

SECTION A

FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS INDEX

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Legal Basis

The official name of the District shall be: THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF BAY CITY, BAY AND SAGINAW COUNTIES; but for all purposes of business, except where the official name is mandatory, the Bay City Public Schools may be used.

Legal Foundation

The District is authorized by, and operated pursuant to, the Michigan Constitution and Michigan statutes providing for public education (MCLA 380.1, et. seq., revised School Code of 1976 as amended). It is subject to all applicable laws and regulations, the District shall be a general powers district, as provided by statute, and shall possess such authority as granted by statute, and by District bylaws and policies. It is the intent of the Board to establish, maintain, manage and carry out the business of operating the public schools and property of the District in the most efficient and productive manner possible.

The revised School Code, MCLA 380.11(6) provides that the Board shall adopt bylaws. These bylaws may establish or change Board procedures, . . . and [provide] any other manner related to effective and efficient functioning of the Board.

Territorial Extent of the District

The District shall be marked on a map of appropriate size and kept on display in a prominent place at the Administration Building and a copy shall be provided to the Intermediate School District office.

A0105 **The Board and Their Superintendent**

The Board is directly accountable to the citizens through the elective process. Members of the Board of Education are officials of the State who represent the people of the District and act as the general agent in carrying out the will of the people in matters of education. The Board shall be responsible for carrying out the mandatory laws of the State; and considering, accepting, or rejecting the provisions of the permissive laws. It shall make and oversee its policies.

The Board shall appoint the most capable person available as the Superintendent. The Superintendent is directly accountable to the Board. Whenever the words "Superintendent," "principal" or "building administrator" appears in these policies and rules, the words "or designated representative" shall be assumed to follow. The delegation of authority of administrative actions does not relieve the Superintendent or principal of the responsibility of the actions of such designated representatives.

The Board and the Superintendent shall strive to respect each other's roles in the operation of the School District.

A0110 **Purpose of Administration**

The general purpose of the District's administration shall be to coordinate and supervise, under the policies of the Board, the creation and operation of an environment in which students learn most effectively. Administrative duties and functions should be appraised in terms of the

contribution made to improving instruction and learning. The Board shall rely on its chief executive officer, the Superintendent, to provide at the District level the professional administrative leadership demanded by such a far-reaching goal.

The District's administrative organization shall be designed so that all divisions and departments of the central office and all schools are part of a single system guided by Board policies which are implemented through the Superintendent. Principals and central office administrators are all expected to administer their units in accordance with Board policy and the Superintendent's rules and procedures. However, the mere execution of directives cannot, by itself, be construed as good administration. Vision, initiative, resourcefulness, and wise leadership, as well as consideration and concern for staff members, students and parents, are essential for effective administration.

Within the concept of an effective total system, it shall be the policy of the Board that ways shall be sought to decentralize administration in order to bring administrative decisions closer to, hence more responsive to, specific needs of individual students and the school community.

(See also C2100 - Administration Goals.)

Educational Philosophy and Beliefs A0120

The intent of the Bay City school system is to create schools in which high levels of performance are expected, students and staff are supported in meeting these expectations, and success is achieved. Although students come to school with differences in their readiness and abilities to learn, it is assumed that we can put in place a learning environment that will enable all students to learn what the schools define as important for them to learn.

The Bay City school system will be characterized by:

1. A belief that all students are capable of learning and of meeting District expectations.
2. A decision making process driven by the needs of students.
3. A caring, nurturing climate which enhances the dignity and worth of each person involved in the teaching/learning process.
4. A recognition that as students attempts new learning, lack of success is not failure.
5. Adults consistently modeling behaviors and attitudes which are desired from students.
6. Continuous growth of students and staff toward meeting clear and public statements of expectations.
7. A program that provides students an instructional process which is driven by the best data available about teaching/learning, addresses differences in learning styles and allows sufficient time for student mastery.
8. A curriculum that is systematically organized to support the District's instructional goals.
9. Practices that are altered whenever they are ineffective or inconsistent with the philosophy and beliefs of the District.
10. An effective problem-solving process where all resources are brought to bear on the needs of students.

11. Effective group activities and cooperative learning opportunities.
12. A sense of responsibility, accountability, and self-reliance by all students and staff.
13. Schools working together with parents and the community to help students achieve high levels of growth and performance so that all possible employment and schooling options are open to them upon graduation.

Since the community comprises the total educative environment, the District assumes that it would both affect and be affected by parents and community as it plans, implements, and evaluates the programs to be provided.

Experience in the Bay City school system will enable each student to leave with:

1. A positive self-concept as a person and as a learner.
2. Cognitive abilities that include basic literacy, mathematical knowledge, and the ability to utilize this knowledge in high level thinking processes.
3. Processing skills needed for effective communication, problem solving, decision making, for functioning in-groups, and for being accountable.
4. A concern for others.
5. Abilities and attitudes necessary to be a self-directed learner.

Students are expected to achieve the highest levels of learning possible. It is evident that the level of education needed for gainful employment and full participation in our society has increased and will continue to do so. The ultimate goal for the success of schooling is to enable students to lead personally meaningful lives as they contribute to society and to enable them to adjust to a changing global society and workplace.

Belief Statements

For the Bay City school system to operate within its philosophy, it must make decisions about what it will communicate and how it organizes and implements its programs and policies. These activities are influenced by the beliefs held by the organization and its people.

The system's beliefs about variables which are important to the success of the students, schools, and the District are:

1. Beliefs about the learner:
 - a. All students can learn well what schools want them to learn.
 - b. All students have talents that can be developed.
 - c. Success is the most effective motivator for learning and is the basis for a healthy self-concept.
 - d. Students have different learning styles and rates.
 - e. The students' rate of learning must not be confused with their ability to learn.
 - f. Students are most successful in new learning when prerequisite learnings are in place.
2. Beliefs about the teaching/learning process:
 - a. Learning is a life-long process.

- b. Instructional variables which can be controlled by a school are more powerful determiners of student achievement than are factors such as innate ability and socioeconomic background.
 - c. Learning is enhanced when students know what is to be learned, how it is to be learned, and how learning is to be assessed.
 - d. Instruction must be driven by a curriculum which clearly outlines goals and objectives.
 - e. Effective instruction is based on planning which aligns instruction with desired outcomes.
 - f. Instructional decisions should be based on the best professional information available.
 - g. Instruction for all students must include higher level cognitive activities.
 - h. Team planning increases flexibility in meeting student needs, promotes professional growth, and more effectively uses the skills and talents available on a staff.
 - i. Trust and caring are the most effective motivators.
 - j. Cooperation between students in the learning process is more effective in promoting learning than is competition.
 - k. Learning can be increased when time is used flexibly in meeting student needs, and when modes of instruction are varied to allow for different learning styles.
 - l. Re-teaching and opportunities for added practice must occur.
 - m. Instructional groupings should be flexible, temporary, and related only to short-term components of instruction.
 - n. Effective instruction reduces the need for remediation.
 - o. Student achievement is defined by comparison to a standard rather than to the achievement of other students.
 - p. Practices for dealing with inappropriate behavior should be designed to enhance students' respect for school, promote positive self-concept, and lead to self-discipline.
 - q. Learning is a positive experience promoted by an orderly, purposeful environment.
 - r. A pupil's rate of learning may vary from task to task, and we must keep opportunity open and support available until the critical learning is in place.
3. Beliefs about organizational behavior:
- a. The primary function of the school is to insure student success in learning.
 - b. Student outcomes are the basis for intentional alignment of all practices and policies in the District.
 - c. School improvement is an on-going process.
 - d. Expertise and knowledge are the basis for influence.
 - e. Decision making should occur at the building level to the degree possible.
 - f. Collegiality is a means of increasing organizational effectiveness and providing more powerful learning environments.
 - g. Staff members should demonstrate a willingness to influence and be influenced by others.
 - h. Decisions and practices must be based on the best data available.

