

# **POLICY / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

**JUNE 2, 2008**

**Oliver Administration Building**

## **Present**

**Subcommittee: Marjorie McBride, Chair, Diana Campbell, Karen Lynch and John Saviano**

**School Committee and Administration: David Dugan, William O'Dell, Edward Mara, Melinda Thies and Don Rebello**

**Marjorie McBride called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM.**

## **Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: Diana Campbell motioned to table the approval of the minutes to the May 5, 2008 meeting to the next Subcommittee meeting; Karen Lunch seconded; the motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.**

## **Student Use of Electronic Devices**

**MOTION: John Saviano motioned to approve the recommended changes for the sake of discussion; Karen Lynch seconded.**

**Karen Lynch: Some staff abide by current policy, some do not—this**

**sends mixed messages to students.**

**Don Rebello: Cell Phones--He and the teachers would not support their use, as they are in a completely different category;**

**Ipods and MP3s-- some teachers are reluctant to approach students using them in the hallways; students may not hear other important sounds in the hallways and this could be a safety issue; their use would be acceptable and part of transition if we begin with teacher discretion in their classroom.**

**Ed Mara: Supports use of Ipods and MP3s in classrooms at teachers' discretion as a good first step; we are trying to build a culture of privilege.**

**Melinda Thies: Concurs**

**The Committee discussed different scenarios that could arise.**

**MOTION: John Saviano motioned to leave the "Electronic Devices" section in the Mt. Hope handbook as is with the addition of a third bullet to read "EXCEPTION: Ipods and MP3s may be allowed by the classroom teacher within the confines of their classroom, bearing in mind the safety and security of the students." Karen Lynch seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **Hats and Hoods**

**Currently, they are not allowed to be worn in school.**

**Don Rebello:** tends to be more liberal on this issue; that kids have made a point on their culture, he thinks we should listen to that point; many of the high school teachers are under 35 years of age and do not see this as an issue, in fact Ted Seizer wore a cap for a talk he gave to a prestigious group. Don objects to any headwear that is a safety issue or gang related; also no hoods at all.

**Marjorie McBride:** does not agree and feels students have many other ways to demonstrate their individuality and we shouldn't find it too hard to bother to teach them the tools they will need in certain situations, such as at funerals, in fancy restaurants, etc.

**John Saviano:** disagrees with Marj, we cannot override the feelings of parents and it is not our responsible to police the students.

**Diana Campbell:** We override parents' rights all the time; social settings are different from work setting and school is not a social setting; safety and security are her greatest concern; Ted Seizer earned the right to wear a hat, students have not earned that yet; perhaps wearing hats could be an earned privilege, to be worn on dress down days, or by seniors, all at the discretion of the principal.

**Bill O'Dell:** Some parents are looking for reinforcement and would

welcome help in teaching lessons; MYTURN brought up there are times when appropriate and not; he likes Diana's suggestion.

**Karen Lynch:** Barrington allows hats but no hoods, this sets a casual mood and many teachers would like it to be stricter; sometimes parents do not make the right decisions; we have to make some decision that get kids through school; likes the idea of dress down Friday.

**David Dugan:** We should set certain standards and it is rude to wear a hat inside a building; does not want it to be confrontational; no hats or other thing on heads.

**Marjorie McBride:** Agrees with David, but to move in the spirit of privilege, she likes Diana's idea and feels it is appropriate for the principal to declare something like baseball day when baseball caps can be worn.

**MOTION:** John Saviano motioned to add a notation to the handbook section on dress code within the "hats, caps, visors, bandannas . . ." bullet to read "Caps and visors may be worn at the direction of the building principal." Diana Campbell seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

**Grade Requirements for Participation in Extra Curricular Activities**

**In previous discussions referral to a “substance abuse education program” was the preferred terminology; however, Melinda Thies now recommends the original wording of “student assistance education program.”**

**Don Rebello reviewed his recommendation for eligibility requirements (attached) which transitions to 100% passing over a two year period beginning next year after the first grading period.**

**Diana Campbell: A differentiation should be made between practice and participation, ex. Band trip to Washington, perks of the activities; and what happens if a student should leave the necessary forms in their lockers; suggests those on academic probation be excluded from “games/ performances/ club events.”**

