

School Boards

School Boards are responsible for many educational priorities—first among them the development and management of the schools’ budgets and making sure those budgets support key educational goals. Another key priority for the SAU39 Boards is policy development. As representatives of the community, Board members translate citizens’ values into policy statements that guide staff and students in the formation of more specific rules and regulations.

To the uninitiated in the ways of educational policy, policy-making may at first seem like an uninteresting bureaucratic enterprise. Some may not find the finely crafted sentence, the correctly interpreted law, the meticulously researched precedence as work that would be terribly exciting. The people who do this, fondly labeled “policy wonks”, may seem like a different breed of people entirely.

But anyone who has participated in debates about such policies as Community Use of School Facilities, Internet Access for Students, Registered Sex Offender Notification, or School Bus Safety, knows that policies can make a difference to the direction of a school district.

This past year, the three District Boards agreed to work to review and align all of those policies required by law. Pam Dudoff, Amherst School District representative, spearheaded this effort, and with the help of representatives from each Board she proceeded to shepherd over fifty-eight policies through the system. Considering that each policy was reviewed a minimum of three times by each Board, one can appreciate the magnitude of this effort!

May 29th will be Pam Dudoff’s last SAU39 Board meeting. She and her family be moving to New York State, and she must vacate her Amherst Board position. At this meeting, all sixteen members of the SAU Board and administrators like me will honor and praise the work she has done. Pam has left a legacy of high standards—in writing—for us all to follow. Thank you Pam, and thank you, Boards, for pursuing the important goal of policy development.