- i. All staff should understand, be able to explain, and be driven by the District's exit behaviors and mission statement.
- j. Trust, caring, and nurturing should pervade the organization.
- k. Schools should be an enjoyable place for students and staff. Fun is an important ingredient for everyone.
- l. Validation phrases are important to a supportive environment and school improvement.
- m. The District staff must be committed to modeling the behaviors that are desired from students.
- n. Higher expectations for student achievement and performance will become a reality when preceded by higher expectations for ourselves.
- o. Removing barriers between students and the school, and between parents and the school is important to achieving greater success.
- p. All staff should be able to identify, explain, and demonstrate how their actions promote achievement of defined learnings and District exit behaviors.
- q. Since the individual school is the unit of change in the school improvement process, all District level decisions must be evaluated on their impact on a school's ability to function as a unit.
- r. Opportunities for staff development and personal growth are integral parts of an effective organization.

A0205 **Commitment to Students**

Students are the first concern of the District, and must receive the primary attention of the Board and all staff members. To fulfill this obligation, the Board will strive to spend most of its time in formulating policy and considering matters related to students. A similar commitment is expected of all staff members. It is imperative that the good of the individual student be kept paramount. At no time are students to be treated as if they were assembly line products; each student shall be considered and treated with respect as an individual.

To this end, the Board and staff shall work together to establish an environment conducive to the very best learning achievement for each student.

(See also J7010 - Student Goals.)

A0210 **Commitment to Instruction**

Though the teacher is a key figure in carrying out the school's responsibility in the educational process, the teacher alone cannot effectively achieve all the objectives of education. The purpose of the various administrative departments is to provide conditions in the schools which permit teachers to work to maximum effectiveness and to provide them with a variety of tools and specialized assistance in developing and carrying out a program of instruction which will meet the needs of students in the world in which they will live. The Board is committed to provide the facilities, personnel, equipment, and materials necessary for the instruction of all students for whom it is responsible.

(See also I6010 - Instructional Goals.)

Commitment to Academic Freedom A0215

The District is committed to academic freedom. Teachers will be protected from unreasonable censorship or artificial restraints which interfere with their obligation to expose students to controversial issues and to help students express their own views on such issues.

The teacher's responsibility is to show objectivity in order that the various sides of controversial issues are given. To carry out this responsibility a teacher should be well informed in the areas being studied. Freedom of individual expression will be encouraged, and if attacks are made upon academic freedom within the classroom, the Board will safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and teachers.

(See also I6020 - Academic Freedom.)

Commitment to Equal Opportunity A0220

The right of a student to participate fully in classroom instruction and extracurricular activities shall not be abridged or impaired because of gender, age, handicap, race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, or for any other reason not related to his/her individual capabilities.

The Board believes that discrimination has no place in public education. Schools must be open to all who wish to enjoy their benefits. This right should not be curtailed because the student possesses characteristics which do not conform to majority patterns. Curriculum offerings should be broad enough to make available to all students an educational opportunity that takes into consideration their needs, abilities, and cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

(See also J7020 - Equal Educational Opportunities.)

Commitment to Support Services A0225

Support services are essential to the successful function of a school system. However, education is the District's central function, and all support services shall be provided, guided, and evaluated by this requirement. Therefore, the Board is committed to provide:

1. A physical environment for teaching and learning that is safe and pleasant for students, staff, and public.
2. Safe transportation for students to and from school.
3. Nutritious meals for students.
4. Support services, resources, and assistance which are timely and which fulfill the needs of educational programs as they develop.

(See also E3010 - Support Services.)

Commitment to Fiscal Management A0230

The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the funding provided and the effective, efficient management of those funds. It follows that achievement of the District's purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management. Further, the

Board recognizes the important trust it has been given with the responsibility of managing a large amount of public resources. As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Board will be vigilant in fulfilling its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated.

Because of resource limitations, there is sometimes a temptation to operate so that fiscal concerns overshadow the educational program. Recognizing this, it is essential that the District take specific action to make sure education remains central and that fiscal matters are ancillary to the educational program.

