

BOE Policy Committee Minutes
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT
October 25, 2017

Meeting was called to order at 8:06 a.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Michelle Embree Ku, Rebekah Harriman-Stites, Lorrie Rodrigue, Timothy DeJulio and Cathy Ostar (8:00 am – 8:40 am), Meghan (Intern at Western Connecticut State University School Counseling Program – 8:00 am – 9:27 am), Suzanne D’Eramo (8:45 am – 9:02 am), Deb Mailloux-Petersen (8:45 am – 9:26 am), Anne Dalton (9:12 am – 9:55 am)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: M. Ku made a motion to approve the minutes of October 11, 2017. R. Harriman-Stites seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

UNFINISHED OLD BUSINESS

Action	Follow-up
<p>Policy 6172 – Alternative Education Programs – T. DeJulio and C. Ostar told the committee that Policy 6172, which is a new policy, is consistent with what they are doing as teachers of The Alternate Program (TAP) at NHS. They have met with L. Rodrigue to discuss TAP and their vision for its future, created a Handbook for the program and are making certain that the entrance and exit criteria and procedures are clearly defined (as required in the policy). There was discussion regarding the statement (in the next to last paragraph on P6172(a)) that “Such programs must comply with state laws pertaining to the number and length of school days in an academic year...” M. Ku and L. Rodrigue attended a Legal Updates Workshop where it was stated that districts now need to give comparable hours/days to students expelled and in alternate programs as they do for regular students. L. Rodrigue stated that we’re waiting for clarification on this. C. Ostar said that currently TAP is at 20 hours per week. The committee members confirmed with C. Ostar and T. DeJulio that TAP at NHS does not include expelled students. R. Harriman-Stites then recommended that the following be added to note the process for those students (to Legal References at the end of Policy 6172 on page P6172(d)): “Newtown Policy 5144 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process, adopted August 15, 2017”. The committee approved this recommendation. M. Ku initiated a discussion about the title of Policy 6172 and whether it should be called “Alternative Programs” (instead of “Alternative Education Programs”). She referenced the fact that, in the state statutes, it is not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and Regulation 6172 – Alternative Education Programs. This is a new policy that the committee approved to move forward to the BOE with the agreed upon edits from the 9/28/17 and 10/25/17 policy committee meetings.

Policy 6172 (continued):

called “Alternative Education”. In the final analysis, it” was recommended that the title remain as “Alternative Education Programs” since “Alternative education is clearly defined on page P6172(a), paragraph 3. On page P6172(b), it was decided that the last sentence in the 1st paragraph shall remain, “There shall be an annual evaluation of alternative education programs.” C. Ostar stated that evaluations currently occur in meetings with the principal. The committee members recommended that it would also be very helpful to set programmatic goals for TAP and then evaluate them. R. Harriman-Stites stated that this is extremely useful when applying for grants, and indicated that knowing how many students graduate from the program is excellent data to have, since the goal is to either return them to the traditional environment or graduate them. M. Ku asked if this program could attract students from other districts in the future? L. Rodrigue stated that this is definitely a possibility and this is also where data becomes so important.

Pertaining to the regulation with the heading, “A new administrative regulation to consider”, C. Ostar and T. DeJulio feel that it is indicative of what they are doing or going to be doing moving forward.

The committee members reiterated that the regulation can be changed as needed without coming back to the policy committee. Two changes were made under “Guidelines for Student Placement” - on page R6172(b) #2 “Entrance Criteria”. The 2nd bulleted item will now read,

“• Alternative education schools and programs develop clear and objective criteria for admission consistent with stated program guidelines that are provided to students and their parents/guardians.” (And remove “at the time of admittance into the alternative setting.”) Next on page R6172(c) in the 2nd paragraph under “Guidelines for Student Placement (continued)”, it is to now read “The entrance criteria and procedures must be explicitly written in each alternative education program/school handbook and provided to parents/guardians and students in the language of the home.” (And remove “at the time of admittance into the alternative setting.”)

