



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 5, 2024
5:00 PM
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room

In Attendance:

Ms. Maxon Kennelly, Ms. Jennifer Jacobsen, Ms. Carol Guernsey, Dr. Zakia Parrish, Dr. James Zavodjancik, Mr. Robert Mancusi (left at 5:44pm), Ms. Kanicka Ingram (left at 6:53pm), Mr. Mick McGarry (FEA President), Ms. Jodie Shannon (FEA Representative), Dr. Jeannette Faber (FEA Representative), Ms. Jennifer Racioppo (FEA Representative), Ms. Kristen Hardiman

Call to Order: Ms. Maxon Kennelly called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

Approval of February 5, 2024 Policy Committee meeting minutes: Approved with changes by 3-0 vote.

Policy:

1110.1 – Parent/Family Involvement

Dr. Parrish stated CABE recommended deleting this policy since language in this policy is also covered in policy 6172.4 Title I Parent Involvement. Ms. Jacobsen stated this policy resides in the Community Relations section while policy 6172.4 resides in the Instruction section. Therefore, she would not like to delete this policy. Ms. Guernsey agreed with Ms. Jacobsen that she would like to keep this policy. Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she was fine either way; however, since Ms. Guernsey and Ms. Jacobsen would like to keep the policy, then she agrees the policy will not be deleted. Dr. Parrish explained if the policy remains, then it will need to be reviewed later since it is a 2004 policy.

5144.2 – Use of Exclusionary Time Out Settings

Mr. Mancusi explained the audit revealed this policy was missing so he started with a template of the mandated CABE policy.

Ms. Maxon Kennelly asked Mr. Mancusi who is allowed to do physical restraint and how they are trained. Mr. Mancusi explained we have staff members who are trained in PMT and they train our staff in-district on a yearly basis. Mr. Mancusi stated the Special Education Department keeps track of the training to make sure staff are current on their training. Ms. Maxon Kennelly asked if the topic of training should be in this policy. Mr. Mancusi explained training is a legal requirement, so he does not believe it needs to be in policy.

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Ms. Maxon Kennelly asked about the italicized language on Page 11. Mr. Mancusi stated that language is important so it should remain in the policy. Ms. Maxon Kennelly recommended making that sentence item #5 and removing the italics.

Ms. Jacobsen stated the “minor misbehavior” language on Page 11 is subjective. Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she did not have a problem with that language because of items #1-4. Mr. Mancusi stated he will recommend alternate language to be used in that section.

Ms. Jacobsen pointed out there are different definitions throughout the policy. For example, on Page 10, third paragraph under section “III, A”, the definition of “seclusion” is different than the definition of “seclusion” on Page 9 under section “I”.

Ms. Jacobsen questioned the language on Page 10, item #2 under section “III, B”. Ms. Jacobsen would like clarification on what “behavior that is severely disruptive” means. Mr. Mancusi explained it would be very difficult to define behavior because it is subjective. Mr. Mancusi recommended adding the word “unsafe” to this line item.

Ms. Jacobsen questioned the language in the last paragraph on Page 13, Section “F”. Ms. Jacobsen stated this language is too far into this policy and recommends it be placed earlier in the policy. Mr. Mancusi stated he will look at language in other model policies.

After further discussion, Mr. Mancusi stated he will provide a new draft of this policy to present to the committee at the next meeting.

6159 – IEP/Special Education Program

6171 – Special Education

6172 – Program Adaptations/Alternative Education

Mr. Mancusi provided a memo to the committee which explains policies 6159, 6171 and 6172 are not legally required since we are mandated to follow state and federal laws on these topics. Dr. Parrish explained these policies were flagged in the CABE audit as missing; however, CABE recommended we follow the advice of legal counsel.

After discussion, the committee agreed these policies will not be adopted since the District is mandated to follow state and federal laws.

4115-4125 – Appointment & Conditions of Employment – Evaluation

Dr. Zavodjancik explained edits to this policy are the result of a change in legislation and the model plan. Dr. Zavodjancik stated the changes he has proposed align with the model plan. Dr. Zavodjancik also explained CABE’s policy was far longer because it contained duplicate information, so he paired it down to eliminate the redundant language.

Ms. Jacobsen asked Dr. Zavodjancik if the committee should approve the plan before approving the policy. Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she recommends approving the policy first before the committee sees the plan. Dr. Zavodjancik explained the policy shows how the plan will be set up. So, he thinks changes to the policy should be approved before the plan is approved. Ms. Guernsey stated she is not comfortable working on the policy without seeing the plan. Dr. Zavodjancik stated the plan is being

built now but is not ready yet. Ms. Guernsey asked when is the earliest they can share the plan with the policy committee. Dr. Zavodjancik stated it will be shared with the Board in May.

Ms. Jacobsen stated there are inconsistencies throughout the policy regarding the language “growth and success”. Ms. Jacobsen questioned the definition of “educator” on Page 18. She recommended removing the word “and” in Section II, under the definition of educator, and replacing it with “student/educator support specialists”. Ms. Jacobsen also questioned the language on Page 20, section “D”, “focus on things that matter”. Ms. Jacobsen suggested adding the language “to the role” to the end of that sentence.

Dr. Zavodjancik explained some of the language in this policy reads like regulation language; however, he wanted to present it as policy. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he did not want to make that determination on what belongs in regulations versus policy. Ms. Maxon Kennelly agreed that most of this is regulation language, and it does not need to be so prescriptive in policy. Ms. Guernsey agreed with Ms. Maxon Kennelly. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he will present both policy and regulations to the committee at the next meeting.

6151 – Class Size

Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she is very uncomfortable with the language in this policy. Ms. Ingram stated she suggested modifying this policy so that it aligns with the budget book. Ms. Jacobsen stated the issue to decide is the timing to collapse or split classes.

Ms. Guernsey and Ms. Maxon Kennelly will present a revised policy to the committee at the next meeting.

6140 – Curriculum

Ms. Maxon Kennelly stated she developed the edits to this policy. After discussion, the committee agreed to revise the language in paragraph four on Page 35. The regulation number and date in the last paragraph on Page 35 was corrected.

A revised policy will be presented to the committee at the next meeting.

6146.1- Grading Policy

There was no discussion on this topic due to time restraints.

Open Discussion/Public Comment:

Mr. Mick McGarry – FEA President

Mr. McGarry spoke about the concern among staff on the use of Artificial Intelligence. Mr. McGarry also spoke about the possible change in the Non-Resident Tuition fee. Ms. Maxon Kennelly encouraged Mr. McGarry to participate in the Finance Committee meetings since that is the committee which approves the fee for Non-Resident Tuition.

Ms. Jennifer Racioppo – FEA Representative

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Ms. Racioppo spoke about staff wanting to conduct a student survey in Grades 9-12 and then hold small focus groups with students and a team of FEA representatives about reassessments.

Dr. Jeannette Faber – FEA Representative

Dr. Faber spoke about the morale survey conducted with teachers in the district.

Adjournment: Ms. Maxon Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 7:40pm.