

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING
March 21, 2016
Carl T. Secor Administration Building
5:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

- I. Meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.
- II. **Policy Committee Members Present were:** Robert Cooke, Robert Huffman, Wayne Rohner, and Judy Summers
- III. **Non-Committee Members Present were:** Debbie Kulick, Gary Summers, and Lisa Van Why
- IV. **School Personnel Present were:** Jeffrey Bader, Eric Forsyth, Thomas Lesniewski, and Debra Wisotsky
- Members of the Public:** None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Robert Huffman to approve the minutes for November 16, 2015 (pages 1-2). Motion was seconded by Robert Cooke and carried unanimously, 4-0.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Wayne Rohner to approve the minutes for February 22, 2016 (pages 1-3). Motion was seconded by Robert Huffman and carried unanimously, 4-0.

VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Robert Cooke to approve this agenda for February 22, 2016 (page 1), with members of the Committee reserving the right to add to the agenda and take further action as the Committee deems appropriate. Motion was seconded by Robert Huffman and carried unanimously, 4-0.

VIII. POLICIES FOR DISCUSSION:

- a. Policy #103.2 Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students – NEW POLICY -- Mr. Forsyth shared that PSBA has not issued a sample policy to date; however, due to Office of Civil Rights advice, in Dear Colleague letters and recent Title VI mandates, administration felt the need for the district to have a policy in place. Mr. Forsyth stated he drafted a policy that he felt is liberal toward transgender and gender nonconforming individuals. Administration asked the committee for direction as to how liberal they wish to be. Do we want to base it on gender identity or the anatomically correct gender? Mrs. Summers expressed concern with privacy and confidentiality issues. She finds it troublesome that if we go with gender identity, parents may not know that child is choosing to identify with a sex other than their own. What's to stop students from being Jane today and Jack tomorrow? Mr. Rohner asked how many students do we currently have in this situation and if there has been any issue as to which restroom they can use? Dr. Lesniewski stated about 2-3 students at South and perhaps 2 at North and that at this point, most students have opted to use the nurse's restroom with no

pushback. Mr. Rohner stated that anyone who opts to use the opposite restroom is a brave soul and it's not for the faint of heart. He worries about bullying issues that could arise; if these things are currently working, we must be doing something right. Mr. Forsyth stated that there are suits being filed on both sides across the country. PSBA will most likely not provide a sample policy until there is specific case law. Mr. Bader mentioned that he believes that Bethlehem Area School District may have recently approved a transgender policy. Administration will look into this and bring Bethlehem's policy to the next meeting. Mrs. Summers suggested holding off on this policy for the time being.

- b. Policies #325, 425, 525 -- Dress & Grooming (Administrative, Professional, Support) -- Administration revised these policies to include the same language as the student Dress & Grooming Policy #221 with regard to "Full-length jeggings/leggings/tights may be worn under skirts or dresses that meet the length requirement". This sentence was inadvertently omitted from the staff policies.
- c. Policy #707 Use of Facilities – The committee discussed defining exactly which groups fall under school-related feeder programs as opposed to non-school related. Mr. Forsyth stated we need to have consistency when approving usage so everyone is treated fairly. We also need to establish a clear fee structure that is affordable so that groups are not constantly coming to the Board for waivers. Mr. Bader stated that Administration will be looking at the actual cost to run each room/area. We may want to also look at a seasonal rate for those looking to use the facilities long term. Personnel fees should also be established on an annual basis based on the average hourly rate for each staff position. This will allow for a more accurate quote of facility/personnel fees at the time of application and for the Board's determination of whether or not to waive fees. Administration will bring back a draft fee structure for the committee's review. Mr. Cooke inquired whether the district utilizes an evaluation form after each use to be sure there are no damages or issues with payment prior to allowing future use. The district does not currently utilize an evaluation form but does keep track of any issues. Administration will create an evaluation form for future use. This policy will be presented to the committee again for further discussion.
- d. Policy #824 Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries – NEW POLICY -- PSBA recently developed this policy addressing professional adult-student relationships in school settings. While not mandated, administration is recommending this policy for legal liability purposes. Mr. Forsyth added that upcoming professional development mandated by recent Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) will tie in with this policy and can be provided with no additional cost to the district. Teacher Induction classes require the 3-hour mandated reporting training requirements where we can provide training by providing examples and case law under the phrase "Professional Boundaries".
- e. Policy #909 Municipal Government Relations -- Administration presented their findings with regard to a question posed at the February 22, 2015 Policy Review Committee meeting. Mrs. Summers had inquired as to why, if 1.1 mil of taxpayer dollars fund local public libraries, why does this policy include language that the school district shall provide financial support for the local library. Isn't that double-dipping? Mr. Forsyth consulted with Chris Brown, Solicitor, to determine whether there was anything in school code mandating that school districts shall fund their local library. Mr. Forsyth stated they found no language to that effect and, therefore, recommends removing the entire paragraph from Policy 909.
- f. Policy #916 School Volunteers newly entitled "Volunteers" -- Administration presented PSBA's sample policy for review based on recent updates to the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL). Mr. Forsyth noted that after consulting with our solicitor, administration will revise the sample policy somewhat to better address and define "direct volunteer contact". Field trip chaperones (pg. 2) will be relocated from the classification of "position volunteer" to the classification of "guest volunteer". Field trip chaperones do not provide ongoing, regular or routine interaction as it is a one-time event. Field trip chaperones also work directly under the supervision and direction of a school administrator, teacher or other member of the school staff. Staff members are directly responsible for the supervision, care and control of the students while on field trips. Another revision will be that only "position volunteers" will be required to undergo a tuberculosis test.

Public Participation:

None

IX. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Wayne Rohner to authorize and direct the administration to post the following item(s) for PUBLIC REVIEW during the month of March and subsequent Board action in April: Policy #'s 325, 425, 525, 824, 909 and 916. Motion was seconded by Robert Huffman and carried unanimously 4-0.

X. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Wayne Rohner to authorize and direct the administration to take action on the following policies at the March 21, 2016 Board Meeting: Policies #004-Membership, 011-Principles of Governance and Leadership (formerly entitled Code of Conduct), 101-Mission, Vision, & Shared Values, 317, 417, 517 Conduct-Disciplinary Procedures-Administrative, Professional & Support Staff, and 529-Substitute Compensation. Motion was seconded by Robert Huffman and carried unanimously 4-0.

XI. NEXT MEETING: April 18, 2016 at 5:00 p.m

XII. ADJOURNMENT: 6:00 p.m.

Respectively submitted by,
Debra Wisotsky