

Board of Education, Ellington CT Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

The Policy Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met virtually on Monday, July 8, 2020 at 5:15 pm.

Attendees: Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services, Ms. Jennifer Brown, Administrative Assistant/HR Coordinator, Mr. Craig Meuser, Attorney (5:30)

Committee Members: Ms. Liz Nord, Ms. Jen Dzen, Ms. Kris Picard-Wambolt

Absent Committee Members: Ms. Kerry Socha, Mr. Michael Purcaro

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:20 pm by Ms. Picard-Wambolt.

Agenda Items:

1. Citizens and Staff Forum

No one addressed the committee.

Please note, the agenda items 2 – 5 were addressed out of order to await the arrival of Attorney Meuser.

5. Continued Discussion of Draft Policy 9328 – Attendance via Electronic Equipment / Live Streaming Meetings

After the discussion at our last Policy Committee meeting, this draft policy was revised to address the concerns of the committee. This included removing the requirement that Board members state the reason for attending electronically and having that reason listed in the minutes. Additionally the restriction limiting a Board member's electronic attendance to an annual maximum of 4 meetings was removed. The requirement of a physical quorum was removed, and the option to live stream committee meetings was included. After further discussion, concerns were raised by committee members regarding included language warning Board members that electronic attendance is not to be used for their convenience or to avoid physical attendance at a particular meeting. Also, of concern was language requiring Board members to identify persons present in the location from where they're attending electronically. These two sentences will be removed for the final draft of the policy.

A motion was made to recommend to the full Board acceptance of new Policy 9328 – Attendance via Electronic Equipment / Live Streaming Meetings as amended.

1st: Ms. Dzen 2nd: Ms. Nord Vote: Unanimous/Passed

2. Continued Discussion of Revised Policy 5145.5 – Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities, Sexual Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment

This policy was discussed at length at our last Policy Committee meeting. There have been no additional changes made to the proposed revised policy. The administrative regulations, along with those for Policies 4118.11 and 4118.112, will be reviewed and revised by Dr. Nicol, Dr. LaPorte, and Attorney Meuser during the summer and upon completion, presented to the committee for review. Administrative regulations, unlike policies, do not require formal Board approval.

A motion was made to recommend to the full Board acceptance of revised Policy 5145.5 – Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities, Sexual Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment as presented.

1st: Ms. Nord 2nd: Ms. Dzen Vote: Unanimous/Passed

3. Discussion of Revised Policy 4118.11 – Nondiscrimination

This policy was reviewed in conjunction with Policy 4118.12 – Sexual Discrimination / Harassment as a result of the recent revisions in regulations to Title IX at the federal level. This revision involved cleaning up some of the language and moving paragraphs that belonged within the body of the policy, from the administrative regulations. Additionally a paragraph was added to highlight the rights of the employee and clarify there is a separate process in compliance with Title IX for employee complaints involving alleged sexual discrimination, and/or sexual harassment. Included in this language is a reference to Policy 4118.112.

A motion was made to recommend to the full Board acceptance of revised Policy 4118.11 – Nondiscrimination as presented.

1st: Ms. Dzen 2nd: Ms. Nord Vote: Unanimous/Passed

4. Discussion of Revised Policy 4118.112 – Sexual Discrimination / Harassment

This policy is the employee counterpart to the student Policy 5145.5, and like that policy required updating and revision as a result of the changes in regulations to Title IX at the federal level. Attorney Meuser and Dr. Nicol explained the changes and implications thereof with the committee. They include, but are not limited to the definitions of sex discrimination, quid pro quo sexual harassment, hostile environment, actual knowledge, and formal complaint. Additionally, the reporting procedures and grievance process are outlined. Retaliation, confidentiality, training, publication, record keeping, and notice are also addressed. Attorney Meuser addressed all of the committee's questions and concerns. He explained this policy is reflective of the very prescriptive federal law, nothing has been added or altered.

A motion was made to recommend to the full Board acceptance of revised Policy 4118.112 – Sexual Discrimination / Harassment as presented.

1st: Ms. Dzen 2nd: Ms. Nord Vote: Unanimous/Passed

Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

First: Ms. Dzen Second: Ms. Nord

Vote: Unanimous/ Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm by Ms. Picard-Wambolt.

Respectfully submitted by _____

Kris Picard-Wambolt, Policy Committee Chair