

MASC Policy Newsletter

Tracy Novick, Field Director - School Finance - September 2022



Updated MASC Model Policies for District Finance

Increased scrutiny of district finance policies stemming from state review for Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief grant funding for capital uses, as well as ongoing questions arising regarding the role of the School Committee in grant approval and signature of warrants, has led to this review and update of district finance policies. In the process, we have also clarified language in several locations, ensured proper legal citation, and added further appropriate cross-referenced policies.

MASC's designation of a -1 policy is one specifically for regional districts. A municipal school district should consider the policy without -1 as their template; regional school districts those with -1 a template. Once adopted, the policy is designated by the NEPN code without -1 regardless of the type of district.

Please note due to Governor Baker's signing into law Chapter 198 of the Acts of 2022 ("An Act Relative to School Operational Efficiency") on August 26, 2022, MASC anticipates sending a further update to at a minimum policies DJ and DJE regarding purchasing. We await guidance from the Office of the Inspector General, expected in late October. Districts should be aware that Chapter 198 of the Acts of 2022 does not go into effect until November 25 of this year.

As always, should you have any questions, please be in touch with the Association.

DB-1 - REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL BUDGET

Adds "school committee members" and broadens to "municipal officials" those for whom the budget should be "clear and understandable," paralleling the language of DB and better reflecting intent of policy. Drops "policy" from "Finance Subcommittee," better reflecting district procedure.

DB-1-R - BUDGET - APPORTIONMENT OF EXPENSES FOR REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

substitutes "by state formula" to internal legal citation, which is more properly cited at the end of the policy.

DBC - BUDGET DEADLINES

Updates to "Select Board," reflecting growing nomenclature. Rearranges ordering of paragraphs to better reflect actual process. Adds legal citation.

DBD - BUDGET PLANNING

Eliminates unnecessary word.

DBG - BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES

Adds legal citation.

DBG-1 - REGIONAL SCHOOL BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES

Adds legal citation.

DBJ - BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

Substitutes "district" for consistency. Changes to "School Business Official" to reflect use of the field. Adds legal citation.

DBJ-1 - REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

Substitutes "district" for consistency. Changes to "School Business Official" to reflect use of the field. Adds legal citation.

DD - GRANTS, PROPOSALS, AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

Clarifies required acceptance of School Committee by changing "shall" to "must." Adds sentence and note to ensure district administration creation and adoption of procedures stemming from policy provides district with necessary documentation and process to appropriate grant oversight and process. Adds both state and federal legal citations.

DGA - AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

Aligns policy with updated warrant process allowing single signatory of all warrants and clarifies process following signature. Adds legal citation and cross-reference. Updates note to reflect updated allowed process.

DGA-1- REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

Aligns policy with updated warrant process allowing single signatory of all warrants and clarifies process following signature. Adds legal citation and cross-reference. Updates note to reflect updated allowed process.

DH - BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Updates language to better describe provision. Adds appropriate cross-references and additional legal citations.

DH-1- REGIONAL DISTRICT BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Updates language to better describe provision, including designation of treasurer and assistant treasurer. Adds appropriate cross-references and additional legal citations.

D1- FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

Adds language to tighten policy in reference to administrative procedures required, referencing language used by the Department in ensuring appropriate oversight. Adds federal legal reference.

DIE - AUDITS

Specifies period during which audit must be conducted and notes legal recommendation of consideration of outside firm for student activity accounts. Adds appropriate cross-reference.

DIE-1 - REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AUDITS

Notes requirement of independent auditing firm. Specifies period during which audit must be conducted and clarifies to whom the report is given. Updates to "Select Board." Adds bullets. Edits typo in Federal Grant Audits. Notes legal recommendation of consideration of outside firm for student activity accounts. Adds appropriate cross-reference.

DJ - PURCHASING

Adds "or designee" to signature requirement.

DJE - PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

Updates reference to "law." Adds reference to intergovernmental agreements for purchasing, as noted in review of federal grants. Adds language to review requirements under different purchasing thresholds under the state purchasing law. Adds legal references.

DK - PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Clarifies responsibility of superintendent regarding budget allocations. Adds language outlining process of authorization of single signatory, with appropriate cross-reference and note.

DK-1- REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT PAYMENT PROCUDURES

Clarifies responsibility of superintendent regarding budget allocations. Adds language outlining process of authorization of single signatory, with appropriate cross-reference and note.

KCD - PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

Aligns policy with legal requirement regarding grants and gifts. Clarifies handling of gift funds. Adds legal reference and appropriate cross-references.