



## Policy, Personnel & Legal Committee Meeting Minutes April 15, 2021

### Committee Purpose

*The Policy, Personnel & Legal Committee provides the Board with a venue to fully vet policies, discuss personnel issues and address legal matters of concern.*

### Committee Leadership

*(Board) Chris Smiley, Mike Donato, Linda Johnston, Grant Keener  
(Administrators) Tab Musser, others as applicable/available*

*Per Board Policy, if you intend to record any portion of the meeting proceedings, you must notify the Communications Director or other Administrator prior to the start of the meeting. A public announcement will be made at the opening of the meeting to inform all attendees that all or part of the meeting is being recorded by an audience member.*

**Start Time:** 5:03 p.m.

**Location:** Public Board Room at the District Administration Building

### **Attendees:**

**Board Members:** *Adam Aloisi, Dylan Bard, Mike Donato, Linda Johnston, Grant Keener, Charles Merris, Pat Wagner, Chris Smiley*

**Staff:** *Mike Bromirski, Bill Brossman, Denise Galen, Mike Graham, Maria Hoover, Deb Krantz, Tab Musser*

**Other:** *One resident/community member, and Jacquelyn Strybos, Recording Secretary*

**Time for Public Comment** (5-minute limit per Board Policy 903):

None

### **Agenda Items:**

Dr. Tab Musser, Assistant Superintendent, welcomed the group to the meeting. He noted there was not a specific theme with regard to the policies on the agenda, unlike some meetings. The agenda includes several policies being brought before the committee as part of the district's intentional cycle of review to keep things current, even if there are no recommended changes to an existing policy.

1. First Reading Consideration



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a. 113 Special Education

Ms. Denise Galen, Director of Special Education, presented Policy 113 which was being reviewed as part of our policy cycle. Ms. Galen shared that the Special Education program and plan, which is one part of the district's comprehensive plan, were monitored during the 19-20 school year. As part of that process, this policy was pulled and reviewed. It was found to be in compliance, as written, with no need for any edits. This policy will be on the agenda for approval of first reading at the May 11, 2021 school board meeting.

b. 150 Title I – Comparability of Services

Mrs. Maria Hoover, Assistant Superintendent, explained that this is a new policy recommended by PSBA for inclusion as a monitoring requirement for districts receiving Title I federal funding. As outlined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), an LEA may only receive Title I funds if it uses state and local funds to provide services in schools that are substantially comparable. This policy directs that the district uses state and local funds to provide services/staffing across all schools comparably regardless of whether or not a school receives Title I funds. The policy further outlines the requirement of determining compliance through annual reporting of comparability of the staff to student ratio across comparable schools within the district. There was a discussion as to the delegation of responsibility for annual completion of the Detailed School Data Sheet and submission of the Comparability Assurance Form. It was agreed that the Federal Programs Coordinator would assume that responsibility. With the appropriate selection added, noting this responsibility, this policy will be on the agenda for approval of first reading at the May 11, 2021 school board meeting.

c. 143 Standards for Persistently Dangerous Schools

d. 144 Standards for Victims of Violent Crimes

Dr. Tab Musser presented these policies together on behalf of Mr. Ryan Jones, District Safety and Security Officer, who was not able to be present. Dr. Musser shared that both of these policies were being brought before the committee solely because neither one had been reviewed or updated since originally adopted in 2005. Mr. Jones had reviewed the existing policies and compared them to the latest versions available from PSBA, dated 2017. Both policies were determined to be acceptable as written and therefore Dr. Musser recommended, they be moved forward with no changes other than updating the review date. These policies will be on the agenda for approval of first reading at the May 11, 2021 school board meeting.

e. 705 Safety

Dr. Tab Musser presented this policy on behalf of Mr. Ryan Jones, indicating that he did not wish to move the policy to first reading. Instead, he wanted to bring it forward for conversation in order to gauge board thinking. Two versions of the policy were presented and discussed. The PSBA



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version was noted to be more encompassing than the district version, which basically states that the district will do things that school code and law require us to do. Dr. Musser noted that the committee continues to work on not having policies in place that are redundant with regards to things the district is required to do. Dr. Musser shared that Mr. Jones would like to bring a draft of a more comprehensive version of the policy to the next committee meeting for consideration. He proposes the new policy combine some of what is in our current version with the PSBA version. A draft of a more comprehensive policy will be brought to the May 13, 2021 committee meeting for consideration.

#### **f. 209 Health Examinations/Screenings**

Mrs. Debra Krantz, Health Services Department Coordinator, presented this policy for review with a few minor edits. Mrs. Krantz noted this policy had not been updated in a number of years. The last revision was in 2010. The medical technician position was removed from the list of those who perform screenings as it is not a role that is applicable to current district staffing. Tuberculosis testing was removed from the policy. The district is no longer required to test for TB, as we are not in an area considered to be at high risk for the disease. Changes were also made to note that parental consent is needed prior to dental and/or medical examinations being completed in district schools. Board President, Mike Donato thanked Mrs. Krantz, on behalf of The Board, for all of the hard work and dedication she and her staff of nurses have done during this challenging year. This policy with these minor edits will be on the agenda for approval of first reading at the May 11, 2021 school board meeting.

