

BOE Policy Committee Minutes
Monday, May 13, 2024, 9:30 am – 11:00 am
Municipal Building, BOE Conference Room
3 Primrose St. Newtown, CT 06470

CALL TO ORDER Meeting was called to order at 9:30 am

IN ATTENDANCE Doria Linnetz, Don Ramsey, Chris Melillo, Anne Uberti, Mark Pompano, 4 public

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Aaron Cox, Pond Brook Road, Newtown, provided his input on the newly revised policy. He believes it is very solid. He provided examples on why communication with parents is extremely important, especially when planning an international trip.

APPROVE MINUTES Don Ramsey made a motion to approve the minutes of April 22, 2024. Doria Linnetz seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Policy 6114 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

The committee discussed the proposed edits that were provided by Shipman and Goodwin.

The input that was provided was regarding the SSSC committee and how it may also serve as the School Climate Committee but not vice versa. The SSSC must be the identified committee but it may also serve in the role of the SCC.

Ms. Linnetz pointed out that the original intent was to provide greater efficiency within the committees.

Mr. Pompano volunteered to make the necessary changes to make sure our committees are consistent with law.

The next recommendation is on page (b) and refers to documents concerning security and procedures that are exempt from FOIA. Shipman and Goodwin suggest removing part of the sentence *“as are appropriate for public dissemination shall be readily accessible to parents/guardians at the start of each school year and thereafter at any time upon request.”* The committee agreed.

Mr. Pompano will make the approved edits and send to Ms. Connell.

Mr. Ramsey asked the committee if they thought this policy would be ready by July 1 for the new school year and new Superintendent.

The committee agreed that it would be at the Board level for approval in June.

Policy 6114.1 - Emergency (Drills) / Crisis Response Drills / Bus Safety Drills

Mr. Pompano stated that he is aware that the statutory requirement is within the first thirty days to do a drill, however, Newtown’s fire marshal asked for the drills to be done within the first 10 days many years

ago. Newtown goes above and beyond with their drill schedule. The committee agreed to keep the language “10 days”.

In the third paragraph, per Shipman & Goodwin’s recommendation, the language will now read “The Board shall develop crisis response drill protocols in consultation with the appropriate law enforcement agency and the District Security and Safety Committee (DSSC). Such protocols shall meet the statutory requirements. Further, a representative of the local law enforcement agency, fire department and/or town emergency management team **may** supervise.....”

Shipman and Goodwin asked if when requiring the transportation company to comply with Board policies, Newtown will need to include a specific requirement regarding compliance with Board policies about bus safety drills in the contract with the transportation company.

Mr. Melillo and Ms. Uberti believe that it is in the contract but will confirm with Ms. Vadas.

Ms. Connell will make the approved edits.

Policy 6114.7 - School Security and Safety

Ms. Linnetz suggested holding back on editing this policy until Policy 6114 and Policy 6114.1 were finalized.

Ms. Uberti does not feel it is necessary to have this policy and will ask the Principals for their input.

Ms. Connell will include this policy on the next policy agenda for discussion.

Policy 6153.1 - Educational Tours

Ms. Linnetz made the approved edits from the previous meeting. Ms. McConnell and Mr. DeJulio did not have any objections and this policy will go to the Board for their first read on May 21st.

NEW BUSINESS

Policy 6163.1 - Selection of Library Media Resources

Mrs. Uberti provided an update on the effectiveness of this policy throughout the past year. She stated that it is important to review policies periodically because circumstances can change at any time.

At the beginning of the school year, parents were notified that they could restrict up to fifteen books for their child. Currently, under ten families at each school have requested through the book restrict request mechanism.

The spirit of this policy is to be completely transparent and to respect the parent’s rights as parents.

Mr. Ramsey asked how the staff is feeling about this policy.

Mrs. Uberti said that the staff feels it is acceptable.

Mrs. Uberti also reminded the committee that this policy is strictly for Library Media Resources and does not pertain to classroom teachers. It is up to the parents to have discussions with the teacher regarding the book that they choose to read in the classroom.

She suggested creating a form letter to add in the Regulation so all schools have a consistent response when there is a book challenge and reported that there has only been one book challenge this school year. It was determined that the book was age appropriate and the case was closed without further incident.

Mr. Ramsey said that he is happy they are reviewing this policy after a year. It is important to understand what is working versus what is not.

Mrs. Uberti will create a form letter for the regulation and will notify the Board of the change.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Mr. Melillo stated that he believes that Policy 6163.1 has been an extremely successful policy this past school year. He also stated that he is saddened that it was needed. He believes it is important to let students see the world through different perspectives which can be found in books. Libraries are where students can break out and see other parts of the world through literature. He understands that the school can not be the moral compass and parents have to be involved. He is proud of the LMS and their hard work.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

Mr. Ramsey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Linnetz seconded. Motion was unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.

****THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES****