

Addendum
Board Meeting
09-24-2020

DRAFT

BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Via Video Conference
September 21, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, Chair - (BC)
J. Guy Isabelle, Vice-Chair - (At-Large)
Andrew McMichael (BC Community Member)
Jon Valsangiacomo – (BT Community Member)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Emel Cambel (BC)

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:

David Wells, Superintendent
Scott Griggs, CVCC Assistant Director
Pierre Laflamme, BCEMS Assistant Principal

GUESTS:

Linda Radzvilla

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Monday, September 21, 2020, meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., which was held via video conference (Google Meet).

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

None.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – May 18, 2020 Policy Committee Meeting

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the May 18, 2020 Policy Committee Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Review of BSU Policy Manual Index

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 06/02/20) was distributed.

Mr. Wells advised that there were no updates to the Index. It was noted that the highlighted policies advise of pending minor revisions and the Committee may need to add these policies to a ‘to do’ list. Mr. Isabelle also suggested that the Committee look to Mr. Wells and staff for recommendations regarding possible policy issues that they encounter on a day to day basis. Mr. Wells advised that he is not aware of any policy concerns being raised since the start of school. Mr. Wells suggested that the Committee review some COVID related VSBA policies that were recently published.

5.2 Review VSBA Model Policy – Identify Those with Substantive Changes

A copy of the VSBA Model Policies list was distributed. Mr. Wells advised that he wants to present 5 VSBA policies, and he will display each policy as it is presented for discussion.

A25 – Delegation of Authority During State of Emergency Due to COVID-19 Pandemic (Recommended Policy)

Mr. Wells advised that much of what is mentioned in the policy, are things that the District has done, and that the Board has been advised of. This policy gives superintendents more authority under emergency situations. Brief discussion was held which included agreement that it may be beneficial to adopt a written policy that could be referred to, and that would serve to strengthen decisions made by the superintendent. Section F of the policy does advise that districts must follow labor master agreements. It was noted that this policy is only in effect for the duration of the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

The Committee agreed by consensus that Policy A25 be presented to the Board for approval.

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B8 – Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students (Required Policy)

Mr. Wells advised that this policy sends a strong message that the District takes this matter seriously and will take action if the policy is violated. This policy stresses the importance of the focus to protect students. It was suggested that administrators review the policy and provide feedback. Prior discussions relating to an electronic communications policy focused on a larger picture, including communications not intended to be between employees and students, but general postings through social media. A policy relating to those types of communications will most likely need to be discussed, but prior discussions involved concern over freedom of speech rights. In previous discussions, Mr. Pandolfo advised that the BUUSD was waiting for the VSBA to develop a policy relating to this matter, and would then review the model policy to see if it addressed all of the areas of concern (policy with internal code of B40). It was noted that this policy is very targeted and is intended to apply to communications strictly between employees and students. It is believed that these two types of communication are very different from each other. Mr. Wells advised that another district had a 'code of conduct' policy relating to social media postings, but it no longer appears in their policy listing. It may have been rescinded due to freedom of speech concerns. Mr. Valsangiacomo reiterated that this policy is very clear and targeted on the specific areas of communication. Mr. LaFlamme raised concern regarding whether or not this policy might be problematic for guidance counselors, school social workers, and behavioral interventionists (those who are charged with building relationships with families).

The Committee agreed by consensus to table discussion until administrators have had time to review the policy and provide feedback. This policy will be added to the October agenda.

C12 - Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited by Title IX (Required Policy)

See agenda item 5.3.1.

C29 – District Equity Policy (Recommended Policy)

Mr. Wells recommends that this policy be presented to the Board for approval. The policy echoes conversations within the district and around the state (relating to equity/equity issues). Having this policy in place might assist when writing grants for equity work. This policy will most likely involve substantial discussion with the Board. It was noted that the BUUSD has money in the Federal Grant (\$10,000 or \$15,000) to consult with an equity coordinator.

The Committee agreed by consensus that Policy C29 be presented to the Board for approval.

D22 – Modes of Instruction During State of Emergency Due to COVID-19 Pandemic (Recommended Policy)

Mr. Wells strongly recommends that this policy be adopted by the Board. In response to a query, it was noted that the Board did not vote to approve a re-opening plan. Mr. Wells advised that earlier guidance from the AOE required Board approval of re-opening plans, but the AOE has since reversed itself, and board approval of instructional models is no longer necessary. Mr. Wells advised that he discussed this matter with the Board Chair and Vice-Chair. Mr. Cecchinelli believes it would be beneficial for the Board to approve the re-opening plan and that by its approval; the Board is showing accountability and support. It was noted that this policy is only in effect for the duration of the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

The Committee agreed by consensus that Policy D22 be presented to the Board for approval.