#### **g. 218 Student Discipline**

Dr. Bill Brossman, 11<sup>th</sup> grade Assistant Principal, presented this policy and noted that it was being updated with additional language as a direct result of the approval of the new Policy 218.3 last month. Dr. Brossman noted the linkage between policy 218.3 which addresses off-campus behavior and the district's existing policy 218, which is the header policy for student discipline. The policy was edited to include language, taken directly from Policy 218.3 and is in alignment with the latest recommendations from PSBA. Aside from this addition, all other language within the policy remains as written as it is consistent with current policies and practices. This policy with the noted edit will be on the agenda for approval of first reading at the May 11, 2021 school board meeting.

#### **h. 239 Foreign Exchange Students**

Dr. Bill Brossman presented this policy which was last updated in 2014 and thanked Mr. Grant Keener for working with Mr. Jim Dague, High School Principal on reviewing and updating this policy. The delegation of responsibility was changed from the Superintendent to the High School Principal. There was discussion regarding the ability of the High School Principal to access and



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determine visa status through the highly protected Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Dr. Musser shared that most of our exchange student applicants come to us on J-1 visas, where an exchange organization handles all of the necessary securing and verification of status.

Verbiage was added for clarification of ways in which English proficiency may be demonstrated; providing a definitive due date (June 1<sup>st</sup>) for applying for admission; a recommendation of a minimum grade level equivalent before enrolling in the district; the requirement to commit to a minimum of one academic semester, with preference given to students who intend to attend for a full academic year; and the awarding of a certificate of attendance for participants as they are not eligible to receive a high school diploma.

Dr. Musser explained that the time period of the placement is controlled by the type of visa an exchange student applies under. As noted above, most are on J-1 visas with a placement of at least one academic semester or longer. Very few of our applicants come to us with the F-1, full-year visa requests as this type of a placement requires an individual to pay the full-year's tuition rate up front. A question was raised of how many foreign exchange students the district hosts on a typical year, with the average being 3-5. This policy with the noted edits will be on the agenda for approval of first reading at the May 11, 2021 school board meeting.

#### **2. Discussion**

##### **a. 248/348 Unlawful Harassment**

Dr. Musser shared an email notification from PSBA indicating that these policies should be retired based on our recent Title IX updates to Policy 103 and 104, which in effect make 248 and 348 duplicates. Dr. Musser requested the board's permission to officially retire them as they have been replaced. Mr. Keener expressed his reservations in simply abandoning any policies addressing unlawful harassment without a detailed review to ensure duplicity before removal. Both policies will return to committee for review at the May 13, 2021 Meeting.

##### **b. 702.1 Property Crowdfunding**

Dr. Tab Musser discussed the property crowdfunding policy which had been given a tentative pass earlier in the current school year, pending additional work on administrative regulations on how it would actually play out. Unfortunately, other items have taken precedence (Covid response, ensuring safe/healthy schools) of their time and attention as the year has progressed. The Administration is requesting this policy be tabled until such time as they can devote the proper attention to it to ensure that both the business side implications and the instructional side of this policy are addressed. The administration would like to bring the policy forward with any edits or recommendations at a later date accompanied by a set of administrative guidelines. A concern that the policy would continue to be pushed off indefinitely was raised and an agreement was reached



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to bring this policy to committee early in the new school year with the plan to have it ready for review at the October 14, 2021 committee meeting and pending approval, move it directly to second reading.

c. 216 Student Records

Mr. Michael Graham, Chief Information Officer, gave a brief overview of the district's current policy, which was last revised in 2010. He noted that obviously a lot has changed since that time with regards to privacy, electronic records, records retention, and providing records in multiple languages. Our current policy is 3 pages long. Mike received a new draft of the PSBA version of the policy which is 15 pages long. Due to the weightiness of this subject, Mike will continue to work on a draft for Hempfield, with the plan to bring an updated version to the May 13, 2021 committee meeting for consideration.

d. 123 Interscholastic Athletics

Mr. Mike Bromirski, Superintendent, brought this policy to the committee's attention, noting that although it had recently been revised (November 2020), he felt it lacked enough specificity and deserved another look. Components of the policy should be reviewed and potentially updated to provide more clarity and specificity. He highlighted a few discrepancies and areas lacking the level of specificity the district needs to answer questions related to various issues such as, eligibility criteria, participation, and conduct. He suggested that the board create a committee with stakeholders from defined roles, including: board members, district staff members, district director of athletics, coaches, and community members. They would be charged with doing the necessary leg work in consultation with the district solicitor and PIAA representatives, providing updates throughout, and then drafting a revised policy with the added level of specificity to bring back to the committee for discussion. The goal would be to bring a draft for first reading to the July 13, 2021 school board meeting, allowing enough time for discussion and revision if necessary, to secure approval and implementation in August, prior to the official start of the Fall sports season. After much discussion as to who would lead the committee and which board members should or could be part of it, Mr. Bromirski asked board members to consider their participation and to contact board president, Mr. Mike Donato with their interest within 12 hours. Mr. Bromirski will also consult with Mr. Donato with non-board member suggestions for consideration to include.

There was an executive session immediately following the committee meeting to discuss a student issue.

**Future Meeting Dates:**

*May 13, 2021*

**Board Review / Action Items:** *None*

**The meeting concluded at 6:03 p.m.**