

June 19, 2013

Jean Briggs Badger, Superintendent  
Dover School District/SAU #11  
61 Locust Street, Suite 409  
Dover, NH 03820

Re: Dover School District Policy Review

Dear Superintendent Briggs-Badger:

I am pleased to inform you that I have completed my review of the Dover School District Policy Manual. I read and reviewed each policy in your manual. I made specific recommendations directly on each policy, where applicable. I also have the following general comments.

1. Overall, the Dover Policy Manual is in very good condition. It appears that most policies were updated in 2005/2006; and other policies have been more recently updated or adopted. As a general premise, NHSBA recommends that school board policies be reviewed on an on-going basis, such that every policy is reviewed every three to five years.

Most of the policies are fine as is. A few policies others significant amendments or complete revision. Where minor changes are recommended, I wrote directly on the policy itself. Where more substantive changes are needed, I have attached the most recent NHSBA Sample Policy to your policy and noted as such.

2. Coding and Legal References. The coding of Dover School Board Policy Manual is consistent used by NHSBA, with a few minor exceptions. I note the same with Legal References. There is no overriding concern or necessity to have the codes and Legal References match exactly. The greatest benefit to having the codes match is for easy reference when NHSBA issues policy updates. However, this is not an immediate necessity.

3. Policies Required by Law. There are approximately 50 policies required by law. My review indicates that the Dover Policy Manual is missing approximately 10 of these policies. I have included a document with this letter that lists all the policies required by law and also lists which of those policies are missing from your policy manual.

Please note that some of the policies required by law which you already have in place may require some revision.

I recommend that the missing policies required by law be addressed as soon as possible.

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or (800) 272-0653  
Fax: (603) 228-2351

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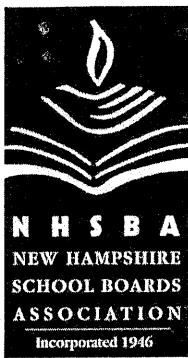
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4. NHSBA Policy Updates. NHSBA issues two policy updates per year – spring and fall. It is recommended that the administration and/or school board review these Updates against your current policies to determine what, if any, changes are necessary to your existing policies. I strongly encourage that the District make keeping up to date with these Updates a priority. While I noticed that some of your policies were updated 2005/2006, it does not appear as though the changes recommended in the NHSBA Policy Updates have been followed on a consistent and regular basis.

Presently, this is not a significant concern, as most of the Dover School District policies are still legally compliant and, I presume, reflective of the Dover School Board's goals and values. I simply urge the Board to remain aware of, and implement when so desired or legally necessary, changes included in the NHSBA Policy Updates.

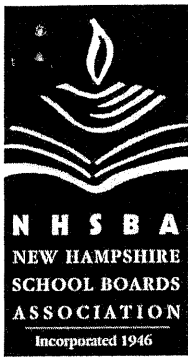
5. Table of Contents. The Dover Policy Manual contains a Table of Contents preceding Tab A. I encourage the Dover School Board to sure this Table of Contents is continually updated, as necessary so that it accurately reflects the policies included in the manual itself. This will assist the administration, staff, school board and public in locating policies. It will also assist keeping track of codes and titles when the board implements a new policy.

6. As a general premise, I recommend that the Board make its policies short, clear directives to the Superintendent and staff. Most of the Dover Board's current policies achieve this goal. There are several objectives that the Board needs to consider when evaluating policies. The existing policies satisfied such recommendations. As a general rule, school board policies should:

- Be succinct and directive
- Direct action, not philosophical or aspirational goals
- Provide adequate guidance to the Superintendent
- Reflect current federal and state law and rules
- Reflect the practice in your school district
- Provide sufficient risk protection

7. The general comments in this letter are intended to provide you with an overall guide to assist the Dover School Board in revamping its Policy Manual. In order to use these comments effectively, I advise that you consult NHSBA Sample Policies when revising your Policy Manual.

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I recommend that the Dover School Board implement all the changes noted within this letter. Most of the policies currently in place are fine as is, whereas others require only minor changes, and even fewer are recommended for complete revision.

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The NHSBA Online Policy database can be accessed at:

[www.nhsba.org/policy.asp](http://www.nhsba.org/policy.asp).

The username and password information are:

Username: onlinepolicy  
Password: policy09

8. General plan for moving forward: First, the Dover School Board should focus on adopting the Policies Required by Law that are currently missing from it's policy manual. Second, the Board should address the other changes noted and recommend throughout the manual. Third, the Board needs to be mindful of the NHSBA Policy Updates and implement changes as needed (legally) or as desired by the board. Fourth, if it hasn't, the Board should establish a cycle for review such that every policy is reviewed by the Board at least once every three to five years.

Last, NHSBA includes an invoice with this letter in the amount of \$900.

Thank you again for choosing NHSBA to provide this service. Please contact me at (603) 228-2061 or via e-mail at [bchristina@nhsba.org](mailto:bchristina@nhsba.org) should you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Barrett M. Christina  
Staff Attorney

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Dr. Theodore E. Comstock  
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