

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
November 16, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Andrew McMichael (BC Community Member)

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:**

David Wells, Superintendent  
Luke Aither, SHS Assistant Principal  
Scott Griggs, CVCC Assistant Director

**GUESTS:**

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Monday, November 16, 2020, meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., which was held via video conference.

**2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda**

None.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 Approval of Minutes – October 19, 2020 Policy Committee Meeting**

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the October 19, 2020 Policy Committee Meeting.

**5. New Business**

**5.1 VSBA Model Policies**

Two documents were distributed:

A document titled ‘Vermont VSBA Website – Current List 11/09/20’

A copy of the VSBA Policy Index

Mr. Wells advised regarding discussions with VSBA who advised regarding which policies come straight from the State and should be adopted without changes, and which policies allow for some discretionary changes. VSBA has been making progress regarding updates to policies, and advised that they will be noting on their website, policies which should not be changed. Mr. Aither advised that discussions with VSBA were very productive and that they were open to receiving input. It was noted that districts are allowed to have some ‘local’ policies. Mr. Aither provided an example of a policy that should be adopted as written (C10) Prevention of Harassment, Hazing & Bulling Policy. This policy came straight from the Agency of Education, and other than minor ‘cosmetic’ changes, the policy should be adopted as written. Mr. Aither is reviewing this list of VSBA policies. Some new policies have been added recently. Mr. Aither will be prioritizing the list of policies that should be reviewed/considered for adoption. Regarding the ‘implementation’ portion of the policies, Mr. Aither reported that VSBA advised that the implementation portion of policies may be altered a bit to accommodate items such as differences to accommodate different age levels etc. (high school vs elementary or middle school), and that in some instances, the BUUSD could write those sections as procedures rather than keep them in the policy.

**5.2 Review of BSU Policy Manual Index**

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 06/02/20) was distributed. Mr. Wells advised there was nothing additional to report. Mr. Cecchinelli prefers the new ‘landscape’ version of the report.

### **5.3 New Policies to Review**

Copies of all policies referenced in Agenda Items 5.3.1 through 5.5.1 were distributed.

#### **5.3.1 Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students (B8) (Required Policy)**

This is an AOE policy and cannot be modified. Mr. Aither advised that sections relating to 'procedure' (under the Implementation and Reporting to Other Agencies sections) cannot be removed from the policy. The BUUSD needs to assure that contracts with outside contractors specify the policies that agencies must follow.

**The Committee agreed that the First Reading of policy B8 will be presented to the Board for approval on 12/03/20, and it should be noted that this policy is required by the Agency of Education.**

#### **5.3.2 Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited by Title IX (C12) (Required Policy)**

Mr. Aither attended a very informative webinar/training session on this policy/mandate, and advised that although the policy is very lengthy, it should be adopted as written. Mr. Aither advised that this VSBA model policy was put into effect in August 2020 and requires that 5 different individuals be identified (for reporting, investigating etc.... purposes), and those 5 individuals will require training. There should be a reporting individual named for each school. Mr. Valsangiacomo advised that some colleges hire an independent investigator to perform that function. It was agreed that it may be beneficial to hire an outside contractor for investigations. An independent investigator would help assure that there is no conflict of interest. Mr. Aither also advised that all employees need to be informed/advised of this policy and its requirements. In response to a query, Mr. Aither advised that he believes training could be performed on-line. The BUUSD does have a platform for training and the platform tracks who has completed training. HHB is at the State level, Title IX is at the Federal level. Title IX supersedes HHB. Under Title IX, all details are included, including the identities of the complainant (the victim) and the respondent (the accused). In response to a query, it was noted that it is usually a building administrator who receives these types of complaints. Mr. Aither advised that SHS probably receives 1 or 2 complaints per year. The majority of complaints involve possible incidents of bullying, not sexual harassment.

**The Committee agreed that the First Reading of policy C12 will be presented to the Board for approval on 12/03/20.**

#### **5.3.3 Homeless Students (C13) (Required Policy)**

Mr. Aither advised that this policy does have an implementation section, and the Committee may wish to discuss whether or not those should be removed from the policy and put into a procedures manual. In response to a query, Mr. Aither advised that students who live with grandparents do not qualify as homeless. 'Homeless students' is defined in the policy. It is believe that some of the definitions in the policy are from the McKinney Vento Act. It was noted that Dawn Poitras is the District's liaison for homeless issues. Currently Stacy Anderson (Director of Special Services) makes the determination if a student qualifies under McKinney Vento. Once a student is defined as homeless, that distinction remains in effect for the remainder of the academic year. The Committee agreed to remove the bulleted section (only) from the Implementation section of the policy, and remove the word "following" from the first sentence of that section. The 'bulleted' procedures will be added to the 'implementation' section of the existing Procedures Manual. It was noted that after the policy is adopted, it should be reviewed with Administrators and Registrars. In the past, there have been times when students have been registered prior to confirmation that all qualifications have been met.