(See also D2510 - Fiscal Management.)

A0235 **Commitment to Personnel**

The personnel employed by the District constitute the most important resource for effectively conducting a quality learning program. Important contributions to a successful education program are made by all staff members. Therefore, the District will employ highly qualified personnel, conduct appropriate staff development activities, evaluate staff performances, and establish policies and working conditions which are conducive to high morale and which enable each staff member to make the fullest contribution to District programs and services.

To provide the highest quality educational program which will best serve the interests of students and the general public, the District shall at all times seek personnel who are most qualified for positions to be filled. Efforts to hire people who can help the District meet its goals will require the use of both subjective and objective criteria.

In hiring, promotion, and appraisal/evaluation the District is committed to a policy of affirmative recruitment and equal employment opportunity.

(See also G4020 - Personnel.)

A0240 **Commitment to Negotiations**

The Board shall always negotiate in good faith on appropriate concerns. It shall deal with staff negotiating units openly and fairly, and will sincerely endeavor to reach collaborative agreement on items being negotiated. Nothing in negotiations shall abridge the Board's legal responsibilities nor will any staff member's rights and privileges under state and federal statutes be impaired.

The Board negotiates salary and other conditions of employment with its employees under requirements and subject to limitations set forth in the Public Employment Relations Act. The legislation requires school boards in Michigan to: (1) recognize and negotiate with duly chosen bargaining units; (2) enter into written agreement with local units; and (3) negotiate written policies setting forth grievance procedures.

(See also G4400 - Negotiations.)

Commitment to Facilities Development A0245

Buildings used for instruction constitute one of the most important resources of instruction. Their adequacy of space and their specific design features either contribute to or detract from the quality and scope of learning. The District is committed to the development of facilities based on identified educational needs and on programs developed to meet those needs. In considering construction of buildings, highest priority will be given those for use in the instructional program over those for purposes such as administration, instructional resources, and ancillary services.

(See also F3510 - Facilities Development Goals.)

Commitment to School-Community Relations A0250

Because of its conviction that (a) the public schools belong in every sense to the people who created them by consent, and support them by taxation; (b) the schools are only as strong as the intelligent and informed support of the people of the community, and never any stronger; and (c) the support of the people must be based upon their knowledge and understanding of, and their participation in the aims and efforts of the public schools, the Board is committed to maintaining open school-community relations. The Board will strive to keep the citizens of the District regularly and thoroughly informed and invite the advice and counsel of the people of the School District.

(See also H5010 - School-Community Relations Goals, and K7020 - Information Services.)

Commitment to Education Agency Relations A0255

The Board appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies. In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the School District and to other educational agencies, the Board establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational and non-educational agencies.
2. To supply educational services to and/or share them with other educational and non-educational agencies as financial resources permit.

(See also H5455 - Education Agency Relations, H5440 - Relations with Education Research and Service Centers, H5430 - Relations with Other Schools and School Districts, H5445 - Relations with Colleges and Universities, H5455 - State Education Agency Relations, H5460 - Federal Education Agency Relations, H5470 - Relations with Accreditation Agencies.)

Involvement of Community

The Board is committed to identify the desires of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires. All citizens of the District will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and judgments about the schools through such means as (a) written suggestion(s) or proposal(s); (b) presentations at hearings; (c) responses to surveys made through interviews, written instruments, or other means; (d) comments at meetings of the Board; and (e) service on citizens advisory committees. To the extent possible, the Board may involve members of the public in the development of Board policy.

Involvement of Staff

The Board encourages employee participation in decision making for the School District. The Superintendent is encouraged to make a reasonable effort to establish such committees as necessary to recommend policies and rules for the proper functioning of the District.

In the development of rules, regulations and arrangements for the operation of the school system, the Superintendent shall include at the planning stage, whenever feasible, those employees who will be affected by such provisions. The Superintendent shall evolve with certificated and non-certificated employees channels for the ready intercommunication of ideas and feelings regarding the operation of the schools.