The committee members noted the importance of this program and the difference it makes by providing a meaningful alternative to the traditional college path. Policy 6172 – Alternative Education Programs – was approved to move forward to the BOE with agreed upon edits.

Policy 4118.14/4218.14 – Certified/Non-Certified – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities – S. D’Eramo likes CABE policy with heading “A recommended ‘good practice’ policy to consider.” On page P4118.14(a)/4218.14, after the heading “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities, remove “(Option 1)”. Then at the end of the last sentence on that same page, change to Director of “Human Resources” (and remove “Pupil Personnel Services). On page P4118.14(b)/4218.14, again remove “(Option 1)” after the heading and delete the box below that begins with “Note:” In the 1st sentence below that box, again change to Director of “Human Resources” (and remove “Pupil Personnel Services”). Next delete the entire box with the heading “Optional language for Fragrance and Chemical Sensitivities”.

S. D’Eramo also likes the Form titled “Section 504/ADA, Employee Request for Accommodation” with the following changes: Under #3, “Authorization to Communicate with Medical Provider”, insert “Newtown Public Schools” in the blank space before District and then, in that same sentence, change to Director of “Human Resources” (and remove “Pupil Personnel Services”). At the very bottom of the Form, in statement starting “ONCE COMPLETED...” change to “Director of Human Resources” (and remove “Pupil Personnel Services”). R. Harriman-Stites asked S. D’Eramo if we currently have this form and she answered that we do not.

S. D’Eramo feels that the “Sample regulation” is clear and wants to include it all with some changes. On page R4118.14(a)/4218.14 in the last paragraph after the first sentence following: “Major Life Activities:” delete the section after “and working:” that is in italics. Next on page R4118.14(d)/4218.14, under “Grievance Procedure” A.” at the bottom of the page, remove “ADA Coordinator/”. Then remove “ADA Coordinator/” under B. as well. Lastly on page R4118.14(e)/4218.14, remove “ADA Coordinator/” from C. and D. under “Grievance Procedure (continued)”. S. D’Eramo believes the Appendix titled “Specific Impairments Considered to be Disabilities” is good as it is. This Policy 4118.14/4218.14 replaces Newtown’s policies 4-705 and 8-602. The committee approved this policy to move forward to the BOE with the agreed upon edits.

- Policy and Regulation 4118.14/4218.14 – Certified/Non-Certified – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities is to be moved forward to the BOE with the agreed upon edits. It replaces Newtown’s policies 4-705 and 8-602.

<p>Policy 5145.4 – Students – Nondiscrimination – Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504 – D. Petersen likes the CABE policy with the heading “Another version of this policy to consider.” that begins, “The Board of Education shall ensure...” On page P5145.4(a) in the first paragraph, 2nd sentence, a comma needs to be added after “writing”. Then, at the bottom of the page, the box that starts with “Note” needs to be completely deleted. D. Petersen does not need the Appendix included. This policy replaces Newtown’s policy 802.1. The committee approved Policy 5145.4 to move forward to the BOE with the agreed upon edits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 5145.4 – Students – Nondiscrimination – Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504 – The committee approved moving this forward to the BOE with the agreed upon edits. It replaces Newtown’s policy 802.1.
<p>Newtown Policy 1250 – Community Relations – Visits to the Schools – the committee revisited D. Petersen’s proposed policy on “Classroom Observations” at her request. D. Petersen feels that Newtown’s current Policy 1250 is too general in its statements under “Classroom Observations” and that the wording needs to be more specific as regards outside evaluators coming in, having a time frame, and regarding the issue of confidentiality. The committee agreed that D. Petersen’s proposed policy should be added to our current Policy 1250 at the end before “Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes”. Create the heading “Classroom Observations” and add D. Petersen’s proposed policy in its entirety (with previous edits) plus delete the first paragraph. Next, remove “Classroom Observations” in its entirety from the regulation on page 1250(c). There was some discussion about asking PTAs to give out information to parents about the issue of confidentiality. The committee approved sending Newtown Policy 1250, with the agreed upon edits, to the BOE for review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee approved moving Newtown’s Policy and Regulation 1250 – Community Relations – Visits to the Schools - forward to the BOE, with agreed upon edits, for review.
<p>Policy 5141.251 – Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs – This policy was approved at the 9/28/17 policy committee meeting to move forward to the BOE with the agreed upon edits. D. Petersen had no changes to request after her review of the regulation. A. Dalton reviewed this regulation and requested that on page R5141.251(d) under “Accommodating Disabled Students with Special Dietary Needs (Modified Meals for Disabled Students)”, #13 be entirely deleted. The committee agreed and this policy and regulation will be moved back into the group waiting to go forward to the BOE with the 5000 series.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 5141.251 – Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs. The committee has agreed that this policy (as approved at the 9/28/17 policy committee meeting) and the regulation, as edited at this meeting, will be put back into the group of policies waiting to go forward to the BOE with the 5000 series.

