

**Stonington Board of Education  
Policy Committee – 7:00 p.m.  
Minutes of Special Meeting October 20, 2010**

This meeting was called to order at 7:05pm

In attendance: Sam Agnello, Faith Leitner, Gail MacDonald, Leanne Masterjoseph, Alisa Morrison, Doug Rea & Interested Community Members

Gail MacDonald opened by describing the purpose of the meeting, which is to gather public input on the proposed changes to Drug and Alcohol policy language. No decisions would be made tonight.

The following individuals addressed the Board's committee:

C. Crowley, L. Foster, P. Gayowski, J. Hayes, A. Hoops, P. Hoops, K. Keller, C. Nadeau, J. Nickerson, P. Sartor, P. Solar, L. Stearns, B. Sternberg, E. Wheeler & J. Worstral

Summary of public comment:

- Appreciation for Board's motivation
- Concern that the Board should have no authority beyond school grounds/activities
- Inquiry re: Board's consultation with legal opinion
- Question re: whether policies for staff behavior have been discussed
- Concern over year-round nature of policy
- Concern over use of cyber images and potential for altering images to implicate students
- Statement re: the Board's responsibility to make use of police dogs
- Concern that Board should focus on time students are in schools – allow parents to parent
- Is this too much government?
- Concern that policy was changed years ago to limit school involvement in these issues
- Concern over equity of response between parents when children make these choices
- Should athletes and extra-curricular participants be held to a different standard?
- Coaches need to send consistent messages
- Could policy yield unintended consequences?
- Should everyone "stay in their swim lanes"?
- Why don't we start this policy with younger students?
- Is the Board over-reaching?
- Questions over current response to incidents
- How does participation involving wine at religious services play into this policy?
- Concern over Board's process – quorum issues

- Policy is intrusive
- Questions over validity of referenced statutes
- Minutes from subcommittee should be more informative and clear to the public – not behind a curtain
- Questions of other schools' policies
- Might students attempting to leave a party where alcohol is present be in endangered?
- Educators should educate – parents should parent – police should deal with illegal activity
- How will this process move forward?
- Take advantage of meetings that students and parents must attend to participate in these activities to educate families about dangers of alcohol, drugs and tobacco
- How can we find other way to communicate and be proactive?
- Is travel to other countries where alcohol use by minors is allowed covered in this proposal?
- Why discriminate against those who participate in activities? Should cover all students
- How can consistency of enforcement be achieved?
- Can another public meeting be held when revisions are made?
- Are all coaches in favor? Statements should be on the record. Process is a problem here
- Does punishing students for these behaviors make them feel "alone" and how does that impact the emotional state of students?
- Can language specific to the expected actions of coaches be included? Its unfair for coaches to be at odds
- Let the coaches solve this – will cause more problems than its worth?
- Some struggle with the summer component of this policy
- Have students been involved in these discussions?
- Can community service be part of this?
- Belief in the value of sports and of teaching kids there are consequences for choices
- We need to come together as a community
- To avoid getting caught, kids may branch off into smaller groups to drink. Kids may be safer – around kids who know how to respond if there is an emergency if they are in bigger groups.
- This may require an appeal process
- During the school year and during the season, students are fair game – summer is not in the school's jurisdiction

Meeting adjourned at 8:46pm




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Gail MacDonald

Board Chairwoman