Involvement of Students

The Board shall create a stimulating learning climate which encourages active involvement of students to participate in establishing course goals, in planning classroom activities, assembly programs, school sponsored forums of interest, participation in student government organizations and in a variety of extra-class activities. To the extent possible the Board may involve students in the development of Board policy.

A0320 **Public's Right to Know**

The Board recognizes the right of the public to information concerning all of its actions, its policies, and the details of its educational and business operations. The Board encourages study, discussion, and active participation by all concerned in the promotion of the best possible program of education in the community.

(See also H5030 - Freedom of Information Act, and H5055-G - Guidelines for Responding to Requests for Access to Records.)

A0380 **Commitment to Non-Discrimination**

The Bay City Public School District is committed to a policy of educating children for living by helping them to develop an awareness of an appreciation for the achievements, problems, and aspirations of all people in our culturally diverse society.

It shall be the practice of the Bay City Public Schools to comply fully with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 under guidelines adopted by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and approved by the President of the United States and the United States Congress.

It is the policy of the Bay City Public School District not to discriminate on the basis of religion, race, sexual orientation, color, national origin, gender, age, or handicap in educational programs, activities, or services and to comply with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education and Federal Regulations (Title IX, Title VI, and Section 504). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

The Board of Education, the administration, and the staff of the Bay City Public Schools will seek to make whatever rules and take whatever steps may be necessary to eliminate discrimination in all educational programs, curricular and extra-curricular activities, and employment practices which come under the State and Federal Regulations.

The Procedures which form a part of this policy have been adopted to accomplish the District's goal of nondiscrimination. Further, in order to facilitate the evaluation of current practices, to investigate complaints, to answer inquires, and to guide the implementation of compliance efforts, the District shall appoint local Title VI, Title IX and a Section 504 Coordinators. All questions, requests for information, or complaints relating to discrimination in the Bay City Public Schools should be directed to the local coordinator at the following address:

Bay City Public Schools
910 N. Walnut Street
Bay City, MI 48706
Telephone: (517) 686-9700

Inquires concerning the nondiscrimination policy may also be directed to Director, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC 20201.

Sexual Harassment A0400

It is a policy of the District that any form of sexual harassment is expressly prohibited. The School District wishes to promote an environment for staff and students free from any form of sexual harassment or discrimination. Sexual harassment is defined as:

"Any unwelcome communication or conduct of a sexual nature where submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of the individual's employment, or educational opportunity, and/or submission to or rejection of the conduct is a factor in any decision affecting the individual's employment, and/or educational opportunities, or the conduct unreasonably interferes with the individual's work performance, or educational performance, or creates a hostile or offensive working or educational environment on the basis of sex."

Any staff member, student, volunteer or parent having any information regarding potential harassment is encouraged to report such information to the building principal, supervisor or administrator responsible for such building, department, activity or program, and/or may report such conduct to the Director of Human Resources or Superintendent of Schools.

All Board members, officers, employees, staff members, volunteers, students and parents are advised that any form of sexual harassment is conduct that will not be tolerated by the School District, is conduct that violates this Board policy, and may result in disciplinary action.

This policy should be prominently posted in each building of the District.
(See A0450-P for the Complaint and Grievance Procedures)

The Bay City Public School District is committed to a policy of complete compliance with the provisions of Title I, the No Child Left Behind Act. This District is committed to the concept of improvement of student learning and the requirement that education opportunities be provided for all students. This District is equally committed to the concept that students and parents should be fully advised of the opportunities available to them and be provided with an opportunity for input into their educational resources. To that end, the District shall provide that the superintendent of schools, and his designees, shall ensure that the District is in full compliance with the provisions of Title I, the No Child Left Behind Act. Appropriate notice shall be provided, including notice of professional qualifications for staff, which shall be provided to parents/guardians of students in Title I Schools. In addition, the District shall provide the appropriate staffing pattern reviews as may be required by law, which shall be conducted on an annual basis. Furthermore, any and all manuals and handbooks shall be reviewed, and periodically updated to comply with the appropriate provisions of federal law, particularly with respect to the qualifications for instructional personnel.