



**Policy Committee
Special Meeting**

**Avon Board of Education
34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001
Meeting Room Two
Monday, September 17, 2018 —7:00 p.m.**

Attendance

Members Present: Laura Young, Chair; David Cavanaugh; Jason Indomenico

Member(s) Absent: Houston Putnam Lowry

Administration Present: Dr. B. Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Donna Nestler-Rusack, Assistant Superintendent

Others Present: Deb Chute, Ex Officio; Shirley Moy, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair at 6:01 pm.

II. Approval of June 12, 2018 Minutes

Jason Indomenico moved, David Cavanaugh seconded, to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2018 Policy Committee meeting.

The motion passed 3-0-0.

III. Communication from Public

- Leslie Mather, Avon resident, expressed her concern that parents' and students' input on the Homework Advisory Committee may not have been implemented into the revised homework policy. Mrs. Mather also added that more communication from that committee would have been helpful in knowing the status of their efforts as the parents were left out towards the end of the process and have never been informed of its status.

IV. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

a. Policies for Review and Discussion

1. Policy 4111 – Recruitment and Selection

The Superintendent reviewed the current policy on recruitment and selection, which the district is seeking to amend. Board counsel was asked to draft a policy which is fairly straightforward and in accordance with CT General Statutes 10-151. The revised policy states that the Superintendent will make recommendations regarding the appointment of individuals who are non-affiliated to the Board and that the terms of employment will be subject to the approval of the Board. Mr. Cavanaugh commented that this was exactly what the Board was seeking.

David Cavanaugh moved, Jason Indomenico seconded, that Policy 4111 be considered approved and transmitted to the full Board for their consideration at the September 2018 meeting.

The motion passed 3-0-0.

2. Policy 5125 – Student Records; Confidentiality

Dr. Carnemolla explained that Policy 5125 is a single page policy with many pages of regulations however, there have been updates to what is required as of the last legislative session. The Superintendent suggested the district adopt the model policy by Shipman and Goodwin regarding Student Privacy in order to be in compliance with current statutes. This will also cover confidentiality of student records. The recommended policy simplifies and streamlines student confidentiality issues and will combine various policies the district currently has in place regarding confidentiality. Certain forms would also need to be reviewed. The district will move to follow the new state statutes even before the Policy is approved, as the new statutes were retroactive to July 1, 2018. The Superintendent will work on revising this policy and related regulations to bring to the Policy Committee for a second read.

3. Policy 5141 – Student Health Services

Dr. Carnemolla shared how this particular policy was very complicated with multiple, and some new, components, i.e., allergy management; medication management; student health assessments; screenings, immunizations, Narcan administration, Glycogen Storage disease, oral health assessments, etc. In light of new regulations, Shipman & Goodwin was asked for recommendations to help address changes to state statute. Ms. Young added that not only was legal counsel consulted, but the district's own internal staff (Nurse Supervisor and Director of Pupil Services) who deal with this on a daily basis were brought in to review the policy and to suggest how to implement new state statutes. The Superintendent added that the entirety of the health policy must be reviewed as new regulations must be added and legal reference must be updated. The changes to administration of medication also needs to be addressed and will be a stand-alone policy due to its complexity. Because a lot of time and effort was spent on developing the current policy, Shipman & Goodwin was asked to leave our current policy as is and suggest changes to reflect the new statutes. The district was advised to consider renaming the policy to Student Health Assessments/Screenings/Immunizations to more clearly explain what information was included in the policy. A redline version of our policy was returned from S&G with red suggesting deletions and blue inclusion. Both Pupil Services and the Nurse's Office have been given copies to review and ensure that what is suggested can be implemented. This is something that needs to be done sooner rather than later to be in compliance with current law. Fortunately our nurses are updated on the changes to laws regularly so they are already doing what needs to be done. Mr. Cavanaugh suggested that the Nurse Supervisor and Director of Pupil Services be asked to address the feasibility and implementation of the revised policy when this is presented to the Board. A summary/bulletin points of changes will also be provided to the full Board to offer clarity on major changes to the state statute - Glycogen Storage disease; administration of medication; health assessments and screening; and oral health. Mr. Indomenico suggested that the policy be cleaned up and further edited before it is brought to the Board. The Superintendent agreed and would appreciate the additional time to work on the policy. Ms. Young suggested that this policy be brought back to the Policy Committee for a second read before being brought to the Board. The Nurse Supervisor and Director of Pupil Services will be asked to attend the October Policy meeting when this will be presented again.

