

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education Policy Committee met in Regular Session on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 4:00 PM in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Committee members present: Mrs. Dahlheimer (arrived late), Dr. Darcy (by phone), Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback

Committee members absent: Mr. Mennone

Board members present: Mrs. Petrella

Administration present: Dr. Schuch, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Brough, Human Resources Specialist

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

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

In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Dr. Darcy, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback.

Approval of Minutes - May 17, 2023

Mr. Roraback made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Petrella, to approve the minutes of May 17, 2023, as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes of May 17, 2023, as presented: Dr. Darcy, Mr. Moore and Mr. Roraback. Motion passed.

Review of 4000 Series Policies

Dr. Schuch explained that they have about half of the 4000 series policies for review tonight and hope to complete the series at the August meeting.

A new Shipman policy has been added regarding reporting of abusive treatment of disabled people and Mr. Brough explained that DCF will not take a case on if the individual is over 18 years old. If there is a case with someone over 18 years old, it will go to DDS instead. This policy allows for an individual to have the same rights as mandated reporters for the district to file a report of abuse. This policy could also come into play at MTA. Mr. Moore explained that this policy would apply to anybody up to age 60 and is very broad. Dr. Schuch suggested they look into this before it goes to the full board.

The policy on alcohol, tobacco and drug-free workplace has been recommended to be combined with the Shipman policy which is more comprehensive. A new policy has been recommended for evaluation and termination and non-renewal of athletic coaches which seems to put the onus on the superintendent. Mrs. Petrella asked what happens if the coach is employed for less than three years and Mr. Brough explained that the standard for termination is much lower and they would not have the right to a hearing.

Staff has recommended that the policy on certified staff development be deleted as the teacher contracts cover most of these issues. Reports of abuse, neglect or sexual assault of students by school employees has been recommended to be replaced with the updated Shipman policy. Mr. Brough added that the Shipman policy was created in 2022 and is more comprehensive. There is training for concussion protocol and heat illness awareness. Parents also have to be aware of the signs as well. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if athletic trainers have to be on campus or on the field and Mr. Brough believed they needed to be on campus.

Dr. Darcy left the meeting at this point.

Mr. Moore explained that the policy, emergency accident plan for interscholastic and intramural athletic events, has been recommended by Shipman. The action plan will need to be on the district website if this policy is accepted.

No changes have been recommended to the policy regarding transfer reassignment for non-certified. It has been recommended to switch to the Shipman policy about employee use of the district's computer system. Mr. Brough explained that he had Mr. Pietrasko review the policy and he was comfortable with it.

It was suggested to add the word "background" before "checks" to the title of the employee and student teaching checks policy and add the optional language. It was recommended to delete policy 4112. It was also recommended to add the policy on internal heat illness awareness for intramural and interscholastic athletes. Dr. Schuch felt that the concern may be that the coach or parents would push a kid to go back out when it wouldn't be appropriate. The family and medical leave policy has been updated and is consistent with the contracts. Mr. Moore noted that a married couple would get a total of 12 weeks FMLA if they had a child whereas a couple that was not married would get a total of 24 weeks.

Dr. Darcy had submitted a comment about the policy on hiring certified staff and agreed that the superintendent should do the hiring, but also thought that the board should approve the position of administrators. Dr. Schuch noted that some districts have the superintendent recommend and the board approve any administrator hire. He felt that the only possible reason for the board not to approve a hire would be a timing issue. Dr. Schuch cautioned that it may get wonky if they continue the practice of having a board member on the interview panel and then have the board approve the hire as well. Mr. Moore noted that Dr. Darcy did not believe the board should be involved in the interviewing and selection process of administrators, but felt more that the creation of such positions and hiring should be approved by the board.

Mrs. Dahlheimer stated that she loved being involved in the interviewing process, but that it wasn't good for the board as a whole. She would rather go with the full board approving the positions. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that having both may help the board make a decision. It was agreed to work on the language of this policy.

Mrs. Petrella asked if the website is covered under the social media policy and Mr. Moore explained that that will be separate. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if they can look at by-laws from other districts about social media use by board members. Mr. Moore agreed, but thought they may want to get legal advice first.

The wellness policy will be covered under policy 5135 and has been deleted. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if the policy would prevent food from being brought back into schools and Mr. Moore stated that they weren't there yet.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

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