Policy 5141.25 – Students with Special Health Care Needs – Life-Threatening Allergies and Glycogen Storage Disease Management. L. Rodrigue and A. Dalton discussed the meeting that was held to work on the concerns in this policy. Changes are as follows: On page 5141.25(c), #3, remove “Emergency Care Plan and Treatment Authorization (“Emergency Care Plan”) and add “Authorization for the Administration of Medication”. On page 5141.25(e), remove the paragraph labeled “G” in its entirety and replace with “As part of the IHCP, an ECP shall be developed and disseminated to all appropriate school staff.” Then add an “H” on this same page with the sentence: “Certified school staff, who are supervising students in a school sponsored activity outside of school hours, will consult with the school nurse regarding any student medical alerts.” On page 5141.25(g) under C. Food in Schools no. 4, delete this whole sentence and change numbering. Next on page 5141.25(h) under D. “Food in Schools – Curricular Instruction Use” in #1 add “K - 8” before classroom. Then add a #2 that states “In view of the developmental age and maturity of high school students, in grades 9-12, staff will communicate directly with students in courses where peanuts/tree nuts may be used in the curriculum (e.g. Culinary classes). Such activities will be held in appropriate areas as designated by administration.” Finally change #2 to #3 and again add “K – 8” before classroom. L. Rodrigue to check with Tom Einhorn and Jim Ross at the Middle School to make certain that peanuts/tree nuts are not present in any classroom there for any instructional purpose. Once that is confirmed, the committee agreed that this policy could go forward, with the edits from the 9/13/17, 9/28/17 and this meeting, to the BOE for review.

- Policy 5141.25 – Students with Special Health Care Needs – Life-Threatening Allergies and Glycogen Storage Disease Management - The committee agreed that this policy could go forward, with the edits from the 9/13/17, 9/28/17 and this meeting, to the BOE for review (once L. Rodrigue has confirmed the correct information from the Middle School).

NEW BUSINESS

Action	Follow-up
<p>Proposed Home Schooling Policy and Regulation 6172.3 (from the State of Connecticut) – D. Petersen stated that she was unable to find in the Newtown policies any references to Home Schooling, thus her proposed policy using one from the State of Connecticut. J. McEvoy also provided the policies that CAFE sent to the committee on Home Schooling at her request. L. Rodrigue stated that we have no authorization or authority to look at or question the kind of home schooling but a statement or policy is needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on D. Petersen’s Proposed Home Schooling Policy and Regulation 6172.3 will be put on the agenda and continued at the next committee meeting. L. Rodrigue to follow up on CIAC rules about policies for homeschooled students and extracurricular activity participation.

**Proposed Home Schooling Policy and Regulation
6172.3 (continued):**

D. Petersen told the committee that, on the special education side, when someone is home schooling, they send a letter saying basically that “we’re here if you need us.” The committee reviewed D. Petersen’s proposal and commented on #8 on the regulation that states “Newtown Public Schools will adhere to the Connecticut Association of Schools and the CIAC (Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference, Inc) rules and regulations for all extracurricular activities.”

