

POLICY AND CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, August 1, 2016

Oliver Administration Building

PRESENT

Subcommittee: Erin Schofield, Chair; John Saviano (arrived at 6:19 p.m.), and Lynn Wainwright

School Committee, Administration & Guests: Diane Sanna, Assistant Superintendent; and Asher Schofield (arrived at 7:35 p.m.)

Erin S. called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Lynn W. motioned to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2016 meeting; seconded by Erin S.

The motion passed unanimously.

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY (IGBA)

Erin S. stated that Leslie Anderson, Director of Pupil Services, requested that the title of the current Programs for Handicapped Students Policy (IGBA) be revised to read Programs for Students with Disabilities Policy in order to update terminology.

Leslie Anderson also contacted Andrew Henneous, Bristol Warren Regional School District counsel, to review and update the policy.

The Subcommittee reviewed the updated policy.

Several clarifying changes were made regarding District vs. School Committee responsibility within the context of the policy.

Erin S. requested that the secretary to the School Committee forward a copy of the revised policy to Leslie A. for her review and acceptance.

(John S. arrived at 6:19 p.m.)

MOTION: Lynn W. made a motion to forward the amended Programs for Students with Disabilities Policy (IGBA) to the full School Committee for a first reading provided that Leslie A. signs off on the revisions made by the Subcommittee; seconded by John S.

The motion passed unanimously.

TRANSGENDER POLICY

Erin S. stated that she was delighted with the sensitivity and thoroughness of the Transgender Policy draft provided by the District's legal counsel.

She asked subcommittee members for their input regarding the Transgender Policy.

Lynn W. expressed concerns about how this policy will be implemented and what steps will be taken to ensure that bullying is addressed to the fullest extent. She cited a recent District Bullying Harassment Report which statistics showed a disturbing trend. Lynn W. questioned what the District will do to hinder bullying overall, especially in light of the sensitivity of the transgender situation.

Diane S. stated that bullying needs to be addressed through changing mindsets and building awareness to ensure a culture of acceptance toward LGBTQ students.

Erin S. responded that she would like to revisit the District's bullying policy.

Diane S. mentioned that online training seminars, which include sessions on bullying, are currently being offered across the District. She will contact Pauline S., Director of Administration and Finance, to provide links for those seminars to the School Committee.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding steps toward implementation of the Transgender Policy as well as means for educating stakeholders.

(Asher Schofield arrived at 7:35 p.m.)

A discussion ensued regarding concerns related to the appropriate first point of contact by a school staff member when dealing with a transitioning student, ie. student or parent.

Erin S. will contact a friend who is an LGBTQ Activist to request that she come and speak or suggest someone to speak at the next Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 6th. Once this is confirmed, Diane S. will invite building Principals, social workers , student assistant counselors and the school psychologist to attend that meeting.

Erin S. will also research schools in neighboring states that have dealt with transgender issues.

Diane S. will send the Transgender Policy to the school Principals to share with support staff in their buildings. If they are unable to attend September's Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting, Diane S. will request that they submit questions or concerns on the policy.

Asher Schofield commended the Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee for addressing the transgender issue. He reiterated that it is critically important to make transgender students feel safe and welcome. Asher S. believes that making the School Committee stakeholders in the Transgender Policy will ensure its success going forward.

AGENDA-MEETING FORMAT POLICY (BDDDB)

A brief discussion ensued regarding moving forward with the first reading of the Agenda-Meeting Format Policy (BDDDB).

MOTION: John S. made a motion to move the Agenda-Meeting Format Policy (BDDDB) to the full School Committee for a first reading; seconded by Lynn W.

The motion passed unanimously.

Erin S. stated, for the record, that the Agenda-Preparation & Dissemination Policy (BDDC) and Executive Sessions Policy (BDC) discussion would be held for the October Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: John S. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.; seconded by Lynn W.

The motion passed unanimously.

/kd