

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 30, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Heidi Keyes, Chair; Artie Kassimis, Sherelle Harris.

STAFF: Tony Daddona, Deputy Superintendent; Richard Rudl, COO;
Brenda Williams, Communications Director;
Mike Barbis, BOE Non-Committee Member; Bruce Mellion, NFT;

Call to Order

Ms. Keyes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated that Committee members were in attendance as listed above, and a quorum was present.

Diane Lauricella, School Recycling

Ms. Diane Lauricella introduced herself as an environmental consultant and member of the Mayor's Environmental Task Force and League of Women Voters. She gave an overview of her involvement with current and past recycling initiatives in the Norwalk Public Schools, and explained that there is no district-wide policy, only practices by each facility that are directed by the building principal. She explained that she has worked with DPW in having blue bins delivered to all schools, but due to limited and consistent best practices, recyclable materials may be collected and sorted by teachers and students, everything is combined into the school dumpsters. She reviewed the cost of tonnage from trash haulers and how recycling measures with waste management practices can save the district thousands of dollars. She spoke about a recent experiment being done in the schools and stated that it is not a fair assessment, as it gives a false sense of security that adequate practices will be put into place.

She asked for a review of the policy with amendments to switch oversight from building Principals to a DPW waste management trained professional. She suggested that the school district conduct general assessments by school to determine needs and practices to establish a general recycling policy district wide and to have procedures and best practices put in place with custodial staff and maintenance personnel.

Ms. Lauricella requested the establishment a district-wide sub-committee in collaboration with the City/BOE Joint Services Committee. She requested to be appointed to serve on this committee with John Kydes and other members of the Mayor's Energy and Environmental Task Force.

Mr. Kassimis referred to Policy 3513 that was revised a few years ago and noted that the Committee will research into the amendments that were made.

Discussion and Recommended Revisions to Policy 3160, Transfer of Funds Between Categories

Mr. Rudl referred to the supporting documents and explained that based on a prior Finance Committee meeting and recommendations of the Blum Shapiro report were implemented with the exception of a revised budget transfer policy. He added that they have review through CABA the language used based on the CT General Statutes and have also reviewed other districts in the state's budget transfer policies, and are recommending for approval the following policy:

The Superintendent or his/her designee may transfer any unexpected or un-contracted for portion of any appropriation/or school purposes to any other item of such itemized estimate not to exceed \$10,000. Transfers in excess of \$10,000 shall come to the full board with a written explanation for approval. Expenditures in each fiscal year shall not exceed/he appropriation made by the fiscal authority. To allow scrutiny of the expenditures and to allow the Board to exercise its oversight responsibility, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will furnish to the Board of Education monthly expenditure statements.

Mr. Kassimis asked to incorporate a measure to safeguard from taking amounts from multiple accounts to create large sums of money to fund positions, etc. He referred to past situations where large transfers were done to fund budget overages without protection in line items.

Mr. Rudl explained the current policy does not describe an amount or specific restrictions related to the Superintendent or his/her designee with regards to budget management. He added that the district has been operating under an un-adopted but followed practice that that restricts transfers over \$1,000 and across object codes.

Mr. Kassimis requested a summary report of transfers at the end of each month. Mr. Rudl noted that while this is somewhat cumbersome, it is doable.

There was further discussion on adding limits against any line item from and to, with amended language as follows:

....not to exceed *a cumulative amount of \$10,000 for any one line item.*

**** MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO AMEND THE RECOMMENDED POLICY 3160 WITH THE ABOVE WORDING AND FORWARD TO THE FULL BOARD FOR ADOPTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discussion and Recommended Revisions for Policy 6146 - Graduation Requirements

Mr. Daddona explained the need to revise graduation requirement due to the absence of CAPT and replacement with SBAC testing. There was a discussion on the state requirements and timing related to mandates.

Mr. Daddona stated that the proposed revision would be needed for 2015 graduates and depending on the upcoming changes from the state, would need to be revisited for 2016. He explained that with the increase in credits to 25, upcoming changes include high school credit for middle school Spanish I and Algebra.

It was agreed to have amended language as follows:

This policy is valid for all those students who have not taken CAPT and until new student performance standards are mandated by the State of Connecticut.

**** MR. KASSIMIS MOVED TO APPROVE AMENDED POLICY 6146 WITH THE ABOVE RECOMMENDED WORDING AND TO FORWARD TO THE FULL BOARD FOR ADOPTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Discussion and Recommended Revisions for Policy 5117, School Attendance Areas

Mr. Daddona explained the need to amend the policy based on conflicts with existing Child Find laws and regulations. He recommends the addition of having a PPT and 504 Hearing to be included under supporting evidence.

There was discussion over the 504 hearing and timing to have this done in time for enrollment numbers and class size/teacher allocations. It was agreed to add “*applications must be in by April 1*” and “*hearings must be completed by May 15.*”

There was further discussion over out-of-district guidelines and it was agreed to request the Board Chair to establish a sub-committee to re-write this policy. It was suggested that members should include administrators (current and/or former), teachers and Board members.

Discussion and Recommended Revisions for Policy 1240, Participation by the Public, Citizens Assistance to School Personnel, Volunteers in Norwalk Schools

Ms. Williams provided an overview of the past policy changes and explained recent concerns raised about time limits on prior background checks. There was discussion on the proposed exceptions. Mr. Kassimis stated that a one-time volunteer should be excluded from the requirement. It was agreed to amend the language to add “**including parents**” after no person, and volunteers.

**** MS. HARRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE POLICY AMENDMENTS AND TO FORWARD THE REVISED POLICY 1240 TO THE FULL BOARD FOR APPROVAL.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Agenda Items for October and November Meetings

Ms. Williams suggested the following items for October:

Attendance, Excuses, Denial of Credit; Discussion and Action
Advertising & Promotions -- Distribution of Materials (through student backpacks)

November: Responsible Use of Technology - Review of Plan for Updating HR Policies:

Ms. Williams stated that Mr. Valenzisi has recommended revisions for review.

Mr. Palmer has proposed changes to the Human Resources policies and procedures.

Other Items

Next Regular Meeting — Tuesday, October 28, 2014

Adjournment

**** MR. KASIMIS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox,
Telesco Secretarial Services