5.3 Policies to Review

5.3.1 C12 Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited by Title IX

A copy of the policy was distributed. This is a VSBA 'Required' policy. The policy is very lengthy and contains much information relating to definitions and other 'boiler plate' types of information. It was noted that the policy seems to contain a lot of procedural information. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding how much of the policy is 'policy' and how much of it is 'law'. It was noted that the policy requires the District to designate and authorize a Title IX Coordinator, but the policy does not have a section where that individual is named. Existing policy C10 (Prevention of Harassment, Hazing & Bulling) has a corresponding Procedures policy (C10-P). The BUUSD appoints designated reporting individuals annually. Mr. Griggs believes policies C10 and C12 relate to each other. Mr. Valsangiacomo advised that this policy appears to be consistent with policies he sees instituted at colleges. The policy also mandates that the District 'shall ensure training' (of specified individuals/groups of employees) though Mr. Valsangiacomo does not know what types of training are currently in place for the district's schools. Mr. Wells will contact VSBA to obtain additional information regarding the creation of this policy. **This policy will be placed on the October agenda.**

6. Old Business

None.

7. Other Business

None.

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8. Future Agenda Items

It was noted that copies of policies slated for discussion in meetings should be distributed as part of the Agenda packet.

- B8 - Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students (Required Policy)
- C12 - Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited by Title IX
- Policies highlighted on the BUUSD Index (A22, B5, B7, B21, B40, C8, D3, D4, D21, D32, and E1)

Committee Members were advised to notify Mr. Cecchinelli or Mr. Wells regarding any additional items for discussion.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Monday, October 19, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via video conference.

10. Adjournment

The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin

BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEW HIRE NOTIFICATION FORM

Complete and Submit to the Central Office
(please submit via email to hr@buusd.org)

Date Received by Central Office:

9/18/2020

To be Completed by Hiring Administrator: (please leave notes for Central Office on the back page)

Name: Location:

Submission Date: Administrator Action/Checklist Complete: ☒ Y ☐ N

Position: Grade (If Applicable):

Endorsement (If Applicable): ☐ Hourly-Non Exempt ☒ Salary-Exempt

Hours Per Day: Scheduled Hours: a.m. to p.m.

Account Code:

Replacement? ☒ Y ☐ N

If Yes, For Whom? Salary Rate: \$

Administrator Approval: Signature Date:

REVERSE SIDE: Complete the New Hire Checklist prior to emailing candidate packet for Superintendent review.

For Central Office Use Only:

Contract Complete Date Offer Letter Complete Date DOH

Total Years of Experience: Step: Salary Placement: \$

Hourly Rate: \$ Salary Rate: \$ Seniority Date:

Contract Type: ☐ Teacher ☐ Para ☐ Replacement ☐ Interim ☐ Offer/Non-Contracted Letters
☐ AFSCME ☐ N/A

Days Per Year: Salary: \$ Contract Days:

Teacher: AOE Endorsement: ☒ YES ☐ NO

If No, Required: ☐ Provisional ☐ Emergency ☐ Apprenticeship

Para-Educator: Associates Degree ☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO) → ParaPro ☐ YES has passed ParaPro
☐ NO will need to take ParaPro



Superintendent and/or HR Director Approval Signature

Date

Alison Palmer

446 US route2 south Alburgh, Vermont 05440
802-370-6990 alispalmer@gmail.com

Education

Saint Michael's College

Colchester, Vermont

Master of Education

Major: Reading

GPA: 3.970

Credit Hours: 33

Attended September 2011 to August 2014

Degree conferred August 2014

Chittenden County Supervisory Union - Teacher Apprenticeship Program

Essex Junction, VT, Vermont

Teacher Certification Program

Major: Middle School Language Arts

Attended August 2009 to January 2010

Degree conferred January 2010

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences

Boston, Massachusetts

Master of Science

Major: MS in Physician Assistant Studies

Attended September 1998 to August 1999

Degree conferred August 1999

Transcript

(included)

University of Massachusetts - Boston

Boston, Massachusetts

Graduate Coursework

Major: Premedical Studies - Arts & Sciences

Attended June 1995 to June 1997

Transcript

(included)

Emerson College

Boston, Massachusetts

Bachelor of Science

Major: Communications, **Minor:** journalism

GPA: 3.700

Attended September 1991 to August 1994

Degree conferred August 1994

Transcript

(included)

Experience

Winooski High School

Jan 2020 - Apr 2020

Reading Specialist

Winooski, Vermont

I provided specific, targeted, research-based literacy instruction to students, grades 9 - 12 who strive to read due to various physical, emotional, and educational needs. Most of my students had gaps in reading because they have a background of immigration and/or a refugee experience and English is their second language. I provided expert instruction, assessment, and leadership to support the school's reading program. I supported, supplemented, and worked independently as well as collaboratively to implement a quality reading program that met the needs of the students in terms of comprehension, foundational reading skills, goal setting, and motivation. I assessed the reading strengths and needs of individual students and designed instruction accordingly and shared information and resources with other educators, psychologists, speech pathologists, and families.

4m

Reason for leaving: I was a long-term substitute for the full-time Reading Specialist who was on maternity leave.

Supervisor: Jean Berthiaume (802-655-3530)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

The Vermont Humanities Council

Jan 2017 - Dec 2019

Director of Literacy Programs

Montpelier, Vermont

I oversee and maintain the placement of, and guidelines and procedures for, five literacy programs for the Vermont Humanities Council: Never Too Early, Connections, Voices, Humanities Camps, and Read With Me. I review and develop program design and structure, project themes, and book selections. I create and oversee budgets pertaining to each program and work with the VHC Development Officer writing grant proposals. I collaborate with the VHC Director of Communications to develop publicity for literacy programs and review publicity, promotional materials, and web information frequently for necessary revision. To place programs throughout the state, I develop and maintain relationships with partnering organizations such as the Child Development Division, Northern Lights Career Development Center, Department of Corrections and Community High School of Vermont (CHSVT), Agency of Education and its Adult Education and Literacy system (Learning Works), Vermont parent child centers, and other statewide agencies and local organizations. I communicate regularly with VHC limited part-time employees to process payroll, deliver professional development, and ensure delivery of quality curriculum.

Reason for leaving: To work within my local community.

Supervisor: Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup (802-262-1351)

Experience Type: Other, Full-time

Please **do not** contact this employer

Northland Job Corps

Jan 2016 - Present

Reading Teacher / Academic Instructor

Vergennes, VT

I instruct 16-24 year old Job Corps students in reading fundamentals in order for them to pass the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). This is an ethnically, socially, and economically diverse group of

students who come from both local and inner city areas to participate in the Job Corps training program in order to learn a trade and earn a high school diploma. Students who come to this program are from backgrounds of adversity and seeking to turn their lives around. In addition to passing the TABE, my role is to support students in the achievement of a twelfth grade level of literacy so that they can appropriately and successfully navigate and function in a professional culture and workplace.

Supervisor: Rocio Mora (802-877-2922)

Experience Type: Other, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Mississquoi Valley Union High School

Special Educator - Long term substitute

Swanton, Vermont

4 m Sep 2015 - Dec 2015

I handled the direct instruction and academic support for a caseload of 11 special education students in the 9th and 10th grades. Direct instruction and classroom support was executed according to IEP specifications in English Language Arts, Math, and Organization and Study Skills. Students on my caseload presented a variety of academic and behavioral challenges to which I responded professionally with flexibility, patience, and clear instruction. My resources were painstakingly chosen according to individual need in order to target instruction for best student achievement and academic success. Work output was negotiated according to student motivation and student/teacher relationships were carefully built and maintained according to mutual respect and trust.

Supervisor: Rachel McIntyre (802-868-0215)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Grand Isle Supervisory Union

Middle School Language Arts Classroom Teacher

Grand Isle

2 y Sep 2013 - Jun 2015

I developed and implemented the language arts curriculum for grades 6-8. This curriculum was aligned to the Common Core State Standards and addressed the six main elements of a comprehensive literacy program: fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, word study, writing, and motivation. The foundation of this curriculum was a humanities-based approach integrated with the Reader's and Writer's Workshop Model of instruction. The classroom environment, content, and instruction were based on adolescent developmental theory as well as the need for differentiation and targeted intervention based on multiple learning styles and academic readiness of students.

Reason for leaving: I loved my experience as a student teacher at the Tuttle Middle School, developed a great deal professionally, and made many good friends!

