

This document was
approved by the
VCPAC membership on
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VCPAC POLICY OUTLINE WHAT IS A POLICY.

A Formal and broad expression of philosophy or principle which results from extensive discussion and implies value choices. Policy defines a belief, an expectation or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions. Policy defines future outcomes, which the Executive hopes to achieve; without policy an Executive does not have the tools to establish direction or evaluate the performance of the Executive, or committees.

Policies (the what and sometimes the why and the how much) are supplemented by regulations, procedures, or guidelines (best to choose one term and stick with it) which explain how, where, when, by whom, by what time, and in what form things are to be done.

IS THIS A POLICY DECISION?

1. Is the issue within the scope of VCPAC (or the Executive's) authority?
2. Does the issue have a reasonable connection with VCPAC's goals?
3. Is it a broad, general issue, involving values as well as facts and actions?
4. Are the issue complex and uncertain, requiring thought and debate?
5. Does this decision have long-term implications? Will it become a precedent for future VCPAC/Executive actions?

IS THIS A GOOD POLICY?

1. Is it legitimate? (Is the Executive within its authority?)
2. Is it legal?
3. Is it compatible with VCPAC's overall goals?
4. Does it adequately cover the subject? (Will a reader find all she needs to know?)
5. Is it reasonable?
6. Is it clear? (Free from jargon and unrelated information)
7. Is it practical? (Can members, live with it? Does it fit in with other policies and practices?)
8. Is it current? (Does it answer present needs and not just past ones?)
9. Is it affordable?

10. Does it have sufficient support? (Will most people comply without excessive enforcement or constant challenge?)

Policies in the following outline are divided into the three broad categories (broadly based on Ralston)

FRAMEWORK
GOVERNANCE
FUNCTIONS

1. **FRAMEWORK (MEGA) POLICIES:** These establish why the organization exists, and what it intends to accomplish. It should include the following:

- a. What are the underlying problems, needs and issues the organization is incorporated to address?
- b. A statement of objects and mission, answering: What difference will the organization make in the long term?
- c. Why do we exist?
- d. What is our mission and our vision of the future?
NB. Keep it brief. Write it in terms of results not process, i.e. Don't use words such as encouraging, promoting, etc
- e. A target statement identifying our partners; who we will work ~vith to bring about our mission.
- f. A statement of aims, i.e. What outcomes do we require our partners to accomplish in order to fulfill our mission?

B. **GOVERNANCE POLICIES:** These set out the principles, rules, management styles, roles, responsibilities and functions which clarify how the work of the Executive will be organized and distributed among the Executive, the committees, and volunteers.

Included would be:

- Constitution and Bylaws
- Policy on policy making (META POLICY)
- Executive function
- Committee function and structure; mandate, reporting, membership, meetings.
- Membership fees, guidelines, deadlines, responsibilities, accessibility to membership list
- Conflict of Interest and Perceived Bias
- Executive job description, expectations, orientation, code of ethics, meetings
- Principles: non-commercial, non-partisan, non-racial, non-sectarian
- AGM: Nomination Committee, Resolutions
- Accountability
- Internal, External communications; public relations; President only speaks for VCPAC
- Budget and Strategic Plan

C. **FUNCTIONS:** This category of policy deals with questions arising from the day-to-day work of the organization, including future planning.

Included would be:

- Responsibilities
- Services
- Programs, projects

- Finance
- Students: Education, Health (Lifelong Fitness), I-lead Life, Learning for Living), Safety (Field Trip, Standard Speed Zone), Learning Disabled
- Parents: Education, Involvement, and Leadership.
- Team Building as partners
- Advocacy (political but not partisan)
- PACs: Communication with and from, Collaborative model, policies
- Code of Ethics, re: problems with school, political stands, model Constitution and Bylaws.
- Planning

POLICY ON POLICIES POLICY

The Executive of VCPAC has a responsibility to develop policy, which is consistent with the goals and philosophy of the organization, and to present this policy to the AGM for ratification by the general membership. Policy is the means by which the Executive and the organization define beliefs, set expectations, establish direction and determine action to achieve desired outcomes.

PROCEDURE.

1. Policy approved at a general meeting becomes effective immediately.
2. Suggestions for policy development in the form of resolutions, briefs, and policy statements may be initiated by voting members, committees, or the Executive in response to a perceived need. These suggestions should be submitted to the Executive in writing.
3. Resolutions may be policy statements submitted to the AGM.
4. Proposed policies will be referred to the appropriate committee, or in some cases to the full Executive for initial discussion; this can be a brainstorming session, which ends with prioritization of the points involved.
5. The proposed policy will then be referred to the appropriate committee or in some cases to the Policy Committee for further development, gathering of information, etc
6. Once adopted, policy will be dated and filed in the Policy Manual
7. Excluding those policies and policy recommendations passed at a general meeting, rejected policy recommendations may not be introduced within a twelve month period unless two-thirds of the Executive approve reintroduction.
8. Policies approved by the Executive are interim until they have been approved by the membership at an AGM.
9. Procedures will be developed from the policy by the appropriate committee.
10. Policies will be reviewed and updated on an on-going basis.