

Board of Education, Ellington CT Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

The Policy Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met on Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the School Administration Building, 47 Main Street, Ellington, Connecticut.

Attendees: Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Erin McGurk, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Mr. Frederick Dorsey, Attorney for the Board
Committee Members: Ms. Kris Picard-Wambolt, Ms. Tracey Kiff-Judson (ex officio)
Absent Committee Members: Dr. Jaime Foster, Mr. Michael Purcaro, Ms. Kerry Socha

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Ms. Picard-Wambolt.

Agenda Items:

1. Discussion regarding Student Discipline Investigation Protocol

At a recent Board meeting, an inquiry was made by a parent as to the policy or protocol regarding investigations by administration into student activities that may result in disciplinary action. Their specific concern was when parents are to be involved in or notified of such investigations. Attorney Dorsey discussed best practice and legal requirements at length with the committee. It is his recommendation that the Board does not create a prescriptive policy regarding student discipline investigation nor should the school administration create additional due process practices. The committee agrees with his recommendation and feels that ongoing training of administrators in investigative practices and cyber-security should be a priority. We have requested follow-up in this regard to be reported back to the Board by the Superintendent.

2. Discussion regarding Wellness School Protocol

There have been several inquiries made to the Board by parents regarding policies or protocol regarding wellness related to flu prevention. The committee reviewed CDC recommendations and guidelines for schools in relation to this issue. We discussed what is and is not included in the various student handbooks on this and related topics. Dr. McGurk shared with the committee aspects of curriculum that cover these topics. She also assured the committee that our school nurses annually review and revise (as necessary) all guidelines. The committee was also informed of a flu clinic at Ellington High School at which staff can and is encouraged to obtain their annual flu shot. The committee requested that wellness guidelines be included uniformly in all student handbooks.

3. Continued discussion regarding Administrative Regulations

Dr. McGurk informed the committee that all Administrative Regulations that are current and updated have now been put in their rightful place within the policy manual. Additionally all regulations are now formatted with an "R" before the policy number ("P" for Policy) as to make clear what is a policy and what is a regulation. Dr. McGurk stated there are seven or eight regulations outstanding that require review and possible revision. She presented three to the committee at the meeting. They are as follows:

Field Trips: Language was added to the regulation stating that in some circumstances parents or guardians may be required to sign a waiver of liability protecting the Board.

Selection of School Library Learning Resources: This was an existing policy but was not included in the most recent version of the policy manual. It is recommended for inclusion by this committee. Dr. McGurk, in collaboration with our school librarians have developed new regulations to be included

with this policy. They detail the process and procedures to be followed when removing books from circulation.

Evaluation and Selection of Books and Instructional Material: This is an existing policy that has not changed. Dr. McGurk has revised and clarified the regulations. These outline the process of textbook adoption procedures as well as requests for reconsideration of instructional materials procedures. The latter clearly states that no student shall be required to read a text or view material which the parent or guardian views as objectionable and alternate texts and materials will be available. At the committee's request, language regarding follow up will be added to the regulation.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m. by Ms. Picard-Wambolt.

Respectfully submitted by _____

Kris Picard-Wambolt, Policy Committee Chair