Supervisor: Eric Arnzen (802-372-6913)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Sheldon Elementary School

Classroom Teacher

Sheldon, Vermont

2 Aug 2011 - Jun 2013

I currently create and instruct all English Language Arts units and lesson plans for middle school grades 6-8. These plans are developed and implemented using a variety of differentiated instruction exemplars and methods to teach students critical analysis skills in order to build stronger readers, writers, and thinkers. Such methods include reviewed and promoted educational resources and models such as backward design planning, writing and reading workshop models, embedded vocabulary, grammar, and spelling instruction, and technology integration to help students strengthen reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills according to the Common Core State Standards. I work cooperatively with Special Education staff to plan and implement lessons for struggling students and provide information and strategies to support students struggling with reading comprehension and writing proficiency. I also facilitate an ongoing drama-based enrichment and intervention period to promote reading and fluency through reader's theater plays.

Reason for leaving: Budget cuts necessitated a re-structuring that eliminated my position.

Supervisor: Mrs. Linda Keating (802-933-4909)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School

Oct 2010 - Jun 2011

Special Educator-Community Based Learning Program
Swanton, VT 05488

I am an instructional assistant (IA) at Missisquoi Valley Union High School where I support special education students in general education language arts and social studies classes. Guided by student's individualized education plans (IEPs), I facilitate one-on-one and small group tutoring as well as apply specific accommodations to promote academic achievement for students with specific learning disabilities. Based on my performance as an IA and my qualifications as a licensed teacher, the special education department has, during the school year, offered me two positions as a long term substitute. During the first position, in the Community Based Learning program (CBL), I worked with students with moderate to severe social integration needs and learning disabilities. Currently, I am working as a general consulting teacher with a caseload of 10 students in need of special education services.

Supervisor: Mr. Paul Fassler (802-868-7311)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School

Sep 2010 - Jun 2011

Instructional Assistant
Swanton, VT 05488

Actively support special education students during in class direct instruction as well as provide accommodations for private testing, tutoring, and skills practice.

Supervisor: Mr. Paul Fassler (802-868-7311)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Swanton Elementary School

Apr 2010 - Jun 2010

Special educator
24 Fourth Street Swanton, VT 05488

I am currently employed as a long term substitute in the special education department at Swanton Elementary School where I provide supplemental academic instruction in literacy and mathematics for students with learning disabilities who receive tier 3 services. I work in direct collaboration with the

classroom teacher and para-educator to support this diverse group of students according to the goals of their individual IEP plans.

Supervisor: Ms. Julie Benay ((802) 868-5346)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Frederick H. Tuttle Middle School

Dec 2009 - Feb 2010

Speech and Language Pathologist - Long Term Sub.

South Burlington, Vermont

I support and implement existing and new lesson plans in speech and language pathology for a diverse group of students who require these services. The lessons focus on written and oral communication as well as social skills building and adolescent problem solving. The students have a wide array of intellectual and physical challenges such as dyslexia, autism, and cerebral palsy that require a varied and creative approach to instruction and concept reinforcement.

Supervisor: Joseph O'Brien, Principal (802-652-7100)

Experience Type: Public School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Frederick H. Tuttle Middle School

Sep 2009 - Dec 2009

Language Arts student classroom teacher

South Burlington, Vermont

Currently teaching a complete, three week unit to four separate classes of sixth graders on the elements of short stories as well as integrated vocabulary grammar, and strategic reading instruction. Assumed full responsibilities as a member of the Polaris teaching team by attending all team meetings, EST referrals, departmental meetings, full faculty meetings and workshops, bus duty, cafeteria duty, guided study, enrichment classes, as well as field trips, before school homework help, grading, and parent/teacher conferences. Worked extensively with IEP students on speech/language and literacy training.

Supervisor: Edith Ainsley (802-652-7100)

Experience Type: Student Teaching, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Alburgh Community Educational Center

substitute teacher

Alburgh, Vermont

Delivered daily lesson plans for a multitude of elementary, primary, and middle school classrooms. Worked extensively with daily classroom management techniques as well as general and special education curriculum and school policy.

Reason for leaving: Began the TAP program

Supervisor: Barbara Burrington (802-796-3573)

Experience Type: Other, Part-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

University of Vermont - Extension

May 2007 - Sep 2008

research assistant

St. Albans, Vermont

Perform technical, logistical, and communications support for nutrient management classes. Assist with the establishment and implementation of applied on-farm research projects. Perform field work including soil sampling, general plot maintenance, data collection, and data entry

Reason for leaving: To get involved more directly in public school education

Supervisor: Heather Darby, Phd. (802-527-3910)

Experience Type: Other, Part-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Thompson Island Outward Bound Educational Center

Sep 1994 - Jun 1996

Outward Bound Instructor

Boston, Massachusetts

Instructed multi-element 14-day Outward Bound courses specifically designed for adolescent girls.

