



**Minutes  
Policy Committee**

**Avon Board of Education  
34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001  
Meeting Room One  
Tuesday, August 27, 2019 —6:00 p.m.**

**Attendance**

**Members Present:** Laura Young, Chair; David Cavanaugh; Jason Indomenico, Houston Putnam Lowry

**Member(s) Absent:** None

**Administration Present:** Dr. B. Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Roberto Medic, Director of Human Resources

**Others Present:** Shirley Moy, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair at 6:11 pm.*

II. Approval of June 11, 2019 Minutes

*Houston Putnam Lowry moved, Jason Indomenico seconded, to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2019 Policy Committee meeting.  
The motion passed 4-0-0.*

III. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

*Committee Chair Young moved, Houston Putnam Lowry seconded, to change the order of the agenda with New Business before Old Business.  
The motion passed 4-0-0.*

IV. New Business - Items for Review and Discussion

a. Discussion regarding Student Use of Electronic Devices

Dr. Carnemolla shared with the committee her past discussion with Avon High School Principal, Mr. Renkawitz, regarding electronic devices and concerns. At this time, the Superintendent is not recommending that the Policy Committee implement a district wide policy. The Superintendent thanked Mr. Renkawitz for being able to join the meeting on such short notice, especially given that it was the day before the first day of school. Dr. Carnemolla clarified that currently there are no district level policies regarding student use of electronic devices, however, there are building level procedures, such as the ones Mr. Renkawitz was prepared to share with the committee. Mr. Renkawitz stated that this school year, the high school has purchased shoe tree holders to be used for cell phones in every classroom. The expectation is that students' cell phones will be placed in these during the duration of each class unless the teacher has the students using the phones for educational reasons. It has also been explained to students that this is the practice during AP/SAT

exams. Phones are also to stay in the holders while students use rest rooms. There is some discretion for student use of cell phones during study hall if students want to listen to music or use their phones for research. Mr. Renkawitz stated that there are no plans regarding smart watches at this time. He also shared that last year, students were caught taking pictures of tests and sending test questions to friends. As discussion was had regarding student use of other electronic devices, Dr. Carnemolla reminded the Board that the district does not require students to bring their own devices and chromebooks are provided for students' use. The use of chromebooks can be monitored to stop some inappropriate student activity and such usage offers more control than having students bring their own devices. The Committee asked if teachers were on board with enforcing use of the cell phone trees to which Mr. Renkawitz responded that he had received no negative feedback. Furthermore, he believes that for this to be successful the policy needs to be implemented uniformly. Mr. Renkawitz further explained that while teachers are expected to build positive relationships with students, the school administration will handle any issues with offenders and possibly even place a phone call home if needed. Mr. Renkawitz and Dr. Carnemolla reminded the committee that student communication from and to parents needs to be communicated appropriately and through proper channels during school hours. The Committee commented that smart watches may be a bigger issue than previously understood and should be monitored. Mr. Renkawitz replied that establishing protocol with cell phone use is a first step. The committee asked how other APS schools were dealing with this issue. Dr. Carnemolla replied that students cannot have cell phones on their person and phones would be taken if seen. The Policy Committee thanked Mr. Renkawitz for his time in explaining the procedures and asked to have another conversation at the end of the year. There was also some discussion on national trends.

V. Old Business - Items for Continued Review and Discussion

a. Policy 4118.11 – Nondiscrimination (Personnel)

Mr. Medic reviewed with committee members the edits made after consulting with Board counsel. Ancestry and genetic information was added to the list of protected characteristics; also, a reference to “veterans” was left in the policy revision as recommended by counsel and defined by CT General Statute although veterans are not a protected class per se. Edits to keep language consistent were also made. The nondiscrimination form was also edited and now mirrors the Sexual Harassment form. The Committee Chair thanked Mr. Medic for his work to the policy and there was no further discussion or changes on the policy.

b. Policy 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination (Students)

Mr. Medic reviewed for the committee changes made to the Nondiscrimination policy in regards to students. Ancestry is now listed and genetic information is a protected class only for discrimination of employment and does not pertain to education. “Veteran” status remained intact to mirror state statute and upper classmen can enroll. There are also other provisions in the District’s Code of Conduct policy that covers teasing; bullying and sexual harassment also overlap. The form was also edited for consistency with the other forms. Complaint procedure now adds inclusion of the name of the student. After discussion, while genetic information is more related to employment and health insurance matters and there is no reporting mechanism for genetic information, Dr. Carnemolla and the committee agreed to include genetic information in the policy for consistency.

***Committee Chair Young moved, Houston Putnam Lowry seconded, to move both Policies 4118.11 and 5145.4 forward for Board approval.***

***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

- VI. Communication from Public
- VII. Future Items for Review
  - a. Student Records; Confidentiality
- VIII. Adjournment  
***Laura Young moved, David Cavanaugh seconded, to adjourn the meeting.  
The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:55 pm.***

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair  
*Laura Young, September 6, 2019*

Minutes respectfully received by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary  
*Jeffrey S. Fleischman, September 6, 2019*

***Minutes are approved at the next Policy meeting, and any corrections to the minutes, if needed, will be made at that time.***