

POLICY / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, July 22, 2013

Oliver Administration Building

Present

Subcommittee: William O'Dell, Chair, Diana Campbell and Lynn Wainwright

School Committee, Administration & Guests: Mario Andrade, Asst. Superintendent

Meeting called to order by Bill O. at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Diana C. motioned to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2013 meeting; Lynn W. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

School Committee Member Authority (BBAA) Discussion

Mario A. made edits to the existing policy per last month's recommendations by the Subcommittee. He reviewed the reasoning behind the inclusion of the last two sentences in the first paragraph as being good practice by way of review for the sitting chairperson and to apprise a new chairperson when one is elected. Mario A. asked if Andrew H. reviews duties of the School Committee annually. Diana C. responded "School Committee 101" given by Andrew H. usually only occurs when issues arise or when a new committee

member comes on board.

Lynn W. commented that the word "and" in #1 should read "an".

Lynn W., referring to item #3, asked when a formal request would not be required when requesting photocopies. Bill O. responded that the Chairperson would determine this during the annual review of that policy. Diana C. suggested that if a committee member is asking for a large job to be done, ie., 700 pages, in the interest of paper and time, the wording for #3 should read "the option to receive copies". Diana C. added that no school committee member would have the right to ask the School Committee's secretary or any staff member to copy a book that would take a large amount of time to complete. An individual member would have to make that request through the full School Committee. Lynn W. clarified that her issue would actually fall more under item #4. Diana C. responded that if a school committee member is asking for specific data, they must go through the full committee at which point the Chair would make the request of Melinda. Bill O. is concerned there will be pushback citing that individual members will question why they just can't go to the Chairperson rather than the full committee. Diana C. stated that a committee member can go to the Chair to make a request for an item to be added to the agenda at which point the individual can request documentation related to it. Diana C. stated that historically, to minimize the agenda and to avoid controversy, this policy point was an effort for the School Committee to be more transparent to the

public to avoid the appearance that the Committee is “working behind the scenes”. Diana C. does not feel there will be pushback as there is essentially only one additional item.

Diana C. stated that #3 and #4 don’t seem to show a process and would like to have the last two sentences that were added to the first paragraph in this revised document moved below #4 as it explains the process for #3 and #4. The Subcommittee did not feel this was necessary.

Bill O. would like to change “his” in #4 to read “his/her”.

Under the cross reference section, the last policy listed should read “BG” not “BF”.

Diana C. and Lynn W. reviewed copies of the cross-referenced policies mentioned in Policy BBAA to determine if those policies are indeed relevant. After review, it was determined that Policy BBF, School Committee Member Ethics, should have a cross reference for Policy BBAA added to it, and Policy BCD has a reference note to Policy BBAA that should be removed. The Subcommittee agreed that these changes can be requested of the School Committee through a superintendent recommendation as they are minor and do not change the content of the policy.

MOTION: Diana C. made a motion to bring revised Policy BBAA,

School Committee Member Authority, to the full committee for a first reading; seconded by Lynn W. The motion passed unanimously.

School Committee Officer's Duties (BCB)

Mario A. stated that the law concerning someone who is incapacitated was reviewed. In that instance, the town could appoint an individual. Mario A. stated he is waiting for a response from Andrew H. in regard to signature policy in the absence of a primary committee member. Diana C. brought up a question regarding item #4 under "Secretary" and whether this is true. The Subcommittee agreed to ask Andrew H. during the meeting that this policy goes for a first reading. Bill O. said once we receive his answer, the Subcommittee can move forward with making any necessary changes prior to the second reading.

Diana C. stated that "BDG, Minutes" under "Cross-Refs" needs to be moved down to a separate line and should read "BDDG, Minutes".

Bill O. stated that under "Treasurer", item #2 should read, "In conjunction with the Superintendent of Schools and the Chairperson, the Treasurer shall"

The subcommittee asked the secretary to go through the policy correcting formatting, spacing and capitalization.

