

Special Meeting
Board of Education
Policy Sub-Committee Meeting
October 29, 2024

Municipal Building
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
BOE Conference Room
5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance:

Anne Uberti, Superintendent
Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote, Transition Administrator
Doria Linnetz, Policy Chair
Alison Plante, Board Member
Tanja Vadas, Director of Business
Sarah Connell
1 Public

1. Call to Order 5:34

- a. D. Linnetz called the meeting to order at 5:34pm

2. Public Participation

3. Approval of Minutes of October 15, 2024

MOTION: A. Plante moved to approve the minutes of October 15, 2024. D. Linnetz seconded.
Motion passes unanimously.

4. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Policy for Second Review on November 19

1. 5120 Meal Charging

- a. T. Vadas joined the meeting and discussed this policy. State law requires schools to include the collection of unpaid charges for school lunches in a policy.
- b. J.Paddyfote continued by saying that she and T. Vadas spoke to the CSDE consultant who conducted an Administrative Review of the School Lunch Program and asked for his input. He provided input which is outlined in yellow.
- c. The committee did not have any further comments and this policy will go back to the Board for a second read with the approved edits.

B. Policies Recommended for First Read

1. 3160 Budget Procedures and Line Item Transfers (replacement)

- a. T. Vadas stated that this policy was revised in 2021 when she became Director of Business. She believes that this policy is restricted and Shipman and Goodwin's policy is more clear. She recommends that the Board consider adopting Shipman and Goodwin's practice of reporting the Financial Report quarterly rather than monthly. The subcommittees will still meet and receive reports monthly.
- b. A.Uberti stated that this proposed change doesn't mean that she couldn't do a report. When a report is warranted, she will provide it to the Board.
- c. A.Plante had concerns when first reading the policy, however, after reviewing the dates, she believes it is efficient.
- d. D.Linnetz suggested bringing this policy to the CFF subcommittee for review. The committee agreed.

- e. A.Plante pointed out that on the first page, second to last paragraph, it states that *“If the Board rejects such suggestions and recommendations, it shall provide the Fiscal Authority a written explanation of the reason for the rejection.”* She wondered if this was consistent with the charter.
 - i. J. Paddyfote answered that it is in the statute. She continued by stating that it is not an adjustment and more recommendations and suggestions. This is before the budget goes through the process.
 - ii. A.Plante is concerned that it may be too vague and in conflict with how Newtown operates. She would feel comfortable making it clear to the Board that this is not the budget process.
 - iii. When A.Plante read the first paragraph, it gave her the impression that this was referring to the budget process.
 - iv. After discussing the language in this policy, the committee agrees that this policy can live alongside the Charter.
 - v. D. Linnetz pointed out that every District has different appropriation process, therefore, that language is not in this policy and only in our Charter.
 - f. A.Plante asked J.Paddyfote to add in language about who the fiscal authority is. The committee agreed.
 - g. The committee asked S. Connell to send this policy to J.Morris to send to the CFF subcommittee.
2. 2010 Uniform Treatment of Recruiters (new)
 - a. J. Paddyfote said that this was covered a little bit in 5125 - Confidentiality of Records. This is a mandatory policy and it is her recommendation to rescind Policy 5145.14 - On Campus Recruitment. This is an opt out process that the parents receive each school year via Powerschool.
 - b. The committee did not have any additional comments.
 3. 6130 IDEA–Alternative Assessments (new)
 - a. J. Paddyfote stated that this is a new policy to NPS and it is required.
 - b. The committee did not have any comments regarding this policy.
 4. 6140 Promotion and Retention (new)
 - a. J. Paddyfote stated that this is a required policy and new to the District.
 - b. The committee did not have any comments regarding this policy.
 5. 6143 Parental Access to Instructional Material (new)
 - a. J. Paddyfote stated that this is a required policy and new to the District.
 - b. The committee did not have any comments regarding this policy.
 6. 6146 High School Graduation Requirements (replacement)
 - a. J. Paddyfote stated that on page 3 and 4, there is a new section titled “Demonstration of Proficiency in Basic Skills”. The current policy has this in the regulation however it should be located in the policy.
 - b. A. Plante asked what a mastery-based diploma assessment is. J. Paddyfote answered that it is known as the Capstone Project in Newtown.
 - c. D. Linnetz said that she is interpreting the language to say that the Capstone project is not required by the State, however, Newtown will still require it. J.Paddyfote agreed with that interpretation.
 - d. D. Linnetz also noticed that the FAFSA language is also included in this policy.
 - e. J.Paddyfote stated that Dr. Longobucco reviewed this policy.
 7. 6147 Weighted Grading for Honors Classes (new)
 - a. J.Paddyfote said that Newtown currently has language about the weighted grading platform in Newtown’s Program of Studies but did not have a stand alone policy on it. This policy is required and new to Newtown.