Instructed and provided in-field, technical support for corporate team building and leadership development courses.

Reason for leaving: Back to school

Supervisor: George Armstrong (617-728-3550)

Experience Type: Other, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Thompson Island Outward Bound Educational Center

Sep 1994 - Jun 1995

Middle School Math and Public Speaking Teacher

Boston, Massachusetts

Instructed mathematics and public speaking for boys in grades 6-8. Implemented and supervised drama club activities; facilitated after-school sports.

Reason for leaving: Back to school

Supervisor: George Armstrong (802-728-3550)

Experience Type: Independent School, Full-time

It is **OK** to contact this employer

Parent Teacher Association

Work with other parents and school to provide support and services to the students in the manner of fundraising for field trips, extra school programs, and student activities.

G.R.A.C.E. After School Program

Dance instructor for students K-8 for after school program.

Emergency Medical Technician Certification

Member of Alburgh Rescue and Fire Department

Considerations for Increasing In-Person Learning at BUUSD

- The AOE has moved to Step III in the Strong and Healthy Start Guidance.
- Step III does not mean that schools *return to normal*. Guidance continues to require performing health checks, maintaining social distancing and managing groups of students.
- “This change in step level does not change the decision-making authority of a school district to offer in-person instruction or not, but if a district decides to do so, it must operate in-person instruction at Step III.”

https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-vdh-a-strong-and-healthy-start-change-in-step-level_0.pdf

Specific Considerations for BUUSD

- Is there adequate staffing for both remote and in-person instruction?
 - Number of classroom teachers & paraprofessionals
 - Available substitutes when staff are out sick
- Is there space in our classrooms to maintain 3 feet of distance between students given our average class sizes? If other school spaces are to be considered are they safe and available?
- Do we have the logistical capacity (e.g. student drop-off & pick-up, transportation, etc.) to follow Strong and Healthy Start guidance while increasing in-person instruction?

Next Steps

- BUUSD Re-Opening Team reviews the safety considerations and recommends potential scenarios for increasing in-person instruction.
- Families are surveyed to gauge their readiness for increased in-person instruction.
- Teachers provide feedback on potential plans.
- Progress is reported to the School Board and community on October 8th

A Strong and Healthy Start FAQ: Transitioning from Step II to Step III

Purpose

On September 26, 2020, based on a joint determination by the Vermont Agency of Education and Department of Health, Vermont will transition from Step II to Step III as defined in [A Strong and Healthy Start: Safety and Health Guidance for Vermont Schools, Fall 2020](#). The distinctions between Step II and Step III are enumerated in that guidance. This FAQ is meant to expand upon and further clarify those distinctions.

Q1. What do you mean by “Step II” and “Step III”? What are the step levels?

The step levels, as they pertain to schools, are defined as:

- **Step I:** Schools are closed for in-person instruction. Remote learning opportunities should be provided for all students. Support provision of student services such as school meal programs, as feasible.
 - **Step II:** Schools are open for in-person instruction with enhanced physical distancing measures and for children who live in counties that are eligible for quarantine-free travel.
 - **Step III:** Schools are open for in-person instruction with distancing measures. Restrict attendance to those from limited transmission areas (counties eligible for quarantine-free travel) only.
-

Q2. How did you decide to move from Step II to Step III?

The Agency of Education and Health Department determined a step level change was appropriate based on a consideration of two variables.

- **The first variable is the overall health conditions for the virus in Vermont.** In spite of the few cases in schools, the conditions remain very positive. The cases we have seen in schools were the result of individuals contracting the virus in a community and then attending school. To date, we have not seen transmission of the virus in schools.
 - **The other variable is an assessment of to what extent schools are able to implement required health guidance.** We measure this subjectively through anecdotal observation based on our frequent, if not daily, conversations with principals and superintendents.
-

Q3. Does the transition to Step III mean schools are relaxing on COVID-19 precautions?

In terms of school operations, Step III should not be viewed as a relaxing of the necessary mitigation strategies schools need to follow. All of the basic, critical mitigation strategies such as staying home when you are sick, completing the daily health check, wearing a facial covering,

physical distancing when feasible and washing hands frequently remain in place and must be followed.

Q4. My school is operating in a hybrid model. Does that change with the move to Step III?

The change in step level does not change to what extent a district may offer in-person instruction or not. That decision remains a decision for the local school district.

Q5. Can schools remain at Step II if they do not feel they are ready for Step III?

