



Comprehensive Employee Management

Numerous updates have been made to the 2012 WASB Employee Handbook

Last year, as new law made historic changes to how school boards govern and manage staff, the WASB provided members with an opportunity to subscribe to a model employee handbook to replace collective bargaining agreements.

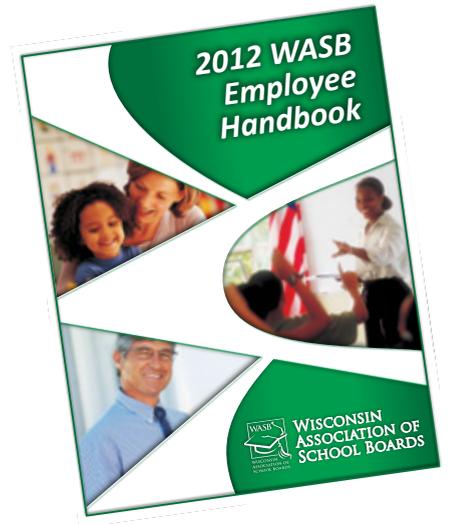
Since that time, WASB staff has made dozens of updates and improvements to the employee handbook. The WASB continues to edit the handbook, making improvements and introducing important

updates as required by state and federal law.

The WASB highly recommends districts renew their employee handbook subscription to ensure their school leaders have access to the most accurate and up-to-date information.

New Laws

Since the release of the first draft of the WASB Employee Handbook, a number of different sections have been updated or revised, including: Section 3.30 Personnel Files, Section 3.05



Child Abuse Reporting, and Section 2.07 Harassment and Bullying.

In addition, several new laws have been adopted that affect the content of the handbook. Laws such as 2011 Wisconsin Acts 81 and 83 resulted in direct changes to the handbook language.

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Employee Opinion Survey

Your district's tool for improving operational efficiency and district-employee relations

The Employee Opinion Survey is a customizable, anonymous survey administered online to your employees by the WASB staff. The survey gauges your employees' opinions on a range of issues related to the operation of your district to guide your work in crafting employee handbooks, building relationships and improving services. If administered annually, your district can track trends and determine the impact of employee-related initiatives.

WASB staff can customize the survey to fit your district's specific needs, but the standard survey will question your employees about 13 different topics including: demographics, job satisfaction, and working conditions.

For example, employees will be asked whether they believe the pay and benefits they receive are competitive with the pay

and benefits received by similarly situated employees in neighboring and/or comparable districts. With this information, the district may discover that, while the compensation it provides to district employees is competitive, it must communicate that information to its employees more effectively.

WASB staff will compile the responses into a summary report and provide a basic analysis of the results. For an additional fee, WASB staff will provide an in-depth analysis of the results and provide suggestions for areas that may need improvement. The summary report will contain high-quality, detailed graphs and charts to illustrate employee responses. If your district chooses to administer the survey annually, the district can track trends, changes and improvements over time. □

FOR MORE INFORMATION about this new service, contact the WASB's staff counsels at 1-877-705-4422.



PRG: Your online policy resource

Last year at this time, WASB policy and information technology staffs were working diligently to launch WASB's new internet-based policy tool – the Policy Resource Guide (PRG). It is now being used by subscribing school districts from all parts of the state – small and large, rural and urban.

The PRG offers school board members, school administrators, and the superintendents' administrative assistants streamlined electronic access to school policy development and implementation information in one place.

Here's a look at what has been happening with the PRG since it was launched last year.

New and Updated Content Added on Regular Basis

Because school policy topics of interest to school districts are varied and unlimited, the WASB has made addressing state law changes affecting school district policies its first priority.

Elk Mound School District Superintendent and PRG subscriber Ron Walsh knows firsthand how helpful these PRG updates are to school districts.

"This past year, legislation affecting the schools has occurred frequently and often without much prior explanation," Walsh said. "We seldom have had the ability to prepare for some of these changes."

For example, Walsh said open enrollment law changes that took effect in February necessitated major revisions to his district's policy.

"It was obvious that our 15-year-old open enrollment policy would need to be changed," Walsh said. "With pressure to have policies and rules in place within a few weeks, the prospect of rewriting the new policy and rule seemed daunting."

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Policy Resource Guide
Your gateway to a storehouse of school policy related information.

