



**Minutes
Policy Committee**

**Avon Board of Education
34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001
Meeting Room One
Tuesday, February 4, 2020 - 6:00 p.m.**

Attendance

Members Present: Laura Young, Chair; David Cavanaugh; Jason Indomenico; Lisa Seminara

Member(s) Absent: None

Administration Present: Dr. B. Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Deb Chute, Board Chair; Shirley Moy, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair, at 6:03 pm.

II. Approval of January 7, 2020 Minutes

David Cavanaugh moved, Jason Indomenico seconded, to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2020 Policy Committee meeting.

The motion passed 3-0-1 (Aye – Cavanaugh, Indomenico, Young; Nay – None; Abstained - Lisa Seminara).

III. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

IV. Old Business - Items for Continued Review and Discussion

a. Policy 5131.911 – Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Dr. Carnemolla reviewed the summary of proposed policy revisions prepared by Mr. Medic. The suggestion from district counsel is to make changes commensurate with what the law currently states. The legislature is expected to make further changes in July 2020, which will require the District to review and revise the policy once again in order to ensure that it is commensurate with the law. Current changes in the law were made retroactive to July 1, 2019; which the District has accordingly been practicing.

It was suggested that we maintain the current definition of bullying to ensure that the District is in accordance with the statute definition. In addition, revisions should include removing the requirement that both the alleged perpetrator and alleged victim both be students attending school in the same district; adding language regarding cyberbullying and teen dating violence; adding requirements to ensure that the District is following state law pertaining to the Safe School Climate Plan; specifying clearer timing of notification to parents; and streamlining the District's bullying form. The Committee stressed the importance of timing of notification to parents.

A second read will continue at the next Policy meeting.

b. Policy 6144 – Controversial Issues

Dr. Carnemolla reviewed minimal suggested revisions except for the change from *sectarian* issues to *religious* issues and from the 5th Amendment prospective, making it clear that while in the process of fulfilling job duties, teachers should avoid references to religion, unless the topic is an element of a course of instruction. Discussion was had regarding the form, which could be seen as a roadblock. However, sometimes requiring a form provides a formal documentation method from which to work. It was agreed that the use of a form would be most appropriate. Changes to the form were made to reflect other recently revised forms and the directions provided will indicate that the form is requested, not required.

Dr. Carnemolla also clarified for the Committee that it is the role of the Board to approve and implement policy per se, but that technically, it is the role of administration to create and implement regulations, including forms that support such policy.

***Jason Indomenico moved, David seconded, to move Policy 6144 as revised to the full Board for approval, as a first read by the Committee or Board.
The motion passed 4-0-0.***

V. New Business – Items for Review and Discussion

a. Bylaw 9132 – Standing Committees

Dr. Carnemolla stated Board counsel was requested to go through the District's Bylaws for advisement. It was suggested to add Freedom of Information Act language. In addition, ex officio status for the Board Chair was clarified. Discussion was also had regarding the non-meeting status of negotiation meetings and therefore that they do not require agendas and do not fall under FOIA. Anything having to do with negotiations, even after a Board meeting, should be classified as non-meetings and therefore, do not need to be listed on the agenda.

b. Bylaw 9133 – Ad Hoc Committees

The suggested change was to add FOIA language. Also, the Superintendent is considered ex officio at Board meetings.

c. Bylaw 9325 – Meeting Conduct

Dr. Carnemolla discussed changes to the policy, as well as various aspects related to conduct at Board meetings. Comments regarding personnel should not be allowed for example. The Committee suggested making policy clear to any public member who wishes to speak at Board meetings. It was suggested that the Board Chair should let the public know that the Board will not respond to comments during meetings.

d. Bylaw 9325.2 – Agenda Format

The Committee had a discussion regarding comments from Board members. It was advised by District counsel to remove Communication from Board members to avoid them having to speak of substantive issues without an item being on the agenda. However, the Superintendent thought the best course of action would be to leave it on the agenda and to be able to self-legislate and remind if necessary that Board members better understand limitations of the agenda. It should be made clear that Communication from Board Members is not a time for conversation between Board members. Furthermore, Board members should not be responding to comments and not engage in conversation during public or Board comment time.

Additional discussion was had on the agenda format including how any agenda item that is requested to be added to the agenda can be rejected. The agenda item Consent Calendar, was brought in as a means to streamline the approval process for items needing no discussion. Consent items can be removed from Consent and placed into New Items to allow for discussion. Having Communication from the Public twice at both the beginning and end, allows the public to comment about matters spoken at the meeting.

The Board Chair will remind Board members of the points of order when this policy is brought to the full Board for review. The Superintendent will review Robert's Rules regarding the order of the agenda.

The order of the agenda can be changed by the Chair and should be made clear in the policy. This will be discussed further at the March meeting.

Roll call is not always needed and wording should be changed to say that it may be called.

VI. Communication from Public
There was no communication from the public.

VII. Future Items for Review
a. Staff/Student Relationships
b. School Volunteers & Parent Involvement

VIII. Adjournment
***David Cavanaugh moved, Jason Indomenico seconded, to adjourn the meeting.
The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:15 pm.***

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair
Laura Young, February 19, 2020

Minutes respectfully received by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary
Jeffrey S. Fleischman, February 19, 2020

Minutes are approved at the next Policy meeting, and any corrections to the minutes, if needed, will be made at that time.