

Policy Committee Meeting

DATE: August 20, 2015

PRESENT: Mr. John Lumia, Ms. Karen Karath, Dr. Seema Rizvi, Mrs. Peggy Kelland (ex-officio)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Petigrow and Mrs. Pedro

There was no one from the public present.

Mr. Lumia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

1.) Appointment of Chair

APPOINTMENT OF
CHAIR

Mrs. Pedro requested nominations for Chairperson of the Policy Committee. Ms. Karath moved to nominate Mr. Lumia as Chairperson of the Policy Committee. Seconded by Mrs. Kelland. All in favor. Motion carries.

Mr. Lumia is appointed Chairperson of the Policy Committee.

2.) Public Member of the Policy Committee

PUBLIC MEMBER
AND PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION

A letter of interest to participate on the policy committee was submitted by a community member. The committee discussed that all standing committees are open to the public. The public has the right to attend the board committee meetings as per the Open Meetings Law, however they do not have the right to vote. The public may observe the deliberations and make comments, if acknowledged by the chairperson; the public has no formal voting authority and there is no formal comment period.

Mr. Petigrow informed the committee that the policy committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Board of Education. It may take no formal action.

Mr. Lumia indicated that any community member is welcome to attend the policy committee meetings.

3.) Review of Truancy and Suspension policies at Orchard View AHS

CHARTER REVIEW

Mr. Lumia prepared a draft of several paragraphs regarding the truancy and suspension policies for Orchard View Alternative HS (see attached). Mr. Lumia noted that he consulted with Dr. Bonk and Board Trustee Tracy Pelton. Mr.

Lumia read the paragraphs on Truancy and Suspension into the record. Mr. Lumia indicated that the students of OVAHS need to know it is a privilege to attend the school and there are consequences for poor attendance and behavior.

Dr. Rizvi noted that many of the students at OVAHS suffer emotional, social and psychological issues that prevent them from succeeding in a traditional school setting.

Ms. Karath suggested an annual review of the Code of Conduct to provide a standard guideline for all students. Ms. Kelland agreed that the Code of Conduct should address all students.

Mr. Lumia believes the Code of Conduct is too lenient.

Ms. Karath offered the opinion that a board member should put their personal experiences aside and come to the meeting as a member of the Board of Education with a view of the larger issues before the committee. She cautioned that if the committee moves in a different direction for Orchard View AHS students, there could potentially be legal consequences. Ms. Karath shared language to say if the Code of Conduct is not followed, the principal has the option to send the student back to the home school. The principal plays a leading role. The Superintendent is responsible for the job duties and performance of the principals.

Mr. Petigrow advised that the committee may ask for a general report on the statistics of the % of students suspended, the % of students absent, and the number of students returned to their home school.

Motion to amend the Orchard View Alternative High School charter, made by Karen Karath, and seconded by John Lumia, to add the following:

Last sentence on page 10 in the Discipline and the Professional Environment paragraph:

“If the student does not abide by the Code of Conduct, at the principal’s discretion, the student may be returned to the home school.”

Vote take. Unanimous approval. Motion passes.

4.) NYSSBA Policy Services Contract

NYSSBA POLICY
SERVICES CONTRACT

NYSSBA offers a policy review at the cost of \$9,500. NYSSBA would not charge the district the \$850 for the period of the policy review contract. The district currently pays \$850 per year for the policy installment updates. The school district attorney reviews the policy installments and sends the committee recommendations for adoption or modification to current policy. For the 2014-

2015 the district paid the attorney approximately \$3,700 for work related to policy services.

Mr. Petigrow presented an example that Policy 5155 regarding the withdrawal of students is moot since it is already in the law. This is an example of a policy that can be deleted. Mr. Petigrow advised that if the district decided to contact for the NYSSBA policy services, it would still have to consult with the attorney once the policies are submitted for adoption, therefore the district will still incur a cost for policy review by the school district attorney.

Ms. Karath mentioned the e-policy service which would put the district's policy on the web. Ms. Kelland remarked that the district's policy is already in electronic format and available to the public on BoardDocs, therefore this expanded service is not needed.

Mr. Lumia requested that the committee continue the policy review process and give it more time to consider if the policy services provided by NYSSBA are a good investment.

The District Clerk will contact Colleen Hardiman to find out where the committee left off with the policy review in the 2014-2015 school year.

5.) Set up Committee Meeting Dates

COMMITTEE DATES

The Policy Committee will meet on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00PM. The meeting location will be the District Offices at 25 Corporate Park Drive, Hopewell Junction, NY.

The following dates will be scheduled for the Policy Committee Meetings:

October 1, November 5, December 3, January 7, February 4, March 3, April 7, May 5, and June 2.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Lumia moved, seconded by Ms. Kelland, to adjourn the meeting. Vote taken. Unanimous approval. Time is 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alberta Pedro
District Clerk