

# **POLICY MANUAL OF THE LNSU BOARD**

**January 26, 2009**

**Amended May 2012**

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## **Forward**

The Lamoille North Supervisory Union was approved by the State Board of Education to provide support for the school districts of the towns of Belvidere, Cambridge, Eden, Hyde Park, Johnson, Waterville, and Lamoille Union District 18. The school directors from these districts are responsible under the laws of the State of Vermont to establish and oversee the policies that provide for the operation and support of the supervisory union.

The obligation of the LNSU board of directors (hereinafter, "LNSU board") is to ascertain, interpret, and agree upon the needs of the school communities, working together for the common good for public education. These policies are established to meet the common good and must be reviewed and altered as required. These policies must accurately reflect the current duties and responsibilities for supervisory unions in Vermont.

## **Section 1.1: Board Meetings**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 262 (b)  
16 V.S.A. § 263  
16 V.S.A. § 264 (a)  
1 V.S.A. § 310-312 et seq.

The LNSU board shall meet annually, not later than 30 days after Town Meeting Day.

The LNSU board may meet as often as deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Supervisory Union.

At any meeting of the LNSU board, a majority of the school districts comprising the LNSU shall be represented and a majority of members of the LNSU board shall be present in order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A legal vote taken at such meeting shall be binding upon each school district in the supervisory union, provided the vote pertains to a matter over which the LNSU board has jurisdiction.

All members of the school boards of the school districts comprising the LNSU may attend and participate in any LNSU board meeting.

Executive sessions of the board will convene only after full compliance with the provisions of Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Unless specifically determined by the board, minutes of executive sessions will not be kept.

## **Section 1.2: Regular Board Meetings**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 262 (b)

Annually, the LNSU board will adopt a meeting schedule. The meeting schedule will be published and made available to the news media by the Superintendent. Special and emergency meetings will be called by the chair on his or her own initiative or by the chair when requested by a majority of the board. Special and emergency meetings will be held only after compliance with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. An agenda for each meeting will be prepared by the Superintendent after consultation with the board chair.

### **Section 1.3: Parliamentary Procedures**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 554 (b)  
1 V.S.A § 310-312 et seq.

The LNSU board will conduct all of its meetings in a similar manner to the district boards within the supervisory union, adhering to Roberts' Rules of Order as expressed in 16 V.S.A. § 554 (b).

## **Section 1.4: Voting**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 266

Each school board is entitled to three votes.

A school board having more than three members shall elect from such board three members to act for it in meetings of the LNSU board.

Consistent with Vermont state statutes, designated members must be present in person or by electronic means to cast votes in the transaction of business.

Elections and transaction of all business at LNSU board meetings shall be determined by majority vote of school board members present or represented and entitled to vote.

The school board of any district which employs no teacher shall only have one vote in meetings of the LNSU board.

## Section 1.5: Officers and Committees

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<b>Date Warned:</b>	5/29/2008
<b>Date Adopted:</b>	11/24/08
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	
<b>Legal Reference:</b>	<b>16 V.S.A. § 261 (a)</b> (Duties of Supervisory Union Board) <b>16 V.S.A. § 262 (a)</b> (Meetings; Elections of Officers) <b>16 V.S.A. § 263</b> (Quorum) <b>16 V.S.A. § 264 (b)</b> (Majority Vote of School Directors) <b>16 V.S.A. § 321</b> (Treasury; Uses) <b>16 V.S.A. § 322</b> (Treasurer; Salary; Expenses; Duties)

### Officers

- A. The LNSU board shall elect the offices of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Clerk from within its membership.
- B. The Chairperson shall conduct all meetings, shall preside at board meetings, shall perform all duties imposed by statute, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law or by action of the board. S/he shall decide questions of order at board meetings. S/he shall appoint or provide for the election of all committees of the board unless otherwise directed by the board. S/he shall call special meetings of the board. S/he may sign official district documents that require the Chairperson's signatures.
- C. The Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence.
- D. The Clerk shall be responsible for signing orders. In his/her absence, the Chairperson shall sign orders.
- E. The board may elect a Secretary or hire a professional to record the proceedings of the board, assist the Superintendent in maintaining the board's records, and serve other functions prescribed by law or by the board.
- F. The Treasurer shall be elected by the board to be responsible for expending funds at the direction of the Clerk, as authorized by the board, and will not be a member of the board.