No. Step levels are determined by the state per the [Decision Making for School District Operations guidance](#). It is important to note that under Step II, schools had some flexibility in terms of how to implement the required mitigation strategies. Step III provides greater flexibility. For example, under Step II, schools should not use their cafeterias for feeding students. Under Step III, schools "may" use their cafeterias but are not required to do so.

Q6. How do buses and transportation change in Step III?

Schools in Vermont opened at Step II statewide, with the exception of buses and transportation, which started at Step III. So, in a practical sense, schools will not necessarily make any changes to their transportation procedures when schools transition to Step III on September 26.

However, the health and safety guidance does make distinctions between Step II and Step III for transportation if that becomes necessary in the future:

- In Step II, schools should create physical distance between students, stagger drop off and pickup to minimize gathering of students, and create more bus stops to minimize number of students waiting together.
 - In Step III, students should be spaced out for the number of riders, and physical distance should be promoted between students at bus stops.
 - The [Health and Safety guidance](#) includes additional general requirements and recommendations on transportation relevant to both Step II and Step III.
-

Q7. Will we have greater flexibility in grouping students under Step III?

Yes. Pod configurations remain an important consideration both for viral spread and contact tracing. However, strict adherence to this model is not required under Step III. This means schools have additional flexibility for grouping students by academic subject, which is an important consideration for high schools.

In general, the distinctions between Step II and Step III for pods/student grouping are:

- In Step II classes should be kept together with the same group of students and teachers each day. Mixing between groups should be restricted, spacing between desks and bedding to six feet apart, with three feet acceptable PreK through Grade 5. Turn desks to

face same direction, prevent students from mingling with other classes at recess, close staff/teacher lounge, hold virtual meetings with students, families and staff, rearrange employee workstations to separate by six feet.

- In Step III, consider keeping classes together to the same group of students each day, and continue to space out seating and bedding to the extent possible.
 - The [Health and Safety guidance](#) includes additional general requirements and recommendations on student grouping relevant to both Step II and Step III
-

Q8. What does this change mean for communal spaces, like the gym and cafeteria?

In Step II communal spaces like gymnasiums and cafeterias should be closed for intended use and used only for overflow classroom space to allow for physical distancing. Limit school sponsored gatherings, events and extra-curricular activities to those that can maintain physical distancing, support hand hygiene and restrict attendance from higher transmission areas.

In Step III, if possible, keep gyms and cafeterias closed. However, they may be used for their intended purposes in smaller groups, staggering use, and cleaning and disinfecting between uses.

[Health and Safety FAQ 7: Physical Education](#) offers further clarification on the use of the gymnasium in Step III:

When schools are open for in-person instruction with distancing measures (Step III), gymnasiums may be used for their intended purposes in smaller groups, staggering use, and for physical education instruction that involves minimal physical exertion (for example, yoga or elements of dance (e.g., repetition and rhythm)) and that is aligned with health and safety guidelines. If multiple classes will use the space, stagger use with at least one hour between use by different groups. Even in Step III, it is strongly preferred to take students outside whenever possible, where they can be more active in a safer environment.

Q9. Do we have to use the cafeteria if meals in the classroom are going well?

No, you do not need to use the cafeteria. In fact, the guidance advises that, if possible, schools should keep the cafeteria closed for its intended use.

After the transition to Step III, students may again eat in the cafeteria with specific precautions. However, administrators and food service directors are advised to carefully consider this option before making a change. If the current model of meals in the classroom is working well, it may be disruptive to return to the cafeteria. In addition, if schools need to move back to Step 2 quickly at a later date, changing back could be even more disruptive.

Among other options, schools can consider continuing meals in the classroom for breakfast or lunch, while using the cafeteria for the other meal. Schools could also have students go to the cafeteria to get their meals before returning to the classroom to eat – an option that is already allowed under Step II.

Q10. If we do move some or all our meal service to the cafeteria in Step III, what should that look like?

If schools do move meal service to the cafeteria in Step III, meals should not be self-serve. If eating in the cafeteria, students should be assigned seating with their classroom or pod, ideally always sitting in the same place. Steps should be taken to ensure physical distancing when waiting to receive meals and while seated, staggering classrooms going through line or cafeteria to reduce interactions and number of students waiting. If pin numbers are used, staff should punch pins, and if ID cards are used to count meals, they should be sanitized between uses. Sneeze guards should be installed in the cafeteria. Please refer to the Food Service Section of the [Strong and Healthy Start guidance](#) for additional health and safety guidance on meal service.

Q11. What does the transition to Step III mean for sports?

