

BOE Policy Committee Minutes
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT
February 21, 2018

Meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Rebekah Harriman-Stites, Dan Cruson, Lorrie Rodrigue, David Roach (8:04 am – 9:55 am), Sherry Earle (8:10 am – 8:35 am), Kate Magness (8:10 am – 8:35 am), Jean Evans Davila (9:05 am – 9:15 am), and Carmella Amodeo (9:14 am – 9:25 am)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: R. Harriman-Stites made a motion to approve the minutes of January 24, 2018. D. Cruson seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

UNFINISHED NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action:

Action	Follow-Up
<p>Policy 5118 – Nonresident or Tuition Students – Committee members decided that the issue of how tuition for employees compares to other districts in the DRG has been looked at a number of times and it's not necessary to look into it further at this time.</p>	<p>• Policy 5118 – Nonresident or Tuition Students – Committee members decided that the issue of how tuition for employees compares to other districts in the DRG has been looked at a number of times and it's not necessary to look into it further at this time. Policy 5118 is in the 5000 series queue that will go forward as a group to the BOE for review.</p>
<p>Policy 5123.3 – Graduation Ceremonies (Participation) - Committee members decided that they liked this "optional policy to consider" on Page 5123.3(a), starting with "The Board believes the completion of the requirements..." and stopping after the 3rd paragraph and before "Another version:" Then continuing on Page 5123(b) with "Limitations" and numbers 1 through 6. In #6 that begins, "Prior to the graduation ceremony", then add "and receiving a diploma," and continue with the sentence "school properties must be returned and all outstanding fees paid."</p>	<p>• Policy 5123.3 – Graduation Ceremonies – (Participation) - J. McEvoy to make agreed upon edits and L. Rodrigue to check to see if we are legally allowed to hold diplomas if school properties aren't returned and/or outstanding fees aren't paid. This policy will be brought back to the next policy committee meeting for further review.</p>
<p>Policy 5122.3 – Assignment of Former Home-Schooled Students to Classes – There were no changes made to the already edited policy. L. Rodrigue made edits to the regulation and shared them with the committee. On Page R5122.3(a), in the 2nd paragraph after "Building Principal" remove the semi-colon and add a comma. In the paragraph under the title "Elementary and Middle School (K-8) Students", delete the comma after "evaluation" and add "and" then continue with the rest of that sentence. After the title "High School", in the second bullet, remove "under these procedures". In the third bullet change "District</p>	<p>• Policy 5122.3 – Assignment of Former Home-Schooled Students to Classes – There were no changes made to the already edited policy L. Rodrigue made edits to the regulation and shared them with the committee. L. Rodrigue told the committee that she would like to go back and review Policy 6146 – Graduation Requirements, as well as Policy 6172.6 in reference to this issue in the regulation. It was agreed that this policy and regulation, as well as L. Rodrigue's suggested edits, would be brought back to an upcoming policy meeting for further discussion.</p>

official's" to "District's official", then remove "of" after "judgment" and add "including, but not limited to, the following:". On Page R5122.3(b) there was much discussion regarding the 7th bullet under "High School (continued)". It states, "In order to graduate from the District's high school the student must be (L. Rodrigue suggested adding 'fully' here) enrolled in the District his/her twelfth (12th) grade. (*alternate: eleventh and twelfth grade*)." L. Rodrigue referred the committee members to NPS current Policy 6146 – Graduation Requirements. This policy states that "students must attend a minimum of six (6) semesters of high school (grades 9-12) to qualify for graduation." L. Rodrigue stated that this is "seat time." S Earle, who had arrived early to discuss the next policy on the agenda, cited an example of a student who had two years online course credits and was not allowed to graduate and made to take another year because of this. D. Cruson noted that the committee just approved moving forward Policy 6172.6 – Distance Education – Virtual/Online Courses. R Harriman-Stites stated that she is okay with adjusting this requirement. L. Rodrigue told the committee that she would like to go back and review Policy 6146 – Graduation Requirements, as well as Policy 6172.6 in reference to this issue in this policy. It was agreed that this policy and regulation, as well as L. Rodrigue's suggested edits, would be brought back to an upcoming policy meeting for further discussion.