### Committees

- A. An Executive Committee shall be formed to serve in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent and to take action in situations in which the convening of the entire LNSU board would be impractical. The Executive Committee shall also be convened to develop preliminary budgets, to draft suggested policies, and to prepare other materials and proposals for consideration by the full board. Any two board members, the chairperson of the LNSU board, or the Superintendent may convene the Executive Committee.
- B. Executive Committee Responsibilities
  - 1. Evaluation and review of Superintendent of Schools and recommendations for employment; assistance with Superintendent's contract.

2. The Superintendent of Schools will prepare and present to the Executive Committee evaluations on all Supervisory Union employees prior to April 15 of each calendar year.
3. Draft goals and objectives of the district to be approved by the full board.
4. The Executive Committee shall be composed of one member from each board and the Chairperson of the LNSU board.
5. The Superintendent shall serve as a member *ex officio* of the Executive Committee, and shall serve as executive officer of the committee with responsibility for recording its activities.
6. The Executive Committee shall employ an individual to take and distribute minutes of all meetings and to serve as secretary as deemed by the committee.
7. Minutes of the Executive Committee shall be distributed to the full LNSU board membership on a timely basis.
8. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of representatives of a majority of the districts.
9. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the LNSU board.
10. The Chairperson may not vote unless also serving as a local board's representative to the Executive Committee.
11. In the event that the Executive Committee takes an action, its decisions shall be subject to review by action at the next meeting of the full LNSU board.
12. No action shall be taken by the Executive Committee unless a majority of the member districts eligible to vote do so in support of the action.
13. Other committees may be established as the Chairperson or board deem necessary.

## **Section 1.6: Board Relations with Staff**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 1/26/09  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the LNSU board to encourage school Board member interactions with LNSU personnel while respecting appropriate reporting relationships.

## **Section 1.7: Public Participation at Board Meetings**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 1 V.S.A. § 310  
1 V.S.A. § 312  
16 V.S.A. § 554 (b)

Meetings of the LNSU board are open to the public and will be conducted in accordance with the Vermont open meeting law. In a similar manner to the requirements that govern the district boards of the supervisory union, LNSU board meetings will allow for public participation as outlined in 16 V.S.A. § 554 (b).

## **Section 1.8: Board Goal-Setting and Self-Evaluation**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 261a

The LNSU board may set goals within the scope outlined in 16 V.S.A. § 261a.

## **Section 1.9: Board Member Conflict of Interest**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 262 (d)  
16 V.S.A. § 567  
16 V.S.A. § 558  
16 V.S.A. § 559  
16 V.S.A. § 563 (20)

- A. In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the LNSU board and its members will adhere to the following recommended standards:
1. Board members will be familiar with the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) or similar Code of Ethics, and will observe their provisions.
  2. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont education law which define School Board powers and govern Board member compensation and public bidding processes.
  3. A Board member will not take any action which is intended to give the impression that he or she would represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain.
  4. A Board member will do nothing intended to give the false impression that he or she has the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the Board or the school administration.
  5. A Board member will not use his or her position on the Board in any manner intended to unfairly promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends, or supporters.
  6. A Board member will not accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the board.
  7. A Board member will do nothing intended to leave the impression that his or her position on any issue can be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question.
- B. Avoiding Conflicts. When a Board member becomes aware of involvement in a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, he or she will declare the nature and extent of the conflict or appearance of conflict for the inclusion in the Board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.
- C. Complaints of Conflict of Interest. When a conflict of interest claim against a Board member is brought to the Board in writing and is signed by another Board member or a member of the public, and the Board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following Board procedures will be followed.
1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining Board members, or upon order of the chair, the Board will hold an informal hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the Board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.
  2. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the remaining Board members will determine by majority vote to take one of the following actions:

- i. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed.
- ii. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the Board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute.
- iii. Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and, in addition to disqualifying him or herself from voting or otherwise participating in the Board deliberations or decision, the Board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.