4. Policy 5144.1 – Use of Physical Force

Dr. Carnemolla explained that although this policy was recently looked at, the change in statute needs to be added to the policy; exclusionary time out must be defined and added to the regulations; as well as the five procedures for an exclusionary time out. Legal reference will also need to be updated. Professional development will need to be done

with pupil support staff who are already aware of this change. Such proposed change in policy will protect the Board and show the District is compliant with the new statute. Mr. Indomenico asked if the district is confident the old policy was being implemented properly to which Dr. Rusack replied that with the change of directors we may not have been in total compliance as the training was not consistent. Dr. Carnemolla added that the current District policy is well done and more conservative than the model policy from Shipman. If we follow District policy and regulations as we ought to, Dr. Carnemolla felt the District was in a good place. Ms. Young added that with additional professional development and mandatory reporting handling of this matter should improve.

David Cavanaugh moved, Jason Indomenico seconded, that Policy 5144.1 be considered approved and transmitted to the full Board for their consideration at the September 2018 meeting.

The motion passed 3-0-0.

5. Policy 6154 – Homework

Dr. Carnemolla shared with the committee that this policy was brought back to the Curriculum Professional Development Council (CPDC) for review and to address some of the Policy Committee's questions. The Superintendent reminded the committee that the policy is what needs to be reviewed and not so much the regulations as she would like to get this to the Board. It is concerning to start the school year without having the policy adopted. Administrators and teachers are anxious without knowing which homework policy to follow. Dr. Rusack explained that it was difficult to gather back the Homework Advisory Committee so it was brought to the CPDC for their review which has representation from every building and grade (about 45 people). Jess Giannini, PGS Principal and Chair of the Homework Advisory Council summarized for the CPDC the work of the Council. The CPDC appreciated that the work was based on the results of research and not random decisions and liked the committee's recommendations. Their concerns centered on how this policy would be communicated for implementation. Ms. Chute, Board Chair, who attended the CPDC meeting, shared that the policy is meant to be vaguer than the regulations. The policy is to explain the purpose of homework while the regulations give more definition and direction. It was understood that there is a difference in the elementary level vs. the high school level. Dr. Rusack added that the time element of homework was also discussed and teachers felt that students work at different paces and felt time recommendations were arbitrary. The recommendation is to implement the policy as proposed by the counsel after spending two years doing the research and work. The most important piece is to have the ongoing conversations. Ms. Young commented that there were concerns about homework being assigned during holidays and not just religious holidays to which Dr. Rusack replied that this is where the conversations are had in interpreting the policy. Dr. Carnemolla confirmed that the new policy included reference to not assigning homework during long vacations, long weekends and holidays. Ms. Young would like some timeframe as to how the policy is being implemented and reevaluate it to which Dr. Rusack suggested the policy be brought back to the CPDC in May to gather their feedback. Ms. Young suggested that another survey monkey be sent out to families and students to assess the community's feelings about the implementation of the policy. Dr. Rusack replied that a district survey is sent out once a year and instead of sending out two surveys just tailor the annual survey a little more to address the questions about what was changed this year. Ms. Young commented that there was an 80% response rate on the previous homework survey because it was such an important topic and so many people in the community expressed opinions and concerns about it. Ms. Young asked if there was reference to giving back homework to which Dr. Rusack explained that was in a different policy. Dr. Rusack

added that this policy will also impact grading and how much homework is weighted and how it is defined. Mr. Cavanaugh mentioned that although the policy does not have a time limit as to when homework is returned the word needs to get out to teachers the importance of returning homework to which Dr. Rusack said that grades can be monitored on PowerSchool. Ms. Young stated that although she values the opinion of the CPDC there is also value in a community survey and hopes to move towards that in the May timeframe. Mr. Cavanaugh was concerned about the parent who felt the parents of the Homework Advisory Council were excluded from the work of the committee and voiced her concern about the proposed policy. Dr. Carnemolla will reach out to the parent to explain the lag in presenting the policy. Ms. Young added that it was not a deliberate act to exclude the parents and students but happened due to the various changes that took place in the District. Ms. Young thinks it is important to ask for feedback from the parents and students especially with something that is as important as homework and something which parents and students will be looking at closely. Mr. Cavanaugh addressed the concerns of some of the parents who have spoken up and feels the way homework is handled within this policy those parents may be satisfied. The conversations had about the value of homework and how much is being assigned then this policy may be enough. Mr. Indomenico commented that the regulation guidelines be consistent through the grades. Dr. Carnemolla agreed that these issues will be fixed.

Jason Indomenico moved, Laura Young seconded, that Policy 6154 be considered approved and transmitted to the full Board for their consideration at the September 2018 meeting.

The motion passed 3-0-0

V. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

VI. Future Items for Review

- a. Bylaws
- b. Organizational Chart
- c. Student Code of Conduct
- d. Student Dress Code
- e. Student Use of Electronic Equipment

VII. Adjournment

The committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:15pm

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair

Laura Young, September 21, 2018