MOTION: Diana C. made a motion to have revised Policy BCB, School Committee Officers (Duties) go before the full School Committee for a first reading; seconded by Lynn W. The motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittees of the School Committee (BCE-R)

In reviewing the policy, Lynn W. asked why Health & Wellness is a committee and not a subcommittee. Diana C. responded that it was mandated by the state which is why it is a committee.

Bill O. stated that the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee has only concerned themselves with Policy and not Community Affairs. Bill O. asked whether the sixth bulleted item under Community/Policy Subcommittee has been done by this subcommittee. He does not believe it has. Diana C. stated that the intent of this item was to safeguard against multiple and/or contradicting statements going out from the District, ie., Letter to the Editor. Diana C. added that she believes this is referring to official statements and not opinions. Lynn W. added that we can express our own opinion, but not the opinions of the School Committee. Bill O. also brought up bulleted item #4 which states that the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee executes public relations on behalf of the School Committee which has been adopted by the School Committee.

Diana C. asked whether item #2 under Budget/Facilities Subcommittee means that the Personnel Subcommittee and Budget

Subcommittee work together to determine the Superintendent's salary. It was determined that both subcommittees do historically work on this together. Bill O. is concerned that communication is lost between the Personnel Subcommittee and Budget Subcommittee. Lynn W. asked if item #2 under Budget/Facilities should be included under School Committee Goals. A suggestion was made that Policy BCE-R could be cross-referenced under Policy BCB.

Mario A. asked if this document is still accurate as it is seven years old.

Bill O. commented that bulleted item #7 under Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee speaks of addressing security concerns, space and use of facilities which the Budget Subcommittee is currently addressing. Bill O. asked if this was something the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee should have handled.

At the next School Committee meeting, Bill O. will request that the Sub-Committees review Policy BCE-R. Diana C. asked the School Committee's secretary to include Policy BCE-R on each subcommittee's agenda once Bill O. recommends their review.

Board-Staff Communications Policy (BG)

Diana C. made an observation that Policy BG reads in its entirety similar to item #2 of Policy BBAA. Bill O. asked whether or not Policy BG is necessary. Lynn W and Diana C. responded that BG is needed.

The Subcommittee agreed that the title of the Policy should read "School Committee v Staff Communications".

MOTION: Diana C. made a motion to bring revised Policy BG, School Committee-Staff Communications to the full committee for a first reading; seconded by Lynn W. The motion passed unanimously.

Health and Wellness Policy (JHCG) - Update

After meeting with the Wellness Collaborative through RIDE, Lynn W. received input and ratings for the District's current Health and Wellness Policy based on five different criteria. The Wellness Collaborative based their ratings (0-2 with 2 being the highest) on key wording that is recommended for a strong Health and Wellness Policy. The District's policy did receive several 0's particularly in the area of Physical Education.

The Wellness Collaborative also made suggestions for the District's website such as having a dedicated section for Health and Wellness. Lynn W. reported that currently our Health and Wellness Policy information is hard to locate. Adding further that the responses to the Wellness survey indicated that parents in the District are interested in our Health and Wellness Policy as it relates to healthy foods.

Lynn W. made changes to the policy reflective of the Wellness

Collaborative suggestions. Lynn W. added that the changes are in color and suggested printing off colored copies. Bill O. would like to see the rationale behind the changes as well. The Subcommittee requested of the School Committee's secretary to post the proposed draft to the District's secure website for the full School Committee's review and comments. Bill O. said this policy will be at the top of the next meeting's agenda and will be reviewed thoroughly.

Future Agenda Items

Lynn W. would like an update on the cheating policy as well as a discussion concerning student dress and use of electronics and the pertinent policies related to these items. Mario A. will contact the high school concerning these matters and report back to the Subcommittee. Bill O. stated at that time the Subcommittee will determine what action needs to be taken, if any.

„X Health and Wellness Policy (JHCG)

„X Subcommittees of the School Committee Policy(BCE-R)

„X Student Dress Code Policy (JFCA)

„X Student Code of Discipline (JG)

„X Policy Review List

„X Future Agenda Items

Next meeting will be held on August 5, 2013.

Adjournment

MOTION: At 8:06 pm Diana C. motioned to adjourn; Lynn W. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

/kd