R. Harriman-Stites asked what does the CIAC say about athletics while being home schooled? L. Rodrigue stated that they can’t participate until they return to school.

Therefore, she will check on #8 but believes we need to remove it from the policy. L. Rodrigue told the committee that if a student is being home schooled, they are not part of the school and therefore can’t participate in activities. She feels that what is needed, at minimal, is a process for parents who want to home school.

D. Petersen suggested that parents be sent a form, like the one in 6172.3 Form 1 from Hamden. Edits were made to the form – delete the section for “Name of Teacher, Address and Telephone Number” and don’t provide a list of subjects but have them list the subjects to be taught. Underneath that list, just have one question “Methods of assessment of student progress: _____”.

It was decided to put the discussion of the proposed Home Schooling Policy on the agenda for the next meeting

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UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Policy 3541 – Transportation - L. Rodrigue did speak with Tom Einhorn and Jim Ross to discuss the various issues regarding students walking and requests from parents. L. Rodrigue feels that there needs to be a process for whenever a student is walking at middle school and younger. The level of maturity for students to be able to walk in high school vs. middle school is totally different. L. Rodrigue did speak with our lawyer and he said that there should be some kind of sign up at the beginning of the year for students who walk. R. Harriman-Stites stated that for elementary/intermediate students we should have one practice and based on their age/grade. Discussion on this will continue at the next committee meeting.

- L. Rodrigue asked Tom Einhorn and Jim Ross to look at other middle schools to see if they have any policies or procedures regarding “walkers”.

A motion was made by M. Ku to forward Policy and Regulation 6172 – Alternative Education Programs; Policy and Regulation 4118.14/ 4218.14 - Certified/Non-Certified – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities; Policy 5145.4 – Students – Nondiscrimination – Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504; Newtown Policy 1250 – Community Relations – Visits to the Schools; and Policy 5141.25 – Students with Special Health Care Needs – Life-Threatening Allergies and Glycogen Storage Disease Management, with approved edits, to the Board of Education for review. R. Harriman-Stites seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by M. Ku to postpone discussion/action on Policies 5125 - Student Records: Confidentiality, 6172.4 - Parent and Family Engagement Policy for Title I Students, Policy 5114.21 – Conduct Code for Participation in Extracurricular Activities, Proposed Home Schooling Policy 6172.3 and 3541 – Transportation. R. Harriman-Stites seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - DISCUSSION/ACTION POSTPONED TO A FUTURE MEETING:

<p>Policy 5125 – Student Records: Confidentiality L. Rodrigue to meet with C. Amodeo to discuss this policy based on CABE update.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 5125 – Student Records: Confidentiality L. Rodrigue to share the results of her meeting with C. Amodeo regarding CABE update.
<p>Policy 6172.4 – Parent and Family Engagement Policy for Title I Students and our current policy 7-409.1, Title I Parent Involvement. These policies are to be reviewed by L. Rodrigue and interested PTSA members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L. Rodrigue to update the committee on the status of reviewing Policy 6172.4 – Parent and Family Engagement Policy for Title 1 Students and our current policy 7-409.1, Title I Parent Involvement – with PTSA members.
<p>Policy 5114.21 – Conduct Code for Participation in Extracurricular Activities – M. Memoli to revise the regulation for this policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. McEvoy to check with M. Memoli as to the status of this revision to the regulation for Policy 5114.21 – Conduct Code for Participation in Extracurricular Activities.

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

<p>Proposed Home Schooling Policy and Regulation 6172.3 (from the State of Connecticut)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion to continue on D. Petersen’s proposal for a Home Schooling Policy
<p>Policy 3541 – Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L. Rodrigue is waiting for feedback from T. Einhorn and J. Ross as regards looking at other middle schools to see if they have any process/procedures for “walkers”.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by M. Ku and seconded by R. Harriman-Stites. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Submitted: Michelle Ku, Policy Committee Chair