



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 2, 2023
5:00 PM
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room

In attendance:

Ms. Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Ms. Jennifer Jacobsen, Ms. Carol Guernsey, Ms. Courtney LeBorious (left at 6:47pm), Mr. Robert Mancusi (arrived at 5:10pm, left at 5:20pm), Dr. Zakia Parrish (arrived at 6:14pm), Dr. James Zavodjancik (arrived at 6:22pm), Ms. Kristen Hardiman, Ms. Wendy Macchia

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

Approval of April 20, 2023 Special Policy Committee meeting minutes – Approved by a 3 – 0 vote.

Policy:

3000 – Goals and Objectives for Non-Educational Business Operations

The committee discussed and agreed to edit language in this policy by a 3 – 0 vote. This policy will be presented to the Board for a “first read” at the meeting scheduled for May 23rd.

6163.33 – Service Animals/Therapy Dogs

Mr. Mancusi stated this policy is not necessary since the District must comply with the American Disabilities Act. Mr. Mancusi also stated our attorneys do not recommend instituting a policy for Therapy Dogs. Mr. Mancusi recommended we do not develop either a Service Animals or Therapy Dogs policy. Mr. Mancusi recommended that we inform the District Leadership Team (DLT) that therapy dogs are not allowed in the schools.

Ms. Guernsey stated she felt as though this policy would invite animals into the schools. Ms. Guernsey agreed with Mr. Mancusi to not implement this policy.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly explained the request for this policy came from Mr. Michael Cummings when he was Superintendent last year.

After further discussion by the committee, they agreed not to have this policy implemented. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly will inform Superintendent Testani that Mr. Cummings had inquired about adding this policy; however, the committee has agreed not to move forward with it at this time.

Grading Policy

Ms. Guernsey asked Dr. Zavodjancik for feedback from the schools regarding the grading regulations. Dr. Zavodjancik stated the feedback he has received from the schools pertained to three areas: response time to record grades into Infinite campus, minimum number of assessments and, communication to families. Dr. Zavodjancik further stated that reassessments are “on hold” at the moment. Ms. Guernsey asked Dr. Zavodjancik if the feedback he received was just from staff and not students. Dr. Zavodjancik confirmed the feedback received was only from staff.

Dr. Zavodjancik explained sometimes there are reasons as to why teachers do not enter grades into Infinite Campus within a certain time period. For example, a teacher may have given a student a grace period which has delayed the teacher entering in the student’s grade into Infinite Campus. Ms. Jacobsen stated the reason these regulations were implemented was due to student feedback in which students were being asked to do further work, yet they had not received their grades from previous work.

Ms. Jacobsen stated test corrections are a common practice in the district. Dr. Zavodjancik stated the subject of test corrections did get bundled with the subject of reassessments.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly requested the next policy meeting focus solely on the grading regulations. For the next meeting, Ms. Maxon-Kennelly requested suggestions on GPA. Ms. Jacobsen requested a list of non-negotiable topics from staff to discuss at the next meeting. Dr. Zavodjancik agreed to bring this topic back for discussion at the May 22nd policy meeting.

1230 - Booster Clubs

Ms. LeBorious stated she provided background information for the committee to review and also drafted a policy based on their recommendations. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Ms. LeBorious if the Athletic Directors have reviewed this draft. Ms. LeBorious acknowledged that the Athletic Directors have seen the draft; however, they have not provided their feedback yet. Ms. Jacobsen asked Ms. LeBorious if the Head Principals have reviewed this draft. Ms. LeBorious confirmed the Head Principals have seen the draft and have provided some feedback.

Ms. LeBorious stated, from a fiscal standpoint, she recommends having a policy for certain items and then using the Student Activity account for the remaining items. Ms. LeBorious explained Booster Clubs would have a Treasurer, by-laws and be required to follow fiscal practices.

The committee recommended changing the name of the policy to “501C3 School-Connected Organizations, Parent Organizations and Booster Clubs”. The committee recommended moving items #5 through #9 into the regulations.

Ms. Jacobsen recommended striking the third paragraph from the bottom on page #29. Ms. Guernsey agreed with Ms. Jacobsen to strike that paragraph. Ms. Jacobsen requested the addition of a timeline for an approval process for this policy.

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Ms. Guernsey requested the number of Booster Clubs currently in place in the District. Ms. Guernsey also requested feedback from the Athletic Directors on the draft of this policy.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly requested a revised draft of this policy for the meeting scheduled for May 30th.

3543 – School Activity Funds

Ms. LeBorious stated this draft language was taken directly from Shipman and Goodwin. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Ms. LeBorious about item #2 relating to costs of the driver education program and whether or not that applies to our District. Ms. LeBorious stated she will follow up on that item for clarification.

Ms. Jacobsen questioned the last sentence in the 2nd paragraph on page 33. Ms. LeBorious stated she will get clarification of this sentence from Shipman and Goodwin.

Ms. LeBorious explained there are specific rules for school activity funds and accounting practices that need to be followed. Ms. LeBorious further explained school bookkeepers are responsible for the accounting of these funds. Ms. LeBorious also explained the principals have oversight of the account and she monitors the account as well.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly requested a revised draft for the policy committee meeting scheduled for May 30th.

3280 - Gifts, Grants & Bequests – This policy was included in the packet for reference only.

1324 - School Based Fundraising – This policy was included in the packet for reference only.

Open Discussion/Public Comment

The committee agreed to move the next Policy Committee meeting from May 23rd to May 22nd.

Mr. Mick McGarry – President Elect-FEA

Mr. McGarry spoke in regard to grading regulations. Mr. McGarry explained pacing is going to be different from class to class. He stated there may be times when a teacher might need more summative assessments than what is required. Mr. McGarry requested the committee go slow in developing these regulations in order to get them right.

Mr. Robert Smoler – President-FEA

Mr. Smoler spoke regarding the formation of the Booster Club policy and grading regulations.

Mr. Smoler stated several years ago Booster Clubs were banned in Fairfield.

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Mr. Smoler stated staff has discussed cumulative grading and zero grading. Mr. Smoler explained there were some philosophical differences on these topics between staff. Mr. Smoler stated he does not think there will ever be uniformity amongst staff with cumulative grading. Mr. Smoler also stated staff is supportive of what the policy committee is doing; however, staff will need compelling reasons as to why changes are being made.

Adjournment – Ms. Maxon-Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.