## **Section 1.10: Decisions in the Absence of Board Policy**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 242 (1) and (5)

The policies of the LNSU board are to be interpreted consistently with Vermont law and the regulations of the Vermont State Board of Education. These policies should also be interpreted consistently with those educational objectives, procedures, and practices which are generally accepted in the public education field.

When a situation arises that is not covered by LNSU board policy and requires immediate attention, the Superintendent will act to resolve the situation. S/he must inform the LNSU board immediately that such action has been necessary. The Superintendent's decision may be reviewed at the next regular meeting of the LNSU board and a policy may be established per policy adoption procedures.

## **Section 1.11: Superintendent Employment and Duties**

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**Date Warned:** 11/10/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 1/26/09  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** **16 V.S.A. § 241** (Appointment)  
**16 V.S.A. § 242** (Duties of Superintendents)  
**16 V.S.A. § 243** (Principals Appointment; Renewal; Dismissal)  
**16 V.S.A. § 244** (Duties of Principals)  
**16 V.S.A. § 261a (10)** (Duties of Supervisory Union Board)  
**Policy Cross Reference:** 1.5 Officers and Committees

- A. The Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board has the authority to employ the Superintendent of Schools as outlined according to Vermont Statutes.
  - 1. The Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board shall establish a process for the search, interview and subsequent appointment of the Superintendent.
- B. The Superintendent shall carry out the duties for each School District in the Lamoille North Supervisory Union as outlined according to Vermont Statutes.
- C. The Superintendent shall serve the Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board in fulfillment of the duties outlined according to Vermont Statutes.

## **Section 2.1: Operating Procedures**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 11/24/08  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** **16 V.S.A. § 261a (10)** (Duties of Supervisory Union Board)  
**16 V.S.A. § 263** (Quorum)

Agendas. An agenda for regular LNSU board meetings shall be prepared by the office of the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Supervisory Union Chairperson. A copy of the agenda shall be mailed or emailed to each school board member no later than five (5) business days prior to a regular LNSU board meeting.

Expenses. A legal vote taken at an LNSU board meeting shall be binding upon each school district in the Supervisory Union. Each school district shall pay a proportional share of the expenses of the Supervisory Union based on the number of students enrolled in their schools on October 1<sup>st</sup> of the year preceding a proposed budget.

Audit. The LNSU board shall comply with local audit requirements as outlined in 16 V.S.A. § 261a (10). Additionally, an independent auditor shall be employed to annually review all the books of the district.

The above shall be operative unless otherwise directed by the Commissioner of Education.

## **Section 2.2: Grants, State, and Federal Programs**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 261a (4)  
16 V.S.A. § 261a (9)

The LNSU board shall annually vote to authorize the Supervisory Union to accept grants and to act for them with respect to any other state and federal programs that require such authorization, and to act as the representative of the individual school districts in administering these federal and state programs, except the Supervisory Union shall not incur any financial obligation without the express approval of the school directors of the individual school districts that are affected by the obligation.

The LNSU board shall annually designate the Superintendent of Schools as their authorized representative in all state and federal programs requiring such authorization. The Superintendent is responsible for delegating the correlated work to the appropriate central office administrator.

1. The administrator so designated shall be responsible to the board for:
  - a. Preparing plans, making applications and amendments, and filing reports.
  - b. Administering and supervising the programs as required in state and federal regulations.
  - c. Employing the personnel required to carry out the project if so mandated within the requirements of an individual grant.
  - d. The administrator so designated will review with the board or the Executive Committee plans for programs, employment, parent involvement, and program evaluation.

### **Section 3.1: Policy Development and Adoption**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. ch. 7  
16 V.S.A. § 563 (1)

The LNSU board is responsible for maintaining, amending, and developing policies which are general applications of the Supervisory Union duties under the provisions of 16 V.S.A. chapter 7.

LNSU board policies shall be adopted at regular or special LNSU board meetings, and may be amended after at least a ten (10) day warning by vote of the board. Adopted policies shall be codified and made available to the public.