- b. D. Linnetz asked if this was consistent with what Newtown’s practices currently are. J. Paddyfote answered that it is.
 - c. A. Plante is surprised that this policy is mandatory because it seems more operational but it is required by Statute.
8. 6148 Credit for Online Courses (new)
- a. J.Paddyfote stated that in Newtown’s current policy “Distance Education, Virtual Online”, it states that the courses are only taken during the school day. This is not the practice because students can take a course during the summer.
 - i. A.Uberti suggested editing the language in the first paragraph of the PRe-approval of Courses section to say: *“To receive credit for online courses to be used toward high school graduation requirements, for courses that are not part of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s remote learning model.....”*
 - b. A.Plante asked for a general description of what Newtown offers to the students via Online Courses.
 - i. A.Uberti stated that Newtown offers virtual high school. Students that take advantage of this are typically students that may need credit recovery. Another example may be when a student wants to take a course that Newtown does not offer in person.
 - c. D. Linnetz asked if this includes allowing students to earn college credit as a dual enrollment. A. Uberti said that it is a different program. Those courses are taught by teachers that have become certified through a university program and teach the class based on the university syllabus. Upon completion, the student will get high school and college credits.

B. Items of Information

- 1. 4116 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Concussion Management
4216 R and Training for Athletic Coaches
 - a. J. Paddyfote developed this regulation because a policy is not mandated. However, training is required. She stated that she worked with Athletic Director, Matt Memoli on reviewing this regulation and put most of this information in his Emergency Action Plan which can be found on the website. They both agreed that this regulation provides more structure on what needs to be accomplished based on the legislation around concussions.
- 2. 6148 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Credit for Online Courses
- 3. 6151 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Class Size Guidelines
 - a. J.Paddyfote said that A.Uberti updated this regulation because the current policy is outdated. A.Uberti provided information about why these numbers were chosen for each grade. After tracking enrollment, Administrators found that evening out the number of students in kindergarten was a smoother transition.

MOTION: A.Plante moved that the committee send the policies in #4B to the full board for first read subsequent to the November 19, 2024 board meeting. D. Linnetz seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: A. Plante moved that the items of information in #4B be sent to the full board along with the policies for first read at the same meeting subsequent to the November 19, 2024 board meeting. D. Linnetz seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

- C. Policies to Rescind upon Adoption of Policies in Item A Above or Due to Statutory Changes or Review of Administrative Regulations
- a. These policies are being directly replaced by proposed policies listed above.
 1. 5141.7 Student Sports–Concussions
 2. 5145.14 On Campus Recruitment
 3. 6146 High School Graduation Requirements
 4. 6172.6 Distance Education Virtual/Online Courses

MOTION: A. Plante moved that the committee send the policies to rescind upon adoption of policies in item B above or due to statutory changes or review of administrative regulations in #4C to the board for possible rescinding at a board meeting subsequent to the November 19, 2024 board meeting. D. Linnetz seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

D. Non-Mandated Policies Recommended to Rescind

1. 6000 Instruction
 - i. A.Plante stated that this policy is very high level.
 - ii. D. Linnetz said that this policy was adopted recently, however, it is not needed as a policy.
 - iii. A. Uberti reminded the committee that this language is covered in the strategic plan.
2. 6114.6 Emergency Closings
 - i. The committee agreed that this is operational and not needed.
3. 6114.8 Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies
 - i. D. Linnetz remembers Shipman and Goodwin recommending rescinding this policy in the past.
 - ii. A.Uberti believes that some of this language is covered in other health related policies, specific to communicable diseases and responsibilities in schools.
 - iii. A.Uberti also stated that if there was another pandemic, the District would be bound to cooperate with the Health Director of the town and follow guidance that would be coming from other agencies.
4. 6151 Class Size
 - i. This policy is being replaced by the proposed regulation.
5. 6163.32 Live Animals in the Classroom
 - i. This policy is regulated by law and covered by 504 or ADA accommodations.
6. 6172 Alternative Education Programs
 - i. A.Uberti understands why this policy is not needed as it is informational.
 - ii. This information can be put in the handbook.
 - iii. This policy refers to programs like TAP, a different type of instruction. This is also not required by law to provide programs. In her opinion, this is a program, not a policy.
7. 6172.3 Home Schooling
 - i. This policy is operational and not needed.
8. 6172.5 Pilot Programs and Research Projects
 - i. A.Uberti said that this is operational. She created a form and recommends rescinding this policy and would be open to having the form as a regulation for staff.

MOTION: A.Plante moved that the committee recommends to the full board that non mandated policies in #4D 1-8 be rescinded. D. Linnetz seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

5. Review Policy Tracker

- a. D. Linnetz asked who will have access to this tracker.
 - i. S.Connell believes that only the committee will be able to edit and the Board will be able to view it. This is an internal tracker and not for public view.

6. Public Participation

- a. Deborra Zukowski, Newtown, has concerns about the understandability of certain policies that was talked about, particularly the budget policy and remote learning policy. In her opinion, attorneys focus on risk mitigation, not necessarily clear communication. She asked the committee to make sure they understand each policy before presenting to the full Board. She also stated that she has concerns about removing the policy that refers to the TAP program.

7. Adjourn

- a. A.Plante made a motion to adjourn the meeting. D. Linnetz seconded. Motion was unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm.

These are draft minutes