

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education Policy Committee met in Regular Session on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at 4:00 PM in the library at Cuginchaug Regional High School.

Committee members present: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy (remote), Mr. Moore, and Mr. Roraback

Committee members absent: Mr. Mennone

Board members present: Mrs. Petrella and Mrs. Hurlbert

Administration present: Dr. Schuch, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Keane, Director of Student Services and Special Education, and Mrs. Stone, Principal of Cuginchaug Regional High School

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. Roraback made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Dahlheimer, Darcy, to approve the agenda, as presented.

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

Approval of Minutes - May 15, 2024

Mrs. Petrella made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to approve the minutes of May 15, 2024, as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes of May 15, 2024, as presented: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy and Mr. Moore, with Mr. Roraback abstaining. Motion passed.

Review of 5000 Series Policies (Students)

Dr. Schuch explained that Mrs. Stone was present today because the CIAC has changed their out-of-season practice rules very significantly and the high school is working to develop local guidelines on a very short timeline. Mrs. Stone added that they are not starting until June 17th and Mr. Petronio is working to stay on the same path as other Shoreline schools. She offered to share the guidelines with the Policy Committee once they are done. One change is that teams can work together as a full team during the summer when they weren't allowed to do so. Mrs. Stone explained that the CIAC changed the guidelines to level the playing field. They will include very specific criteria on temperature and humidity.

Mr. Moore began with the policy on attendance and truancy and noted that staff has recommended to not adopt the Shipman version and keep Policy 5113 instead. Dr. Schuch added that 5113 is the Shipman one that was updated in 2019. Mr. Moore also stated it has been recommended to keep policy 5131.6 and

adopt the Shipman policy as well. The policy on concussions was replaced and moved into the 4000 series.

Dr. Darcy had submitted a note wondering why the district would not go with the Shipman policy on student dress. She felt that the Shipman policy felt less discriminatory and added that explicitly naming the Confederate Flag and Nazi symbols was important. She felt that the district's policy is very subjective and allows for bias. Dr. Schuch added that the leadership team's concern about the Shipman policy was that it was pretty restrictive and included restrictions related to overcoats and backpacks. They felt that the current policy is in line with current practice and tries not to be too specific. Mrs. Stone explained that they went to more of a "present yourself in a professional way" two years ago, including not wearing things with the Confederate Flag, drugs or alcohol, but also for everyone to cover up. Instead of what you can't do, it's more about what you can do. She gave an example of if a teacher asks a student to remove their hat in a classroom, the student needs to remove their hat. They generally agree to pick their battles. Mrs. Keane felt the Shipman policy was very prescriptive and geared toward things like gang attire.

Mrs. Petrella preferred a stricter dress code because the way you're dressed sets the tone in your mind. She asked what happens if someone has the Confederate Flag and Mrs. Stone stated that it would be addressed by the administration. It was agreed that the policy needs to be updated, but not necessarily the Shipman policy. Mr. Moore suggested they hold off on this policy for now.

Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if Dr. Darcy had any model policies and Dr. Darcy stated that she didn't feel there were any good policies out there. She worked with a school that eliminated their dress code policy and it was rough for a while, but there have been no problems in three years. Mrs. Dahlheimer suggested they ask the CABE chairs.

Moving on to 5131.4, drugs and alcohol, staff recommended keeping the current policy. Dr. Schuch explained that the current policy is the Shipman policy adopted in 2020. Education Stability and Procedures is a new policy from Shipman and Dr. Schuch explained that he felt it was a policy/regulation to put the district in compliance with legal responsibilities regarding transportation with children under DCF. It was recommended to keep the current policy 5140, Food Allergies. Dr. Schuch noted that it was a Shipman policy that was adopted in February 2020.

The policy on Fundraising was adopted in January. No action was recommended on policy 5118.1, Homeless Children. It was recommended to replace policy 5141.1, Immunizations, with the Shipman policy which is based on state requirements. Policy 5542, Meal Charging, was amended in December 2022 and has been recommended to remain as is. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that they will be choosing eight regional districts for free lunch next year.

Moving to policy 5146, Non-Discrimination, it has been recommended to keep the current policy. It was recommended to replace policy 5115, Physical Activity and Student Discipline, with the Shipman Recess and Play policy. Dr. Schuch explained that this is based on legislative action and is more comprehensive. Play-based learning is now a requirement in kindergarten and should also be supported in the older elementary grades. Mrs. Keane added that the district has not taken away recess time in the past, but this adds in the play-based learning component.

The recommendation for policy 5114, Student Discipline, is to use the Shipman policy. Dr. Schuch explained that the district doesn't do a lot of expulsions, but it is helpful to be able to turn to this policy

when necessary. Mrs. Dahlheimer didn't see anything for protected classes under discipline as victims. She asked that that be looked at before the second read. Dr. Schuch read from the policy about protective class harassment on page 5.

Moving to Non-Resident Students 5118, Dr. Schuch reviewed that he felt that this is a very difficult policy to consistently enforce and was concerned about the restrictions. CABA has two model policies on this and Dr. Schuch liked version 2 because it more closely resembles current policy and gives a better definition of a non-resident student. The current policy gives the superintendent discretion as far as tuition and Dr. Schuch did not find that very helpful. The Shipman policy provides a waiver for tuition which makes sense for allowing a child to finish a marking period. The intent would be to do something that doesn't disrupt the educational process. The policy gives blanket coverage to any senior to be able to finish their year. Mr. Moore stated that individual cases have been brought to the board in the past. Mrs. Dahlheimer agreed that the board should look at waiving any tuition as it is a financial decision. It was agreed to revisit this policy.

Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if the committee would meet in late June or July to get through the remaining policies. Dr. Schuch added that there is a set of 5000 series policies that need extensive work and he recommended waiting. He felt they could be done in the early fall.

Mrs. Dahlheimer noted that she has received some good guidance on fundraising and crowdsourcing.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

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