## **Section 4.1: Curriculum Development and Coordination**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 261a (1) (2)

The Lamoille North Supervisory Union shall establish and maintain a process for curriculum coordination among the sending and receiving schools. The intent of the curriculum coordination process shall be to:

1. Ensure that all students are taught and evaluated utilizing a curriculum that is fully aligned with the Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities and the Vermont Grade Expectations, both from classroom to classroom at the same grade level and from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grades; and
2. Ensure individual schools' compliance with all additional current State Board of Education requirements pertaining to public school curricula.

The Superintendent, in conjunction with School administrators, shall be responsible for developing and implementing the LNSU curriculum coordination process. The Superintendent shall prepare and present for initial LNSU board approval a written summary of the LNSU curriculum coordination process. The Superintendent shall report annually to the Supervisory Union Board on the status of curriculum coordination within the LNSU and on related student achievement outcomes as measured by state-mandated and local assessments.

Overall, it shall be the Superintendent's responsibility to monitor the status of curriculum and instruction throughout the Supervisory Union with the goal of continuous improvement and full compliance with all pertinent State rules and regulations. Each local school district board and administration shall be responsible for the development and implementation of curricula specific to local needs and resources. The Superintendent, in conjunction with School administrators, shall advise and assist each school in evaluating, developing, and implementing local curricula. The Superintendent, in collaboration with local school administrators, shall report to local school boards on the status of curriculum, instruction and assessment at their individual schools as requested by each local board.

## **Section 4.2: Class Size**

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**Date Warned:** November 18, 2010  
**Date Adopted:** November 29, 2010  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. §242(5)

It is the intent of the Board to comply with Sections 15 and 16 of Act 153 of 2010 requiring superintendents to work with school boards to develop policy guidelines for minimum and optimal average class sizes in regular and technical education classes. Class size guidelines will be used to inform annual decisions related to staffing and program offerings.

### **Implementation.**

1. The superintendent or his or her designee shall, in consultation with building principals, develop supervisory union wide class minimum and optimal average class size guidelines that take into account the instructional needs of specific elementary grade intervals and required and elective courses at the secondary level.
2. Class size guidelines in the supervisory union shall vary as necessary to reflect differences among school districts due to geography and other factors, such as school size, instructional needs of students, programmatic needs, and fiscal circumstances. For the purposes of this policy, class size will be defined as core teacher assigned to students, and does not include intervention teachers, special education teachers, enrichment instructors, specials teachers, etc. On-line courses are excluded and are subject to the discretion of the administrator.
3. The guidelines shall also ensure compliance with state or federal requirements related to matters such as student-teacher ratios, special education, technical education and English Language Learners.
4. The superintendent shall report to the Board at least annually on the implementation of this policy, and shall include in his or her report information related to the use of the guidelines in determining actual class sizes and program offerings in the schools within the supervisory union.
5. This policy shall be posted on the supervisory union's website and forwarded to the Commissioner of Education by January 15, 2011.

## **Section 5.1: Educational Support System**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** Act 230 of the 1990  
Vermont Legislature;  
Act 157 of the 1996  
Vermont Legislature;  
Act 117 of the 2000  
Vermont Legislature;  
16 V.S.A. §§2901, 2902,  
2904 (General policy, ESS  
and EST);  
16 V.S.A. §§ 2961 et seq.  
(Special education funding);  
Vt. State Board of Education  
Manual of Rules & Practices,  
§§2120.8.1.3.1, 2194

It is the policy of the LNSU to coordinate a continuum of educational services through a comprehensive Educational Support System to increase the ability of the school to meet the needs of all students in the general education environment.

The procedures necessary to carry out this policy will comply with the requirements of 16 V.S.A. §261 (6), §§ 2901, 2902 and 2904, and Rules 2194 and 2120.8.1.3.1 of the Vermont State Board of Education, and IDEA 2004 Section 504.