**The Committee agreed that the First Reading of policy C13 will be presented to the Board, as amended, for approval on 12/03/20.**

### **5.4 Changed Policies for Review**

#### **5.4.1 Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy (A22) (Recommended Policy)**

This policy was amended by VSBA on 08/30/2020. Mr. Aither advised that the current BUUSD policy has a section pertaining to grievance procedures, the VSBA policy does not. Mr. Griggs noted that the current policy also refers to providing equal access to the Boy Scouts, but the model policy does not. It was noted that the reference to the Boy Scouts is found in the VSBA policy under the footnotes section. Footnotes have been removed from BUUSD policies. Mr. Aither recommends adopting the VSBA model policy. Mrs. Gilbert will amend the current policy to reflect the wording outlined in the VSBA policy.

**The Committee agreed that the First Reading of policy A22 will be presented to the Board, as amended, for approval on 12/03/20.**

#### **5.4.2 Employee Unlawful Harassment (B5) (Required Policy)**

VSBA updated this policy on 10/20/2020. Mr. Aither advised that the model policy, section D, pertains explicitly to procedures. Mr. Aither recommends creating a procedure numbered B5-P, removing the 'procedures' from the VSBA policy, and adopting the amended version of the VSBA policy. The BUUSD version of the policy will be amended to reflect the amended VSBA policy, minus section D. Mr. Aither will 'cut and paste' section D into a new procedure labeled B5-P.

**The Committee agreed that the First Reading of policy B5 will be presented to the Board, as amended, for approval on 12/03/20.**

### **5.4.3 Electronic Communications Use and Retention (F22) (Recommended Policy – not previously adopted by the BUUSD)**

This policy will be added to the January 2021 Agenda. It will be beneficial to have input from the Director of Technology. Mr. Ajanma will be invited to attend the January meeting.

### **5.5 Removed Policies**

#### **5.5.1 Field Trips (D30) (a To Be Considered Policy)**

Mrs. Poulin cautioned that the policy distributed with Committee packet, is an old version. An amended version was adopted on 05/14/2020. The current policy does not contain the requirement for Board approval of out of state and overnight field trips. It was clarified that the intent of VSBA rescinding policy D30, is not to eliminate field trips. Mr. Aither recommends rescinding the policy, but keeping procedures in place. Mr. Aither provided clarification, noting that anytime teachers and students leave campus, it is considered a field trip. Mr. Wells advised that many scenarios that may occur on a field trip are covered under other policies. It was noted that recent concerns relating to field trips pertain to rooming issues, gender identity, etc. Mr. Aither advised that VSBA has recently adopted policies (C29 - District Equity Policy – 07/21/20 and C28 - Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students Policy - 03/03/20) that have not yet been adopted by the BUUSD. These policies may cover some of the field trip related concerns. Given that under COVID restrictions no field trips are allowed this year, there is no rush to work on this policy.

**The Committee agreed to postpone discussion of this policy until the spring 2021.**

### **6. Old Business**

None.

### **7. Other Business**

Mr. Aither advised that there is a policy (B6), adopted on 06/15/19 that is on the BUUSD web site, but not on the policy index. Mrs. Poulin will perform research regarding policies D30 and B6 regarding conflicting information on the website, packet and index.

### **8. Future Agenda Items**

Mr. Aither advised that the number of Model policies that haven't been approved by the District is growing. Mr. Aither hopes to complete his review of the VSBA policies by end of week, and will prioritize the list of policies. Mr. Aither believes that HR policies should be given prioritization for review and noted that the policy on substitutes contains items that are not in line with BUUSD operations. HR policies will be on the December Agenda.

- BUUSD Policy Index Review
- VSBA Policy Index Review
- B1 – Substitute Teachers – Required Policy / VSBA updated 10/11/19
- B20 – Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks – Recommended Policy – VSBA updated 03/03/20
- B22 – Complaints About Personnel & Instructional Materials - Recommended Policy – VSBA updated 03/03/20
- B30 – Staffing and Job Descriptions – Policy to be Considered – VSBA updated 03/29/09
- B31 – Educator Supervision & Evaluation: Probationary Teachers - Policy to be Considered – VSBA updated 03/29/09
- B32 – Personnel Files - Policy to be Considered – VSBA updated 03/29/09
- B33 – Resignations - Policy to be Considered – VSBA updated 03/29/09
- Other Business – include Update on B6 if Mrs. Poulin has located information.
  
- District Equity Policy (C29) (Recommended Policy) (January 2021)
- Field Trips (D30) – Spring 2021 - TBD

### **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Monday, December 21, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via video conference – Google Meet

### **10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 7:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*