

BOE Policy Committee Minutes
Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Municipal Building, BOE Conference Room
3 Primrose St, Newtown, CT 06470

CALL TO ORDER Meeting was called to order at 9:01 am

IN ATTENDANCE Dan Cruson, Deborra Zukowski, Janet Kuzma, Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Suzanne D’Eramo, Sarah Connell, 1 public

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION None

APPROVE MINUTES Dan Cruson made a motion to approve the minutes of February 23, 2022. Janet Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action:

Item	Reports
<p>Policy 4118.211– Retaliation / Whistleblowing D. Cruson introduced this policy back into the agenda with the addition of the Freedom of Speech policy to address the concerns that D. Zukowski spoke about at the last meeting. D. Cruson also wanted to confirm that anything changed on the Retaliation and Whistleblowing policy will still be in align with the Freedom of Speech policy. D. Zukowski stated that, according to CABE, this policy is optional and not mandatory. She recommended relying on the CT state statute and not move forward with this policy. S. D’Eramo added that Shipman and Goodwin’s recommendation was the same; however, after having more discussion with the previous committee, it was determined it was important to have and to move forward. L. Rodrigue disagrees and does not feel this policy is problematic. J. Kuzma asked why Shipman and Goodwin did not recommend having this policy. S. D’Eramo read Gwen’s email that stated this policy is not necessary because the law already prohibits retaliation and current Newtown policies also already prohibit retaliation thus much of this policy would be duplicative. J. Kuzma asked why the previous committee went against Shipman’s recommendation. L. Rodrigue said there have been issues in the past</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Connell will invite S. D’Eramo to the next policy meeting

<p>that people have come forward regarding retaliation so the committee thought it was better to make it clear the Board's position on it followed the law. D. Zukowski also recommended having a simple policy stating the Board's position regarding this policy with the legal references listed below. D. Cruson asked L. Rodrigue if that would resolve the concerns from the Administrative level? L. Rodrigue said the questions would still come up because the nuances of the law are somewhat unknown. The committee agreed to still obtain this policy, however, it was determined that L. Rodrigue and S. D'Eramo will make edits and bring it back to the committee for further review.</p>	
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NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action:

Item	Reports
<p>Policy 4118.239/4218.239 – Covid-19 Vaccinations L. Rodrigue spoke with Shipman and Goodwin and it was clear that their recommendation is to rescind this policy. L. Rodrigue added that Shipman's explanation to rescind this policy was because this policy was followed by an Executive Order. Some districts did not feel it necessary to even have a policy because of the Executive Order. D. Cruson does not believe that the District will mandate vaccinations on its own so a policy is not necessary. However, it is possible that the District may need to mandate face masks if there is a localized issue. The committee agreed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Connell will send this policy to K. June to be rescinded.
<p>Policy 4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 – Face Masks Coverings D. Cruson believes this policy would help the District if there was an issue that happened on a localized level. Districts that do not have one they would be unprepared in the case of an emergency. J. Kuzma understands D. Cruson's position but has issues with having a policy with no metrics. L. Rodrigue asked to bring this policy back to a future meeting. She would like to speak to other Districts, Donna Culbert, Anne Dalton and Shipman</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Connell will invite S. D'Eramo to the next policy meeting. • S. Connell will invite D. Culbert to the next policy meeting.

<p>and Goodwin before moving forward with editing or rescinding.</p> <p>L. Rodrigue agrees with possibly adding language “working in concert with the DPH/local health dept” to this policy if the committee decides to keep it.</p> <p>The committee agreed.</p>	
<p>Policy 6172.61 – Distance Education - Distance Learning Plan Due to Health- and Safety School Closure</p> <p>D. Cruson recommended combining this policy with Policy 6172.6. L. Rodrigue said that it is possible but this policy is for K-12 and Policy 6172.6 is for High School students.</p> <p>D. Zukowski does not agree with combining the two policies. She looks at this policy as a completely different policy than 6172.6. Her recommendation is to take the mechanics out of the policy and have a simple policy with a regulation.</p> <p>D. Cruson said that is why he thinks it would be a good idea to combine the two policies.</p> <p>D. Zukowski asked if the committee can table this policy until Policy 6172.6 is finalized before including a subsection.</p> <p>J. Kuzma agrees with D. Zukowski and sees these policies as two different policies.</p> <p>D. Cruson agrees that the policy should be broader.</p> <p>D. Zukowski suggests bring the Board members into this conversation because this is a huge shift in education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Connell will bring this policy back to the committee at a future meeting.
<p>Policy 6172.6 – Distance Education – Virtual/Online Courses</p> <p>L. Rodrigue asked the committee to re-review this policy.</p> <p>J. Kuzma has a lot of questions regarding this new guidance and asked L. Rodrigue if she would be doing a presentation to the Board.</p> <p>L. Rodrigue said Newtown already has Virtual/Online High School in place and the State just provided a new guidance.</p> <p>Virtual/Online Courses are not mandated, but if you do take an online course, the guidance is what will help the District stay consistent and compliant.</p> <p>L. Rodrigue will look the policy and new guidelines to make necessary edits.</p> <p>D. Cruson asked for a revised CAGE sample for the committee to review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L. Rodrigue will make necessary edits that align with the new guidance from the State. • S. Connell will obtain a sample from CAGE and bring to the next policy meeting.

A motion was made by D. Cruson to move Policy 4118.239/4218.239 – Covid-19 Vaccinations forward to the BOE to be rescinded. J. Kuzma seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

No Superintendent Report

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ADJOURNMENT

Dan Cruson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. D. Zukowski seconded. Motion was unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.