Policy 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

L. Rodrigue shared CABE's suggested policy and regulations versions with the principals and got some input. S. Earle and K. Magness came to address their suggestions for the Acceleration portion of the policy. S. Earle stated that even though our current NPS Policy 705.1 is outdated, she likes it as it relates to acceleration. She stressed that it is important to plan all the way through for these children and that acceleration can only be successful if it is part of a district-wide plan. She and K. Magness would like to keep the current acceleration piece in our NPS Policy 705.1, and add this statement, "When a decision is made to accelerate a student, whether whole grade or single subject acceleration, administration from all subsequent levels need to be involved in the plan." The committee members agreed and then looked to choose the policy that they liked the most to add the acceleration piece to. It was decided that "Old Saybrook's version of this policy" was their choice and L. Rodrigue said that we can integrate some of what we're doing at NPS to this policy. On Page 5123(a), L. Rodrigue stated that in the 3rd paragraph, starting with "All students are expected to progress...", that we need

• Policy 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

J. McEvoy will make agreed upon edits and L. Rodrigue said that she would work on this policy and regulation. R. Harriman-Stites stated that she wasn't sure if a regulation was needed but does like Old Saybrook's chart in their regulation. Also suggested that L. Rodrigue look at the NPS current Policy 7-105.1 – Retention Procedures for possibilities for the regulation. This policy and regulation will be brought back to an upcoming policy meeting for further discussion.

to make sure that this aligns with Policy 5122 - Assigning Students to a Teacher and Classes in Grades K-12. Then in the bulleted items underneath that paragraph, she stated that we can make these items fit for our District and that the social emotional piece will fit beautifully here as well. R. Harriman-Stites said to delete the last paragraph on that page and replace it with the language on acceleration from our current NPS policy 7-105 Assignment, Retention & Acceleration of Students and the added statement from S. Earle and K. Magness. R. Harriman-Stites also indicated that this statement should be a stand-alone one. L. Rodrigue said that she would work on this policy and regulation. R. Harriman-Stites stated that she wasn't sure if a regulation was needed but does like Old Saybrook's chart in their regulation. Also suggested that L. Rodrigue look at the NPS current Policy 7-105.1 – Retention Procedures for possibilities for the regulation. This policy and regulation will be brought back to an upcoming policy meeting for further discussion.

Policy 5123.2 – Summer Work or Credit -

R. Harriman-Stites indicated that this is also an optional policy and asked if it is needed? L. Rodrigue told the committee that she met with E. Gellis, who runs the NPS Summer School, and they are looking at the “Virtual High School” to support more than seat time for summer school. She stated that we might want something stand-alone about how you can recover credits. E-mail from E. Gellis was shared with the committee where she stated the summer school policy that she has been working from:

Make up courses are for students who have taken a course and not completed it successfully. Students must have a grade of 55 or higher and an attendance record of 75% to enroll. Not all students will be eligible to attend. Credit will only be given to students who previously failed the course during the regular school year.

R. Harriman-Stites asked why are students with a grade of 55 or lower not allowed to take summer school class? L. Rodrigue said that it is not enough seat time. D. Cruson asked what is the intent of the course – to supplement what the student took or a full course? L. Rodrigue stated that it is to supplement as it is only 8 weeks. The Virtual High School (VHS) has a summer school program for that reason. She would like to add a virtual piece to this policy. R. Harriman-Stites wants to keep that students must have a grade of 55 or higher to enroll in summer school. D. Roach stated that the 75% attendance needed is not consistent with the high

• Policy 5123.2 – Summer Work or Credit –

L. Rodrigue would like to add a virtual piece to this policy. R. Harriman-Stites believes that we should keep that students must have a grade of 55 or higher to enroll in summer school. D. Roach stated that the 75% attendance needed is not consistent with the high school's policy and he would like to remove that piece. The committee members decided that they would like to hear input from E. Gellis before making any decisions. J. McEvoy will invite her to attend an upcoming policy committee meeting and discussion to continue on this policy.