## **Section 5.2: Student Attendance/Truancy**

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**Date Warned:** 5/14/2010  
**Date Adopted:** 5/24/2010  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. Chapter 25  
§§1121, 1122, 1123, 1124

### **LAMOILLE COUNTY COMMON POLICY FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE / TRUANCY**

#### **POLICY**

**It is the policy of Lamoille North Supervisory Union to set high expectations for consistent student school attendance in accordance with Vermont law (V.S.A. Title 16, Chapter 25) in order to facilitate and enhance student learning.**

#### **Introduction:**

Vermont Law (Title 16. Section 1121) requires children between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend a public school. In addition to the legal responsibility, regular school attendance is important for a number of other reasons. First, it is critical to the academic and social/emotional growth of all children. Second, regular and punctual attendance fosters the development of responsible and effective work/study habits. Finally, education is a responsibility shared by individual students, families, schools and communities. Clear expectations regarding student attendance support this shared responsibility (exceptions to this statute as per Title 16. Sections 1121 & 1123).

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **Parents/Guardians**

It is the responsibility of a child's parent or guardian to cause their children to attend and participate in school on a regular basis. It is also their responsibility to provide written notification of a child's absence. It is helpful to provide this notice in advance whenever possible and is clearly in the interest of good home-school communication.

##### **School and District**

The principal or designee will make reasonable effort to contact and work with parents/guardians to implement necessary supports to have children attend school on a regular basis. The principal or designee will document all student absences and will determine the thresholds for interventions. The superintendent shall seek corroboration of mental or physical unfitness to attend school when appropriate.

## **Section 6.1: Professional Development for Teachers**

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**Date Warned:** 5/29/2008  
**Date Adopted:** 10/8/2008  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 261a (5)

In accordance with 16 V.S.A. §261a, the LNSU board shall provide for the establishment of a written policy on professional development of teachers employed in the supervisory union and periodically review that policy.

### **LNSU policy on Professional Development**

It is the policy of the Lamoille North Supervisory Union to support the important connection between educators' professional development and improved student achievement, and to assure that professional and para-professional staff members acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills needed to contribute effectively to the achievement of goals and strategies articulated within school action plans.

### **Principles to Guide Professional Development**

Professional development programs sponsored by the district will be directly linked to student performance goals identified within annual action plans.

The Superintendent or his/her designee, in collaboration with school administrators, will oversee a professional development system that is characterized by the following:

1. its primary focus is on improved student learning and achievement
2. it is based on current, documented research findings
3. it provides structure and substance that allow continuity
4. it focuses on content and curricular needs as well as teaching methodology
5. it includes the needs of all who contribute to the education system
6. it is developed and directed by professional educators

### **Implementation**

The Superintendent or his/her designee, in collaboration with school administrators, will base annual and multi-year professional development programs on an analysis of student performance data, best-practices research, state and local standards compliance and the district action plan priorities.

The Superintendent will report at least annually to the school board on the district's professional development program, with an emphasis on its relationship to student achievement goals.

## Section 7.1: Annual Budget

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**Date Warned:** 11/24/08  
**Date Adopted:** 11/24/08  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** **1 V.S.A. § 311-312** (Open Meeting Law)  
**16 V.S.A. § 563** (Powers of School Boards)

It is the responsibility of the Lamoille North Supervisory Union Board to assure it has an approved annual budget.

The LNSU Board shall adopt an annual budget that reflects the needs and goals of the Supervisory Union and its member school districts.

Proposed annual LNSU budgets shall be deliberated at regular or special meetings called for that purpose. These meetings shall be conducted in accordance with open meeting laws.

## **Section 7.2: Fiscal Management and General Financial Accountability**

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**Date Warned:** 10/8/08  
**Date Adopted:** 1/26/09  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** **16 V.S.A. §261-267** (Supervisory Unions)  
**16 V.S.A. §301-303** (Union Expenses)16  
**V.S.A. §321-325** Treasury  
**16 V.S.A. §563** (Powers of School Boards)  
**16 V.S.A. §559** (Public bidding)  
**24 V.S.A. §832** (Bonding requirements)  
**16 V.S.A. §1756** (Indemnity and insurance)  
**GASB Statement 34** (Financial Statements )

It is the policy of the Board to manage its financial affairs in a fair and open manner using acceptable financial practices and providing appropriate accountability. A modified accrual system of accounting for the proper control and reporting of school district finances and for stating the financial condition of each of the School District members shall be established by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent or designee is responsible to carry out the policies by the school board relating to the business affairs of the supervisory union and member school districts. Responsibility includes the development, implementation, dissemination and application of uniform accounting and fiscal practices. These areas of authorization include, but are not limited to:

- Banking
- Fund Transfer
- Electronic Fund Transfer
- Tax Deposits
- Account Reconciliation
- Internal Accounting
- Government Agency Authorization

## Section 7.3: Investment

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**Date Warned:** 11/24/08  
**Date Adopted:** 11/24/08  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** **16 V.S.A. § 1756** (Protection of School Officials & Staff)

It is the policy of the Board to invest public funds in a manner which is consistent with all state statutes and which will meet the following objectives:

- Investments will be undertaken in a manner that ensures preservation of principal
- Investments will be diversified to avoid incurring unreasonable risks associated with specific securities or financial institutions
- The investment portfolio shall employ strategies to achieve the highest rate of return possible while at the same time staying within the constraints of the previous objectives.

All participants in the investment process shall seek to act responsibly as custodians of the public trust and shall avoid any transactions that may impair public confidence.

## Section 7.4: Fund Balance

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**Date Warned:** October 24, 2011  
**Date Adopted:** November 22, 2011  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** 16 V.S.A. § 563 (Powers of School Boards)  
GASB 54  
Deficit : 9 VSA§ 515 and 24 VSA § 1523b  
Fund Balance: 24 VSA, 2804 and 16 VSA 123

In accordance with the governmental accounting standard, GASB Statement No. 54, the Lamoille North Supervisory Union and their member School Boards recognize the following categories of fund balance for financial reporting purposes:

1. Non-spendable Fund Balance - non-cash assets such as inventories or prepaid items.
2. Restricted Fund Balance - funds legally restricted for specific purposes, such as grant, food service expendable trust funds and restricted purposes once voted by the electorate.
3. Committed Fund Balance - amounts that can only be used for specific purposes by board direction, pursuant to a formal vote of the electorate as regulated by statute.
4. Assigned Fund Balance - amounts intended by the Board for specific purposes as allowed by statute, prior to any formal vote. The Board authorizes its Business Manager as its chief financial officer to, depending on the situation; identify items that would fall under this type of fund balance such as encumbrances and other recognized liabilities of the district or supervisory union.
5. Unassigned Fund Balance - residual spendable fund balance after subtracting all of the above amounts.

Committed Fund Balance: The School Board, as the district government's highest level of decision making authority, may seek commitment of an audited fund balance be brought before the voters by a formal vote. Prior to the vote, the fund balance is Committed. Once an affirmative vote is taken by the electorate, the fund balance is Restricted. In the case of the supervisory union, the electorate is recognized as the voting members of the supervisory union board.

Assigned Fund Balance: The School Board expressly delegates through the Business Administrator as its chief financial officer, the authority under this policy to assign funds for these particular purposes under acceptable practices through formal audit. .

Spending Prioritizations: When an expenditure is incurred that would qualify for payment with either restricted or unrestricted funds, it will be paid from restricted funds provided approval of the expenditure is concurrent with acceptable procedure at the appropriate regulatory level.

When an expenditure is incurred that qualifies for payment from either of the three unrestricted fund balance categories, it will be applied in the order: 1) Committed, 2) Assigned, and 3) Unassigned.

Deficit Fund Balance: At year end if any of the special revenue funds (i.e. food service, after-school, etc.) has a deficit unassigned fund balance, the general fund must cover the deficit, providing the general fund has money to do so. Any general fund deficit must be dealt with in the manner allowed by statute.

The School Board will incorporate in the earliest next available budget, any audited, unassigned, general fund balance to offset the next possible realized fiscal year's tax rate or assessment.

Annual Review: Compliance with the provisions of this policy shall be reviewed as a part of the annual budget adoption process.