AOE guidance on [Fall Sports Program for the 2020-21 School Year](#) states:

If permitted under “Guidance for Specific Types of Sports”... school-based fall sports programs may initiate interscholastic games, meets and competitions when Vermont schools reach Step III as described in the Strong and Healthy Start guidance.

The date for the Step II to Step III transition (Sept. 26, 2020) is on a Saturday to permit the start of interscholastic competitions over the weekend. This gives our student athletes an extra weekend for what has already been a shortened season.

Printer Friendly Versions:

- [Word](#)
- [Acrobat](#)

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY DURING STATE OF EMERGENCY DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Purpose

It is the policy of the _____ School District to comply with the [Safety and Health Guidance for Reopening Schools, Fall 2020](#) issued jointly by the Agency of Education and Department of Health ("Joint Guidance"), the [Agency of Education's COVID-19 Guidance for Vermont Schools](#) ("AOE Guidance") and the [Executive Orders issued by the Governor of the State of Vermont](#) regarding the State of Emergency due to COVID-19.

Delegation of Authority to Superintendent

Due to rapidly changing conditions and guidance during the pandemic, the _____ School District hereby delegates authority to its Superintendent to make decisions regarding the reopening and operation of schools, including but not limited to the instructional modes that will be provided during the 2020-2021 school year.

Implementation and Communication

The Superintendent shall implement the Joint Guidance and AOE Guidance and shall report to the school board ("Board") at least monthly on the status of such implementation.

- A. Implementation shall be consistent with existing District policies, including the Non-Discrimination Policy, the Harassment, Hazing and Bullying Policy, confidentiality of student records and other relevant policies.
- B. The Superintendent is authorized to temporarily suspend provisions of the Board's policies and/or whole policies (limited to those policies which are not required by law), as determined by the Superintendent in the Superintendent's sole judgment, if such suspension is necessary to implement the Joint Guidance and AOE Guidance. In the event that the Superintendent suspends provisions of Board policies, in whole or in part, the superintendent shall provide prompt notice to the Board of that action.
- C. Access to the District's grounds and buildings may be limited as directed by the Superintendent.
- D. The superintendent is authorized to close any school in the District without further action by the Board. Such closure shall continue until such time as the superintendent or the Board, in consultation with appropriate health and government authorities, deems it in the best interests of the District and its students to open schools.
- E. The superintendent is authorized, based upon the needs of the District and guidance from health and/or government agencies, to direct staff assignments during District closure for in person instruction, including but not limited to employees who must report to work, employees who may be reassigned, and employees whose services are not needed.
- F. Implementation of the Joint Guidance and AOE Guidance shall comply with labor master agreements, established District employment practices for the State of Emergency and any applicable federal, state, and local law.

Duration of Policy

This policy shall be in effect for the duration of the State of Emergency due to COVID-19 and shall terminate automatically when the State of Emergency is lifted.

Printer Friendly Versions:

- [Word](#)
- [Acrobat](#)

DISTRICT EQUITY POLICY

Policy

The _____ School District (District) is committed to the success of every student, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, family economics, class, geography, ability, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or initial proficiencies. The _____ School Board (Board) holds itself and all District and school-site decision-makers, faculty, and support staff accountable for building a District-wide commitment to equity. The District will incorporate principles of equity within all policies, programs, operations, practices, and resource allocations.

Definitions

Equity: Each student receives the resources and educational opportunities they need to learn and thrive.

- Equity means that a student's success is not predicted nor predetermined by characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, family economics, class, geography, ability, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or initial proficiencies.
- Equity means that every school provides and every student has access to high quality culturally responsive curriculum, programs, teachers and administrators, extracurricular activities and support services to meet the needs of each and every student.
- Equity goes beyond formal equality where all students are treated the same. Achieving equity may require an unequal distribution of resources and services.
- Equity involves acknowledging and disrupting inequitable practices, acknowledging biases, employing practices that reflect the reality that all students will learn, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children.

Culturally Responsive Practices: The beliefs, methods, and practices that support and empower all students socially, emotionally, intellectually, and civically by leveraging students' lived experiences to ensure learning.

Implementation

To realize this commitment to equity, the District will:

- Systematically use District-wide and individual school-level data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, language, ability, gender, and socioeconomic background to inform District decision-making;
- Provide every student with equitable access to high-quality and culturally relevant instruction,

curriculum, support, facilities, technology and other educational resources that respect their individual identities, cultures, backgrounds, abilities and experiences;

- Monitor and evaluate the individual needs of schools and distribute resources and effective personnel based on those needs;
- Incorporate the voice, culture and perspectives of students, staff, families, and communities that reflect student demographics and support and enhance student success;
- Identify and counteract biased practices that perpetuate achievement disparities and opportunity gaps;
- Provide ongoing and continuous professional development at all organizational levels to support employees to engage in culturally responsive practices and delivery of quality culturally relevant instruction;
- Incorporate the principle of equity into the District's strategic plan and identify measurable outcomes to prepare all students for college, career, and life.

