

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016 @ 6:00PM
McFee Administration Building
108 High Street, Woonsocket, RI

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. in Open Session.

For the record the following individuals were present: Dr. McGee, Superintendent; Soren Seale, School Committee Chairman; Joseph Cooper, WSC Attorney; Angie Holt, Coleman Principal; Andy Barnes, Truancy Officer; and Mark Thompson, WMS Principal.

S. Seale said for the next policy meeting, they need to add the dress code to the agenda. For the most part, the elementary children do not dress inappropriately. The dress code should require appropriate dress rather than specific colors; the dress code for the middle school and elementary schools should be the same as the high school. A meeting will be held with P. McGee, S. Seale, D. Coderre, and Mayor Baldelli-Hunt to navigate the outcome. The goal is to have the policy amended by the 2nd meeting in May in order to give the district an idea of what the dress code will look like prior to summer vacation.

Motion to approve the minutes of December 2, 2015: S. Seale 2nd: M. Thompson (all in favor)

Discussion of the School Attendance Policy:

P. McGee handed out the attendance policy which reflects the changes from the last meeting in December 2015. S. Seale asked why missed assignments are in the attendance policy. A. Barnes stated students are given the opportunity to make up missed assignments when they are absent. In addition, the policy must reflect what is written in the handbook in order to be in compliance with ACLU consent order.

Following changes were made to the Attendance Policy:

- Changes were made to reflect the current start and end time for the middle and high school.
- Minor updates and corrections were made to the some of the sub headings in the policy which are reflected in the updated draft copy.
- Excused and unexcused absences as well as class absence has been defined. The organizational format will be renumbered for clarification. The numbers will be removed and text moved over as a subtopic. Items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 will be in paragraph form.

Family Travel/Vacation:

- Removed from the Middle School Section since family travel/vacation adheres to all school levels. Therefore, this section will be moved after the definition of excused absences and before unexcused absences.
- Revised second paragraph, last sentence to read: Additionally, parents should inform their child's teacher so the child may complete appropriate work within a reasonable time period **when they return from vacation.**

Tardy:

- Sentence will read: A student will be considered tardy when he/she enters the school building after the designated arrival time or when a **secondary (middle school/high school)** student enters a class after the designated start time. Add this sentence to tardy definition: **Lateness or tardiness will only be excused for any of the reasons listed under excused absences.**

Class Absence:

- Add **(middle school/high school)** after secondary.

Attendance Review:

- Delete the word **level** and replace with the word **school**.

Non-Attendees:

- Delete **Education Department** and replace with **Public School System**.

Elementary School Section

Item 1. Modified last sentence to read: Written documentation is required detailing the reason(s) for any absence, in advance when possible but no later than 48 hours after returning to school.

Item 3. Modified sentence to read: Following twelve (12) and eighteen (18) cumulative unexcused absences or tardies, the principal will contact the Attendance Officer.

Early Dismissals: Last sentence to read: Students should bring written notification to their teacher at the beginning of the school day.

Middle School Section

Items 1, 2, 3, and 4 are the same as the elementary school section. Therefore, any changes made in those items of the elementary school section will be made to the middle school section.

Family Travel/Vacation: This section adheres to all school levels. Therefore, this section will be moved after the definition of excused absences and before unexcused absences.

Missed Assignments: Adopt the HS definition which reads **Students to arrange for make-up work in a timely manner.**

Appeal Process: Modified first sentence to read: Students (or parent/guardian) who feel aggrieved because of action taken as a result of any section of this policy may appeal said action to the Superintendent of Schools and the Woonsocket School Committee.

High School Section

Sections 1 through 14: Committee reviewed some of this section but decided to wait until a high school representative is present.

Committee agreed to move all of the non-school specific sections to the beginning of the policy after the “Interventions” section. Therefore, the following sections were moved to the front sections of the policy: Incentives, Opportunities for support and intervention, responsibilities of stakeholders, student responsibilities, parent/guardian responsibilities, teacher responsibilities, and principal responsibilities

Responsibilities of Stakeholders:

Removed bullets 1, 2, and 3 from this section and add the three bullets under the “Parent/Guardian Responsibilities.” Responsibilities of Stakeholders will now have one bullet which will read: The responsibility for attendance and academic success is shared by students, parents, schools, and the district.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

Move bullet #4 and make it #1. Modified this item to read: To require that their child attend school regularly and comply with the Rhode Island Compulsory Attendance laws.

Teacher Responsibilities:

Bullet #2 – add the word “policy” after attendance.

Bullet #3 – put a period after team and make a new bullet to read “to work collaboratively with principal, parent/guardian, attendance team, and students to solve attendance problem.

Principal Responsibilities:

Delete bullet #1 and move bullet #4 as the new #1. Bullet #6 – modified sentence to read: To maintain accurate records on student attendance. Committee stopped at bullet #7 until a representative from the high school is present.

District Responsibilities:

Delete bullet #1 and bullet #6.

Home Tutoring Policy and Child Abuse/Neglect Policy: Committee will take home said policies to review. These two policies will be put on the next Policy Subcommittee agenda. P. McGee noted that the Child Abuse/Neglect Policy comes from RIDE and the Home Tutoring Policy was created by WED.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Blais, Recording Secretary