## **Section 8.1: Criminal Background Checks**

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**Date Warned:** 1/14/2010

**Date Adopted:** 1/25/2010

**Date Reviewed:**

**Legal References:**

**4 V.S.A. §1102(b)(8)**(Unauthorized disclosure)  
**16 V.S.A. §§251 et seq.** (Criminal records check policy)

**16 V.S.A. §§252 et seq.** (Definitions)

**16 V.S.A. §§253 et seq.** (Confidentiality of Records)

**16 V.S.A. §§254 et seq.** (Educator licensure; employment of superintendents)

**16 V.S.A. §§255 et seq.** (Public and independent school employees; contractors)

**16 V.S.A. §§256 et seq.** (Continued validity of criminal records checks)

**16 V.S.A. §§257 et seq.** (Fees for fingerprinting)

**16 V.S.A. §258** (Notice; license applications; job applications; employees)

**16 V.S.A. §563 (12)** (Responsibility for hiring)

**20 V.S.A. §§2062,2063** (Fees)

**20 V.S.A. §2056c** (Dissemination of criminal history)

**Act 1** - An Act Relating to Improving Vermont's Sexual Abuse Response System - As Passed 2009

### Philosophy

*Providing a safe learning environment for students is a primary consideration of the Lamoille North Supervisory Union (LNSU) and the member school districts. Therefore, it is the policy of the LNSU to conduct a criminal background check that is in full compliance with Vermont statute for those individuals who may have unsupervised contact with students. The LNSU further recognizes the valuable contributions made to the schools by employees, contracted personnel, student teachers, mentors, volunteers and work study students. We recognize that appropriate supervision of mentors, volunteers and work students will enhance their contributions as well as fulfill the responsibility that the member school districts have for the education and safety of our students.*

### Rationale

It is the policy of the State of Vermont and the Lamoille North Supervisory Union, plus it's associated member school districts, to use criminal record checks to deter abuse and exploitation of school children and to do so in a manner that protects, as much as is practicable, the privacy of those subject to such checks.

### Definitions:

#### Criminal Record

As noted in Title 16 Section 252 this includes convictions in Vermont and convictions in other jurisdictions recorded in other state repositories or by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The details of specific convictions can be found in the above noted Vermont State Statute. Information received by the supervisory union is considered confidential and may be disclosed to specifically designated persons. (Title 16 Section 253)

#### Unsupervised

As noted in Title 16 Section 252, this means not in the presence of a responsible adult in the employ of or under the direction of the school district.

#### Criminal Background Checks Supported by Fingerprints, Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) Checks

This type of check is required for full, part-time and temporary employees, individuals under contract with a school district who might have unsupervised contact with students, any employee of a contractor under contract who is in a position that may result in unsupervised

contact with students, and any student working toward a teaching degree who is a student teacher within the Supervisory Union. This type of check is also required for mentors. Background checks of this type must be processed through the Superintendent's Office and can be shared with another supervisory union or independent school approved by the Vermont Department of Education within three years of the check if so requested in writing by the individual for whom the background check was conducted. All fees associated with processing the background check will be paid by the individual or their agency of employment. This includes fees charged by the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC) and the entity executing the fingerprinting.

#### Criminal Background Checks Conducted Using the Internet Sex Offender Registry

This type of check is required for "work study students and volunteers prior to allowing unsupervised contact with school children". Neither is defined in the statute. Procedures developed by the Superintendent will require this check to be conducted by building principals or their designee.

#### Criminal Record Check Conducted Using the Vermont Criminal Conviction Record Internet Service (VCCRIS)

This is an online service for use by the Superintendent and Principals, or their designee. It will be used to screen applicants for job openings, candidates to whom a job will be offered and as part of the complete criminal background check conducted by the Superintendent. Procedures developed by the Superintendent will require Principals to use the service to screen applicants for job openings and before offering a position to any individual who may have unsupervised contact with a student. All mentors will be screened by the Superintendent and Principals or their designee. Procedures developed by the Superintendent will require volunteers and work study students to be screened by the Principal or their designee using the service.

Volunteer means an individual not employed by the school district who works on an occasional or regular basis in the school setting to assist the staff. A volunteer works without compensation or economic benefit. Mentors are not volunteers with regards to the LNSU background check policy. (Reference VSBA Policy Code D7 and Act 1) These background checks are the responsibility of each LNSU school building principal or their designee. The Superintendent will establish a procedure that requires principals to conduct the background check. Each school will implement procedures to ensure these background checks are conducted.