KEY WORK IN ACTION WORKSHOP

Standards Assessment Accountability



The WASB GoLD team is offering spring workshops

Changes in standards, testing, and the evaluation of teachers and principals are all aligning. New accountability systems outlined in the state's NCLB waiver application need to be in place by the 2014-15 school year. What does this mean for your school district?

In the WASB Governance and Leadership Development (GoLD) interactive workshop, learn how you can use the Key Work concepts to understand and prepare for the changes required in these new systems. Learn about Common Core, model teacher and principal standards and how these form the foundation for the state's accountability system. Learn about the framework of that system including SMARTER Balance assessments, the Accountability Index and Rating, and educator evaluation. Engage in conversation and reflect on questions that can help your board support these changes in your district.

These workshops will be offered in different regions across the state by the WASB GoLD team. Contact the WASB to schedule a workshop and watch the WASB website (wasb.org) for more information. □

New GoLD Services

DATA BASICS

Watch for information about Data Basics workshops. These workshops will introduce practices for effectively organizing and presenting data to boards and to the public.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

GoLD staff brings stakeholder-driven strategic planning to member districts. This process provides essential support as districts audit current performance, assess strengths and challenges, articulate a unique vision for the future and much more.

TO LEARN MORE or to schedule any of these services for your district, contact GoLD director Deb Gurke, 608-512-1710 or dgurke@wasb.org

For example, 2011 Wisconsin Act 83 provides that it's not employment discrimination to refuse to employ or to terminate from employment an individual who has been convicted of a felony. As a result, the WASB revised the section on criminal background checks and on active employees' obligation to report their criminal record. The WASB has also included an implementation note in which districts are cautioned against a zero-tolerance policy regarding felons.

Other Special Features

In addition to providing the most up-to-date information, the WASB Employee Handbook can also be easily customized for local district needs. Subscribing districts receive a

Microsoft® Word version of the draft handbook and can modify it as they wish.

The handbook also features distinct sections for different classes of employees. In total, the draft handbook contains five sections: provisions applicable to all employees; teachers; support staff; administrators; and co-curricular staff.

Notes to guide implementation of the handbook are also provided to help district leaders put the handbook into practice so it meets your district's individual needs.

New this year, first-time and returning subscribers will receive the Hiring Guide and the Impartial Hearing Officer Guide with their purchase. Both publications provide

additional value and expertise in managing school district employees.

For More Information

Districts interested in renewing or subscribing for the first time, can find more information about the 2012 WASB Employee Handbook at wasb.org. Select "Legal & Human Resources" and click on "Employee Handbook." You can also contact any of the WASB's staff counsels at 1-877-705-4422.

The 2012 WASB Employee Handbook provides school leaders with a comprehensive, customizable tool to manage all school district staff. The handbook is designed to make school leaders' jobs easier so they can stay focused on the important tasks of managing the district. ■

Then Walsh turned to the PRG for help. "On a whim I opened up the PRG and looked under the 400's section thinking I'd see a work-in-progress note about the new open enrollment provisions. Instead, I found four solid policy examples and a detailed rule. I read through them and was elated. It was obvious the WASB staff had worked hard to have this ready to use when we needed it. I was amazed since it seemed the ink was still wet on the new legislation."

Walsh said he appreciates the board's foresight in purchasing the PRG and the fact that the PRG is "dynamic and responsive to districts' needs."

Aligned with the WASB Employee Handbook

Because many PRG subscribers also subscribe to the WASB Employee

Handbook, sample policies are being included in the PRG that are in line with related policy topic information found in the handbook. These samples not only include the "selected" employment-related sample policies that are provided to all WASB Employee Handbook subscribers, but also sample policies on other policy topics addressed in the handbook.

Also, a WASB Policy Manual Coding System and WASB Employee Handbook Cross-Reference Index was created that cross-references the WASB policy topic code with related policy topic content included in the handbook. This helps districts ensure that employment-related policies contained in their board policy manual and employee handbook language are aligned.

Eligible Product for Reimbursement Using Microsoft Settlement Funds

Schools that are eligible for Microsoft settlement funds and have general purpose voucher funds remaining in their account can use such funds to pay for their PRG subscription. Information about the Microsoft-Wisconsin Cy Pres Program and submitting vouchers for reimbursement can be found on the program's website at: <https://microsoftwik12.com/>.

PRG Training Videos Available

Subscribers can access training videos at any time to learn how to use the PRG to its full advantage. ■

For more information about subscribing to the PRG, contact WASB Policy Librarian Teresa Kimball at 608-512-1714 or via email (tkimball@wasb.org).