



## Frequently Asked Questions about ASBA Policy Services

### **Q. Why does ASBA offer Policy Services?**

**A.** Adopting policy necessary to govern and run a school district effectively and in compliance with the law is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of a school district governing board. Regardless of its risk management role, policy does not belong to lawyers or liability insurers. It belongs to school boards, making ASBA the natural provider. As the professional association dedicated to governing boards, ASBA is dedicated to supporting school boards in this role. ASBA began offering policy services to its member districts approximately 40 years ago to save them money and provide policies and exceptional service at minimal cost. We continue to make good on that promise.

In addition, we believe there is value in school districts statewide utilizing common policies, albeit with customization based on local needs. This enables board members and superintendents to “speak the same language” from district to district and to be stronger together when advocating for or against changes to the law – and thus policy – that would negatively impact board or district operations.

### **Q. Who may consult with the ASBA Policy Services team?**

**A.** Unrestricted “on-call” consultation is a benefit that sets ASBA Policy Services apart. At ASBA, we believe governing board members, superintendents and administrative professionals are *partners* in policy, hence our commitment to assisting and meeting the needs of those in all three roles. Governing board members who consider and adopt policy and administrative professionals who manage it have a level of access to our Policy Services team that is equal to that of the superintendent.

### **Q. What is included in ASBA’s Policy Services subscription?**

**A.** ASBA provides a comprehensive, robust, responsive service. Compliance-driven model policies through the ASBA Model Policy Manual© are at the heart of the service, but ASBA also provides Policy Services subscribers with the other critical supports necessary for successful policy adoption and implementation.

These include:

- Exhibits and regulations that help districts operationalize and bring policies to life.
- Updates to model policy throughout the year, as necessary.



- Access to on-call staff experts, who are as available to consult with governing board members as they are to superintendents who manage the district.
- Online hosting to provide 24/7 public access along with timesaving editing functions and easily navigable search and comparison functions for exploring your own manual and comparing your policies to those of other districts.
- Policy manual reviews to ensure your policies are up to date with laws, regulations and court decisions.
- Policy amendment and customization assistance.

Subscribers also can access ASBA's Employee Handbook Service, which connects district policies to rules, conditions and clear expectations for employment and supports growth and development of employees for member school districts – all in a concise, customizable format.

*(Learn more about each of the components of ASBA Policy Services at <https://azsba.org/policy/policy-services-overview/>.)*

#### **Q. What is included in the ASBA model policy manual – and why?**

**A.** We believe in local control and the responsibility of governing boards to determine district policy, including how much or how little is included. Rather than take an approach that decides for school boards that “bare bones” is best, we offer a comprehensive manual that puts governing boards in the driver’s seat.

Compliance-driven model policies based on state and federal laws and regulations and pertinent court rulings make up the bulk of the ASBA Model Policy Manual ©. These policies are critically important. However, ASBA also offers model policies beyond the “bare minimum” that the vast majority of districts in Arizona choose to have in place and that are not required by law. For example, governing boards may choose to adopt and customize model policies from the ASBA Model Policy Manual © that are designed to support the governance function more generally and provide for efficient and effective meetings. As with all model policies, it is at the governing board’s discretion to determine which policies from the ASBA Model Policy Manual © to adopt. This comprehensive approach saves boards and districts the time and legal fees that would be needed to engage a lawyer to create policies that rise above the minimum standard.

The manual is arranged in 12 sections, all of which are easily accessible, navigable and searchable through the online ASBA PolicyBridge platform.

#### **Q. What separates ASBA from other policy services providers?**

**A.** ASBA is the only provider of comprehensive model policy and full policy support in the state. As a statewide school boards association with a mission of cultivating excellence in locally governed school districts, our commitment when it comes to policy is to effective school district governance and operations, not solely risk management. ASBA’s model policies reflect that. Of course, compliance-based model policies are at the heart of ASBA Policy Services, but our



wholistic approach acknowledges that more than “bare bones” policies will likely be needed for boards and districts to be successful. In addition, ASBA Policy Services subscribers have access to a multi-faceted team of legal, policy, operational *and* governance professionals with the knowledge and experience to consult on compliance, while also understanding and supporting the real-world, practical needs of Arizona’s school boards and school districts.

**Q. How can I learn more about district policy?**

**A.** Policy-related learning opportunities are available throughout the year at ASBA workshops and conferences, as well as through no-cost webinars that we offer. Just as importantly, members of our Policy Services team are available to answer questions or provide clarification to board members, superintendents and the administrative professionals who support them. We’re just a phone call or email away.