Work Study Student means a student who may or may not receive compensation for work performed at a school operated by the district as part of a work experience program sponsored or provided by a public school program and /or the college or university at which he or she is enrolled. A student working toward a teaching credential who is placed as a student teacher at a district school is not a work study student. The Superintendent will establish a procedure that requires principals to conduct the background check. Each school will implement procedures to ensure these background checks are conducted. (Reference VABA Policy Code D7 and Act 1)

Mentor means a trained individual enrolled in the mentoring program who works one-on-one with a designated student over a long period of time in a support and role modeling relationship. Mentors typically have unsupervised contact with students. Mentors are screened and trained by the Lamoille Valley Mentoring Program. All mentors will complete a

criminal background check initiated by the Superintendent's Office that includes fingerprints, the DCF check, the DAIL check and the VCCRIS check.

Individuals under Contract or the Employee of a Contractor means an individual who is not an employee, full, part time or temporary, that receives payment for their services. All individuals under contract or the employee of a contractor who may have unsupervised contact with students will complete a criminal background check initiated by the Superintendent's Office that includes fingerprints, the DCF check, the DAIL check and the VCCRIS check.

Policy:

LNSU member schools will complete criminal background checks defined above as required by Vermont statute and procedure developed by the Superintendent. Criminal background checks will be initiated through the LNSU Central Office or the principal as required by statute or procedure developed by the Superintendent for each type of individual that must be screened. Individuals seeking employment, contracting opportunities, student teaching placements, volunteer opportunities, work study student placements and mentoring opportunities will authorize the necessary criminal background check prior to the initiation of contact with children. Individuals authorizing the criminal background check will be responsible for the costs associated with the background check process when fingerprints are required.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative rules and procedures to ensure that employees, contractors and their employees, volunteers and work study students are appropriately screened prior to entering into service in the school district, and only individuals who have been properly screened will have unsupervised contact with students. Applications for employment, contracted service delivery contracts, and all application forms relating to mentoring, volunteering or work study student placement will require individuals to provide their date of birth so that all necessary background checks can be conducted. If a record exists the steps outlined below will apply.

Existence of a Record

If the Superintendent is notified by the Vermont Criminal Information Center or directly receives information from the DCF Registry, DAIL Registry or the Vermont Criminal Conviction Record Internet Service (VCCRIS) a record exists:

1. The Superintendent shall forward a copy of the record to the person about whom the request was made.
2. In the case of a request made on behalf of a contractor, the Superintendent shall inform the contractor in writing either no record exists or that a record exists but shall not reveal the content of the record to the contractor. The contractor shall forward a copy of the information they received from the Superintendent to the person about whom the request was made.
3. The person for whom a record exists may sign a form authorizing the Superintendent to obtain a copy of the access restricted criminal background record, challenge the accuracy of any record, decline or resign employment, mentor, volunteer or work study opportunities.

If a principal, or their designee, conducts a background check using the VCCRIS system and a record exists the Superintendent will be informed.

## **Section 9.1: Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources & Internet Safety**

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**Date Warned:** May 9, 2012  
**Date Adopted:** May 21, 2012  
**Date Reviewed:**  
**Legal Reference:** Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

It is the policy of the Lamoille North Supervisory Union to comply with the statutory requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) with regards to acceptable use of electronic resources and internet safety by students, as well as staff and community.

Lamoille North Supervisory Union uses electronic resources including the Internet to support and enrich the curriculum. The board believes that the benefits of access to electronic information resources and opportunities for collaboration by the community, staff and students far exceed the disadvantages.

This policy complies with the statutory requirements of CIPA and promotes the safe, ethical, responsible, and legal use of district electronic resources including the Internet to support the effective use of these resources for educational purposes by addressing:

- Access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web
- The safety and security when using electronic communications
- Unauthorized access including "hacking" and other unlawful activities online
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information.
- Measures designed to restrict access to obscene or harmful materials
- Education for users about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites, in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.

Violation of this policy and the procedures developed in accordance with this policy may result in disciplinary action or referral to local, state or federal law enforcement officials.