<p>school's policy and he would like to remove that piece. The committee members decided that they would like to hear input from E. Gellis before making any decisions. J. McEvoy will invite her to attend an upcoming policy committee meeting and discussion to continue on this policy.</p>	
<p>Policy 5124.1 – District/School Report Cards - J. Evans Davila told the committee that she consulted with V. Mustaro of CAFE on this policy and that he has just updated it to include the ESSA legislation. She will forward this updated policy to J. McEvoy and she can then forward it to the committee members. J. Evans Davila will return to an upcoming policy committee meeting to discuss.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 5124.1 – District/School Report Cards – J. Evans Davila told the committee that she consulted with V. Mustaro of CAFE on this policy and that he has just updated it to include the ESSA legislation. She will forward this updated policy to J. McEvoy and she can then forward it to the committee members. J. Evans Davila will return to an upcoming policy committee meeting to discuss.
<p>Policy 5124.2 – Release of Report Cards - This is another optional policy and R. Harriman-Stites questioned whether it is needed as it refers to copies and report cards are now done electronically. C. Amodeo stated that we don't have 100% electronic coverage of report cards and still have to sometimes use a hard copy. D. Cruson asked if this information is covered by another policy? C. Amodeo said that most is covered by Policy 5125 – Student Records;Confidentiality, however the uniqueness of this policy is that it speaks to withholding "report cards, transcripts and other student records"...if students have outstanding obligations with the district. R. Harriman-Stites pointed out that this is addressed in Policy 6146 – Graduation Requirements – but that's only Newtown High School. C. Amodeo said that there is a State statute that says report cards can be withheld. It was decided that Policy 5124.2 – Release of Report Cards is not needed. However Principals should be made aware of the State statute that allows them to withhold report cards, etc., if fees are not paid or books not returned. C. Amodeo will find this and give to J. McEvoy for the committee's information and for L. Rodrigue to share with the Principals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 5124.2 – Release of Report Cards – It was decided that Policy 5124.2 – Release of Report Cards is not needed. However Principals should be made aware of the State statute that allows them to withhold report cards, etc., if fees are not paid or books not returned. C. Amodeo will find this and give to J. McEvoy for the committee members' information and for L. Rodrigue to share with the Principals.
<p>Policy 6163.32 - Newtown Service Animal Policy – L. Rodrigue shared with the committee members the policy that Peter Maher sent in response to her request that Shipman & Goodwin review the Cherry Hill Board of Education policy on Service Animals that we shared with him, as well as Abby Hill's "Sample Assistance Dog Policy" (to view as a possible regulation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 6163.32-Newtown Service Animal Policy R. Harriman-Stites asked J. McEvoy to edit and present this policy and regulation in CAFE's standard format and bring back to the committee at an upcoming meeting for review, and L. Rodrigue to consult further with P. Maher of Shipman & Goodwin. Also All Star Transportation needs to be given a heads up that there could be a service animal on a bus.

L. Rodrigue stated that what P. Maher did was to make it comply with Connecticut law. D. Cruson stated that he liked how P. Maher handled the conflicting disabilities, noted in G. in the policy. R. Harriman-Stites asked who would be responsible for grievances for this policy? It was decided that it should be the Director of Pupil Personnel, D. Petersen. D. Cruson pointed out that we will need to let All Star Transportation know that there could a service animal on a bus. R. Harriman-Stites said that she would like to see just Abby Hill's chart used as a regulation and then supply the Q & A to the Principals. D. Roach asked who has the final say as to whether a service animal in-training is to be allowed in NPS schools? D. Cruson noted that under the definition of a "Service animal" #3 states that "a service animal in training is **not** a service animal except for a dog being trained to assist a blind, deaf or mobility impaired individual...". L. Rodrigue will ask P. Maher if it is legal to ask what a dog is being trained for. R. Harriman-Stites asked J. McEvoy to edit and present this policy and regulation in CAFE's standard format and bring back to the committee for review.

UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

L. Rodrigue brought to the committee's attention that Policy 5112 – Ages of Attendance - has a mistake in wording that needs to be addressed. On Page 5112(a) in the second sentence under "Ages of Attendance", the words "on or" need to be added after "Children who have not attained the age of five...". The full corrected sentence should read, "Children who have not attained the age of five on or before the first day of January will not be admitted to kindergarten unless the student meets the requirements of Policy 5111."

A motion was made by R. Harriman-Stites to forward Policy 5112 – Ages of Attendance - with approved edit, to the Board of Education for review as soon as possible. D. Cruson seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by R. Harriman-Stites to postpone discussion/action on Policy 5123.3 – Graduation Ceremonies (Participation), Policy 5122.3 – Assignment of Former Home-Schooled Students to Classes, Policy 5123 – Promotion/Retention, Policy 5123.2 – Summer Work for Credit, Policy 5124.1 – District/School Report Cards, and Policy 6163.32 – Newtown Service Animal Policy. D. Cruson seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

UNFINISHED NEW BUSINESS – DISCUSSION/ACTION POSTPONED TO A FUTURE MEETING

Policy 5123.3 – Graduation Ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be reviewed by committee as discussed
Policy 5122.3 – Assignment of Former Home-School Students to Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be reviewed by committee as discussed

Policy 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be reviewed by committee as discussed
Policy 5123.2 – Summer Work for Credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be reviewed by committee as discussed
Policy 5124.1 – District/School Report Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be reviewed by committee as discussed
Policy 6163.32 – Newtown Service Animal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be reviewed by committee as discussed

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by R. Harriman-Stites and seconded by D. Cruson. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Submitted: Rebekah Harriman-Stites, Policy Committee Chair