

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education Policy Committee met in Regular Session on Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 4:00 PM in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Committee members present: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback

Committee members absent: Mr. Stone

Board members present: Mrs. Petrella

Administration present: Dr. Schuch, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Moore called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Mennone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roraback, to approve the agenda, as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes - August 30, 2022

Mrs. Dahlheimer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to approve the minutes of August 30, 2022, as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes of August 30, 2022, as presented: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Mennone and Mr. Moore, with Mr. Roraback abstaining. Motion passed.

Policy Update Process Discussion

Dr. Schuch explained that he added this to the agenda because the leadership team started discussing how active the State General Assembly has been in the past few years and whether district policies need to be updated as things happen. There are two services that provide model policies, both through Shipman and Goodwin and CABE. Dr. Schuch noted that there appears to be a lot of policy language dictated through state statute and felt that, once that happens, it really doesn't matter what the local policy says.

Dr. Schuch reviewed that the leadership team already receives updates from the state and he felt that the district's policy manual is somewhat of simply a compilation of the state policies. They could, in fact, put a link on the website to the state policies. He gave an example of the Meal Charging policy that the committee is going to discuss tonight and noted that the district does not have a choice as it is the law in Connecticut.

Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that linking to the state policies would be fine, but the entire policy and procedures manual will need to be completely redone anyway with the new Strategic Plan. Dr. Schuch felt that was a good point, but what he doesn't feel that what he is talking about falls into that category. Mrs.

Dahlheimer worried that if state mandates come in and the full board doesn't review them, they won't be familiar with their own policies. Mr. Moore felt that having all of the policies there is for other folks to be able to read them, not just the board. He added that some of them need to be amended periodically.

Mrs. Dahlheimer talked to CAFE yesterday and was told that we need to request changes from them, but Shipman is sending them. Dr. Schuch explained that Mrs. Maloney receives them. Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that CAFE's recommendations seem to be off from Shipman's policies. Dr. Schuch added that they would like to stick with one or the other and not pay for both.

Mr. Moore stated that there could be an issue if they adopt a policy that Shipman doesn't agree with as they are the district's attorneys. Mrs. Dahlheimer had an issue that she's been on the board since December and has never met one of the attorneys, except once. Dr. Schuch felt that board interaction with its attorney is usually pretty limited. Mrs. Dahlheimer noted the big switch in the board and felt that they should sit down with them.

Dr. Schuch explained that, in his prior districts, they had one person dedicated to policies and if they were to continue to do this, he will have to restructure someone's current assignment to stay on top of these. He felt that somebody on staff should be reading all of the updates to summarize them for the Policy Committee and the board. Mr. Moore explained that the Policy Committee went through all of the policies in 2019, but really haven't looked at them since then. He thought that Shipman and Goodwin would send somebody to talk about the policies. Mrs. Petrella thought that they usually receive an explanation from Shipman with any changes that were made.

Mr. Mennone asked how it works with Shipman and if they routinely go through all of the district's policies. Dr. Schuch felt that Shipman usually emails links to their website for new policy, they are then brought to this committee and then to the full board. Mr. Moore stated that Shipman doesn't create policies; they take what the General Assembly does and puts it in a policy. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked how many policies Shipman has that the committee hasn't seen and Dr. Schuch didn't know the number, but this discussion was triggered by a large slide deck that he had received.

Mrs. Dahlheimer was irritated that things are sitting and not being reviewed and stated that she would rather do it now than during budget season. Dr. Schuch noted that they are not out of compliance, but the information is not in the Policy Manual. Mrs. Petrella also noted that the Policy Committee hasn't been meeting regularly but they could do that until they get caught up.

Review of new policy

A. Meal Charging Policy

Mr. Moore explained that this is a new policy and it will need to be read twice at board meetings. Mrs. Dahlheimer commented that the Equity policy is in an odd space in the manual and should probably be moved to the section with the non-discrimination policies.

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to bring the Meal Charging Policy to the full board.

Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if the district was already doing this and Dr. Schuch explained that they have been since the effective date of the legislation.

In favor of bringing the Meal Charging Policy to the full board: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of revised policies:

A. Non-Discrimination (Community)

Mr. Moore went through the policy and the major changes are in the third paragraph related to military discharges as well as gender orientation and sexual orientation. Dr. Schuch thought they added something about hairstyles as well. It was agreed that the committee should receive red-lined versions or at least underlined. Mrs. Maloney had put all of the revised policies as well as three years of red-lined versions on the shared drive. There are areas of the policies where names, etc. will need to be filled in before bringing them to the full board.

B. Non-Discrimination (Personnel)

Mr. Moore reviewed that the definition of veteran was added in the fourth paragraph and wording that is the same as in the community non-discrimination policy. They also added words about gender identity and sexual orientation. They also added contact information to the policy.

C. Non-Discrimination (Students)

Mr. Moore reviewed that the same changes were made to this policy.

D. Sex Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (Personnel)

Mr. Moore noted that they added a paragraph about sexual harassment under Title VII of Connecticut law. The committee agreed that they would like to continue to see red-lined versions as well as final versions.

E. Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students)

Mr. Moore explained that they added Title IX to a paragraph and the definition of sexual harassment under Connecticut law. It was agreed to show the red-lined versions to the board. There was discussion about whether policies need to be read into the record or not.

Mr. Mennone made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Dahlheimer, to bring the Non-Discrimination (Community), (Personnel) and (Students), Sex Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (Personnel) and Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students) policies to the full board.

In favor of bringing the Non-Discrimination (Community), (Personnel) and (Students), Sex Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (Personnel) and Sex Discrimination and Sexual

Harassment (Students) policies to the full board: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Mrs. Dahlheimer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to adjourn the meeting.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz
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