

Policy Review Committee Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2013

The meeting opened at 6:06 p.m.

In attendance:

Cliff Sylvia, Chair

Judi DeBonise

Deb Freitas

Jan Rotella (arrived late)

Rebecca Hemsley-Gakidis

Joyce Bacchiocchi

Beth Giuffrida

Ilona Campinha

Geoff Swett - guest

Motion to accept the minutes from January 24, 2013 by Deb Freitas and was seconded by Judi DeBonise with no edits to the minutes. So moved.

Review of Policies

There was some discussion about the library policy and how and why it was split, looking back realizing it had been two months since the discussion started. We decided to wait for Jan Rotella to arrive to continue on with discussion of the policy.

Retention Policy

It was discussed that Elementary K-5 needed to be changed to K-4 and that Middle School needs to be changed from 6-8 to 5-8; all changes noted in color.

Intermediary intervention and all other verbiage changes discussed - note all changes in color when finalizing policy.

Retention policy was discussed at a Central Administration meeting with building principals. The changes presented to Policy Review Committee were those approved at that meeting. Mr. Swett brought up research about retention before 3rd grade when reading skills not in place and how detrimental it can be to later success. Dr. Sylvia asked that we trust the educational professionals. Mr. Swett - wondering if there should be a more definitive policy rather than a case by case basis in regards to the psychological effect when students are singled out. No further discussion.

Motion to accept the changes for **Retention Policy** by Deb Freitas and was seconded by Judi DeBonise, All in favor- unanimous on changes

School Wellness Program Policy

Jan Rotella indicated that Dr. Rabinovitch had sent policy to Deb Perry (Food Services) and Sue Aiken (Nurse) for their review and to reflect latest state laws and regulations. Highlighting indicates changes due to laws and regulations. No further discussion.

Motion to approve the changes for **School Wellness Program Policy** by Deb Freitas and was seconded by Judi DeBonise. All in favor- unanimous on changes.

Library Policy (2nd half) now - Reconsideration of Instructional Resources

Library Policy - 1st half of the document was approved by school committee. Separated from the original *Library Selection Policy* was the review/challenge of textbooks. The second half of the original Library Policy document focused on challenged books in the curriculum - "Reconsideration of public complaints about the curriculum or library and instructional materials". The policy replacing the second half of the old Library Policy is now **Reconsideration of Instructional Resources**, so that the policy would take into account any challenged materials used in schools – in the classroom or the library.

No further discussion.

Motion to approve the changes for the old Library Policy (2nd half) to become **Reconsideration of Instructional Resources** was initiated by Deb Freitas and was seconded by Judi DeBonise, All in favor- unanimous on changes.

Home and Hospital Instruction Policy

The Home and Hospital Instruction policy discussion focused on the question of the term "highly qualified". Jan Rotella explained that hospitalized students are tutored by the contracted tutors from the hospital, Education Inc. (in most cases) but our teachers assign and correct the work. The tutor just delivers the instruction; the tutor is the vehicle by which the student receives the information. The only changes in the document were adding "or designee" after principal in number 1 and in 3 taking out Special Education and adding "Student Services" in its place.

Motion to approve the changes in **Home and Hospital Instruction Policy** by Joyce Bacchiocchi, seconded by Judi DeBonise. All in favor- unanimous on changes.

Attendance Policy

This was the second visit to this policy; we discussed the concerns from last discussion.

1. The 2 day policy in getting documentation into the school for consideration.
2. That we may need to be more flexible.

The appeals process was explained by Deb Freitas as a means to address these concerns.

There was a discussion of #4 in regards to how parents are notified of possible loss of credit due to excessive unexcused absences; report cards and PowerSchool note the CP/NC. The committee and committee chair were satisfied after the discussion.

Under Credit Retrieval section, #4 was eliminated.

Geoff Swett asked about confidentiality issues and if there has been a problem in the past.

Motion to approve the changes in **Attendance Policy** by Deb Freitas and was seconded by Judi DeBonise. All in favor- unanimous on changes.

Controlled Substances

The discussion focused on the universality of the policy ("boilerplate") due to laws and regulations. No further discussion.

Motion to approve as presented with no changes in **Controlled Substances Policy** by Deb Freitas was seconded by Judi DeBonise. All in favor- unanimous.

Early Graduation

Discussed recommended changes as noted on draft as discussed with WHS Administration. Jan Rotella discussed whether e2020 classes at night school for day school credit would be something the district should be looking into in the future as a vehicle for early graduation, but did not move to put in policy at present. Approved changes are in color.

Motion to approve the changes in **Early Graduation Policy** by Deb Freitas was seconded by Jan Rotella. All in favor- unanimous on changes.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made Beth Giuffrida was seconded Rebecca Hemsley-Gakidis. All in favor.

Meeting was adjourned. All policies scheduled for review of the 2012-2013 school year were addressed. Chair Sylvia adjourned committee meetings for the year.

Submitted by Deborah Freitas/Judi Debonise