The superintendent shall identify outcome indicators as necessary to monitor this policy and shall provide a _____ (monthly, quarterly, annually) status report to the Board.

Date Warned:

Date Adopted:

Recommended

Printer Friendly Versions:

- [Word](#)
- [Acrobat](#)

Modes of Instruction During State of Emergency Due To COVID-19 Pandemic

The _____ School District (District) is committed to the success of every student. The School Board (Board) holds itself and all District and school-site decision-makers accountable for developing a continuum of district-wide, flexible modes of instruction and a system of communication thereof during the State of Emergency.

The District will ensure the provision of the minimum instructional hours in any one of the following three ways:

1. The total hours of direct instruction and expected independent student work for the day equal the minimum daily hours set forth in State Board Rule 2312.1^[1]; or
2. The cumulative hours of direct instruction and expected independent work for the week equal the cumulative minimums set forth in State Board Rule 2312.1^[2]; or
3. The District obtains the Secretary of Education's prior approval of another method of counting instructional hours per State Board Rule 2312.2^[3].

The Board delegates authority to the superintendent to develop and implement rules and procedures to address the following: **(From list below, any authority not delegated to the superintendent requires a Board policy with review by legal counsel strongly recommended):**

- Options for in-person, remote, and hybrid learning, by grade level, with an emphasis on ensuring in-person instruction for students in the primary grades.
- The process for parents/guardians to sign up and discontinue participation in in-person, remote, and hybrid modes of learning.
- The completion of student work and achievement of academic milestones, proficiencies and other benchmarks.
- A description as to what extent remote and/or hybrid learning experiences will be synchronous to comparable in-person instructional activities.
- The provision for educational supports including teacher-student check-ins and other supports provided under the district's regular EST process.
- The provision of special education services and related services.
- A process for sharing information about student status (remote/in-person) with your school nutrition program so that they are able to provide meals at home or at school.
- Student participation in in-person extracurricular activities such as clubs, sports and music ensembles.

Responsibilities of the Superintendent

The superintendent shall provide a _____ (monthly, quarterly) status report to the Board.

Duration of Policy

This policy shall be in effect for the duration of the State of Emergency due to COVID-19 and shall terminate automatically when the State of Emergency is lifted.

VSBA Version: 8/5/20

Date Warned:

Date Adopted:

Legal Reference(s):

[1], [2] Rule 2312.1 requires:

Except as provided in Rule 2311.5 (Day of Mourning); the length of the school day shall be:

(a) for kindergarten, a minimum of two instructional hours. However, in any calendar week, five school days may be counted if the total number of hours of instructional time is equal to or exceeds 10 hours per week.

(b) for grades 1-2, a minimum of four instructional hours including recess, excluding lunch. However, in any calendar week, five school days may be counted if the total number of hours of instructional time is equal to or exceeds 20 hours, including recess, excluding lunch.

(c) for grades 3-8, a minimum of 5 1/2 instructional hours, including recess, excluding lunch. However, in any calendar week, five school days may be counted if the total number of hours of instructional time is equal to or exceeds 27 1/2 hours, including recess, excluding lunch.

(d) for grades 9-12, a minimum of 5 1/2 instructional hours, exclusive of the time allowed for recess and lunch. However, in any calendar week, five school days may be counted if the total number of hours of instructional time is equal to or exceeds 27 1/2 hours, exclusive of the time allowed for recess and lunch.

[3] Rule 2312.2 provides exceptions to Length of School Day:

(a) Where the board of school directors has found it necessary to delay the opening of the school day by up to two hours or to send the pupils home after school has begun due to emergencies such as the outbreak of a contagious disease, unsafe building conditions, hazardous weather, high water, unsafe highways, or a fire, the day may be counted as a full day of school;

(b) Upon request of the board of school directors, the Commissioner may permit alternate methods of counting the cumulative instructional hours set forth in subsection 2311.4 of this section where: (1) overall, students do not lose instructional time; (2) students do not lose transportation to and from school or to other educational programs during the school day; (3) students do not lose access to related education programs such as technical or special education; and (4) it is otherwise in the interests of the students and the district.