**Bill O’Dell: Asked what are the “available academic intervention programs”; Don said specifics have not yet been identified but they would be programs that are available to all students.**

**Karen Lynch: Agrees a distinction should be made between practice and participation; concerned about students keeping grades up for the “eligibility period” and then slacking off the rest of the year.**

**Paul Silva: Suggested mid-semester checks on grades.**

**Marjorie McBride: It’s the coaches’ duty and responsibility to check**

**their players' grades each week.**

**Don Rebello: This policy creates a raised level of accountability for coaches.**

**Karen Lynch: Asked if coaches have enough experience to do the things we are asking; Don responded they absolutely do; in fact Coach Silva knows everything about his players; we must see that they develop the inclination to do it; he will see that the language clearly states what is expected.**

**John Saviano: If based on quarterly grades, he is very much in favor of this program.**

**David Dugan: This is a well thought out proposal; likes the transitioning.**

**These new procedures will be included in the handbook and Don will spell it out in detail during orientation; the AD and administrators will address this with the coaches. Athletes have been held to a higher standard, but these requirements will eventually be applied to all.**

**Marj McBride questioned the requirement of raising two failures to one failure and which failing class should it be. There is no clear answer to this, but it will be in effect for only one year so it should not be an issue. Fall eligibility is based on the previous full year average.**

**Interventions would probably not conflict with practices or games, but if so, would take precedence.**

**Marj reiterated that high school and middle school policy must be equitable across the board. Diana Campbell suggested caution with wording Kickemuit's regulations, so as not to eliminate therapeutic clubs and activities.**

**ALL THESE POLICY CHANGES WILL BE REVIEWED IN THE SPRING.**

**MOTION: John Saviano motioned to recommend acceptance of Don Rebello's proposed policy changes by the full Committee based on the final draft received from Don Rebello and Ed Mara. Diana Campbell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Ed Mara thanked Don Rebello for his hard work on this proposal. He asked Don to remind Guy Murgio to remove the high school floor plan from the agenda book.**

**Don Rebello left the meeting at 8:05 PM.**

### **Equal Opportunity Employment – Policy GBA**

**After review of Attorney Henneous' recommendations, the following changes were agreed upon:**

**P.1, item A - . . . . and significantly moving toward the goals of**

**increase employment for women and minority persons; , reflective of a diverse population;**

**P.2, item E – In seeking to fill openings every effort will be made to recruit in such a way that women and individuals from minority groups will have an equal opportunity to be considered and appointed to staff positions.**

**P.2, item II.A.2 – a change in wording “of minority groups and women” was discussed but it was decided to leave it unchanged.**

**P.4, item V.A. – “. . . designed to select, place and train qualified minority and women professionals and nonprofessionals persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or national origin within all segments of its work force.”**

**P.4, item V.A.3 – “. . . discussing employment problems of minority persons and women and individuals with disabilities; and”**

**P.5, item B. – strike entire section B**

**P.6 – replace entire “Statement of Faith” section with the following:**

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

**Any discrimination complaints made on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or national origin should be made directly to the Designated Affirmative Action Officer.**

**Once a complaint is received, it will be investigated in a timely fashion. Said investigation may be conducted by school officials or an independent third party, as determined by the Affirmative Action Officer. The Complainant shall be notified, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation within ten (10) days of its completion.**

**Complaints may also be made pursuant to the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements or through the appropriate state and/or federal agencies or courts of law. The Affirmative Action Officer shall maintain contact information for said state and/or federal agencies and will provide it to a Complainant upon request. If Complainant chooses to proceed according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement he/she should consult his/her Union representative with respect to the effect that may have on other avenues of complaint.**

**This policy revision will be brought forward after the changes are received from Andrew.**

### **Comment**

**John Saviano commented that this is one of the best meetings they have had.**

### **Next Meeting**

**July 7, 2008, 6:00 PM at Oliver**

### **Adjournment**

**At 8:25 PM, John Saviano motioned to adjourn; Diana Campbell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**/ca**