



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 14, 2024
4:45 PM
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room

In Attendance:

Ms. Jennifer Jacobsen, Ms. Jennifer Maxon Kennelly, Ms. Carol Guernsey, Dr. Zakia Parrish, Ms. Kanicka Ingram, Ms. Jennifer Racioppo (FEA Representative), Ms. Katie Flynn (Board Member, left at 5:54pm), Ms. Jodie Shannon (FEA Representative), Dr. James Zavodjancik, Mr. Mick McGarry (FEA President), Superintendent Michael Testani, Ms. Kristen Hardiman

Call to Order: Ms. Maxon Kennelly called the meeting to order at 4:45pm.

Approval of April 30, 2024 Policy Committee meeting minutes: Approved by a 2-0-1 vote.

Policy:

6164.12 – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

Dr. Parrish stated this policy was recommended in the policy audit to be reviewed. The committee did not have any updated language for this policy. This policy was approved to readopt by a 3-0 vote and will be presented to the Board on June 11th for a “one and done” vote.

6115 - Ceremonies – United States Flag

Dr. Parrish explained the policy audit recommended we add the red-lined language to the policy. Dr. Parrish also explained the title of this policy was edited to include the words “Pledge of Allegiance”.

This policy was approved by a 3-0 vote and will be presented to the Board for “first read” on June 11th.

6161.7 – Equivalence of Resources Among the Schools

Dr. Parris stated this policy was missing Title I references and legal language. Ms. Jacobsen questioned the use of the word “comparable” in the last sentence of this policy because the District is doing more than comparable.

This policy was approved by a 3-0 vote and will be presented to the Board for “first read” on June 11th.

5123 – Promotion-Retention

Dr. Parrish stated the red-lined language came from CABE. Ms. Maxon Kennelly questioned the sentence about the District determining when promotion requirements are met. Ms. Jacobsen also questioned the promotion requirements. Ms. Jacobsen asked what the requirements are and where they are posted. Ms. Jacobsen also asked what “successful completion” means. Dr. Zavodjancik explained “successful completion” means the student has met all the standards.

Ms. Jacobsen stated she does not like the language about graduation in this policy since we have a separate graduation policy. Ms. Jacobsen stated she does not like to have conflicting language in different policies.

Ms. Jacobsen also questioned the addition of the last sentence in the policy. Dr. Zavodjancik stated that language came from CABE and the previous policy did not have that language so they thought it should be added.

Ms. Maxon Kennelly and Ms. Guernsey voted in favor of this policy. Ms. Jacobsen was opposed.

This policy will be presented to the Board for a “first read” for June 11th.

6151 – Class Size discussion

Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she is curious as to how the expansion and collapsing of classes works in other districts. Ms. Jacobsen stated she believes Westport uses three weeks prior to the start of school as their date for expanding and collapsing classes.

Ms. Jacobsen asked the committee if they are willing to delay discussion on this policy until the next meeting to allow Board members who submitted their recommended changes to attend the meeting. Ms. Jacobsen stated she will need to put this policy back on the Board agenda for a recommendation that it go back to the Policy Committee.

Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she is opposed to Mr. Krasnoff’s proposed language change of twenty-one students since we do not have the school space to accommodate his recommendation. Ms. Guernsey stated she does not want to reject Mr. Krasnoff’s recommendation without having an explanation from him.

Ms. Flynn stated she provided revised language to this policy to be pro-active instead of re-active. Ms. Flynn stated she does not see any benefit to collapsing a section after the first day of school. Dr. Parrish questioned the last bullet point on Page 14. Ms. Flynn explained that when the class is nearing cap size two weeks before the first day of school, she is recommending the class be split. Dr. Parrish explained that we had classes this school year that were at cap and stayed at cap all year. Ms. Guernsey stated she is concerned there will not be enough qualified teachers if we open more sections. Ms. Flynn explained that is why she wants to hire the educator ahead of time, anticipating that we will be over cap size. Ms. Flynn stated she doesn’t see the harm in lower class sizes; however, she does know the harm that collapsing of classes possesses. Superintendent Testani asked if a school does not have a classroom available, do we bump something out of a space for that additional class? Ms. Flynn responded “yes”. Ms. Flynn explained we could develop a list of what specials would lose their space if a classroom was needed.

Superintendent Testani stated he is not in favor of collapsing classes after the first day of school. Superintendent Testani also stated he does not recommend splitting a class until the new teacher is brought on board. Ms. Maxon Kennelly is not in favor of splitting the class when the class size reaches cap.

Ms. Guernsey stated she is not in favor of making a policy which names specific schools. Ms. Jacobsen explained that we have two schools which are transient schools, and their class sizes are very different than our other schools. Ms. Guernsey questioned what if the District moved a chunk of students out of one of those transient schools and into another school, that might affect the class size at the other school.

Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she is not in favor of Ms. Flynn's two blue bullet points on Pages 14 and 15. Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she understands the idea of being pro-active; however, she is not in favor of the proposed changes. Ms. Jacobsen stated she is in favor of the first blue bullet point on Page 14. Ms. Guernsey stated she is also in favor of the first blue bullet point on Page 14.

Ms. Maxon Kennelly asked the committee if they are in favor of Mr. Li's amendment. The committee did not agree with Mr. Li's recommended language edit.

Regarding Ms. Rinaldi's feedback on Page 17, Ms. Maxon Kennelly explained we have no algorithm to calculate Ms. Rinaldi's request in #2. Ms. Jacobsen questioned Ms. Rinaldi's feedback since it does not include Grades 3-5.

This policy will go back to the Board for a "recommendation to postpone" this policy for further discussion. The amendments will be included for the Board to review.

6146.1 – Grading

Ms. Guernsey asked Ms. Maxon Kennelly about item #7 on Page 19. Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she is comfortable with language in that bullet point. Dr. Zavodjancik explained we currently do this every year.

Ms. Maxon Kennelly questioned the red language in the last sentence on Page 19. Superintendent Testani stated this happened this year with mid-term grades. Superintendent Testani explained Dr. Hatzis brought this topic up because students do not take mid-term exams seriously since their grades have already been submitted to colleges. Ms. Maxon Kennelly would like to keep that sentence in red language for now.

Ms. Guernsey stated the weighted and unweighted GPA is being recorded on transcripts. Dr. Zavodjancik acknowledged that is accurate. Ms. Jacobsen stated she will research other districts to see what their language looks like regarding weighted and unweighted grade reporting.

On Page #23, item #6. Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she added this language as promised to staff and would like feedback on it. Ms. Jacobsen stated she has never been hung up on the reassessments; however, she does agree with test corrections. Ms. Jacobsen stated she would like to keep this language in red for now and would like to make additional edits.

APPROVED 6/4/2024

Open Discussion/Public Comment:

Ms. Jodie Shannon – FEA Representative

Ms. Shannon spoke about the Promotion and Retention policy. Ms. Shannon stated she feels as though middle school is getting lost in the shuffle. Ms. Shannon questioned whether the promotion is grade specific or course specific? Ms. Shannon explained at the high school level, they are having trouble addressing those students coming from middle school.

Ms. Shannon's other concern was regarding the weighting system and electives.

Mr. Mick McGarry – FEA President

Mr. McGarry spoke about item #6 on Page 23 regarding the Grading policy. Mr. McGarry stated they are in support of anything that causes collaboration.

Mr. McGarry also spoke about the Class Size policy. Mr. McGarry stated the Health teachers have expressed concern about the Class Size policy.

Adjournment: Ms. Maxon Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 6:56pm.