

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
March 15, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chris Parker, Chair (BT)  
Abigayle Smith, Vice-Chair (BC)  
Andrew McMichael (BC Community Member)  
Jon Valsangiacomo – (BT Community Member)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Tim Boltin (BC)

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:**

Mary Ellen Simmons, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction  
Luke Aither, SHS Assistant Principal  
Scott Griggs, CVCC Assistant Director  
Pierre Laflamme, BCEMS Assistant Principal

**GUESTS:**

**1. Call to Order**

**Ms. Simmons called the Monday, March 15, 2021, meeting to order at 5:39 p.m., which was held via video conference.**  
Meeting participants introduced themselves.

**2. Organize (Chair and Vice Chair)**

**The Committee Agreed by consensus to appoint Chris Parker as Policy Committee Chair.**  
**The Committee agreed by consensus to appoint Abigayle Smith as Policy Committee Vice-Chair.**

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

Add 7.2 Update on Tuition Policy (C26)  
Add 8.1 Discussion of a Summary Report/Statement to the Board for Each Policy Being Presented for Action

**4. Public Comment**

None.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**5.1 Approval of Minutes – February 15, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the February 15, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting.**

It was noted that the Committee is not comprised of seasoned Board Members, as suggested under Agenda Item #7 of the 02/15/21 Minutes.

**6. New Business**

**6.1 Review of BUUSD Policy Manual Index**

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 03/11/21) was distributed.

A document titled ‘Current VSBA Work – BUUSD Status – Updated 3/11/2021’ was distributed.

Mr. Aither provided a brief overview of the process for reviewing the Policy Manual Index. Review of this document is a standing Agenda item and usually does not require much action.

**6.2 Priority Version of Policy Index – Feedback other Schools**

An untitled document, similar to the BUUSD Policy Manual Index, dated 02/11/21 was distributed. Mr. Aither advised regarding his review and prioritization (based on the high school perspective), and advised that he also requested input from BCEMS and BTMES administrators.

Mr. Aither displayed a copy of the prioritization list and agreed to send a copy to Mrs. Gilbert, for posting as an addendum item. Mr. Aither provided an overview of the document and advised regarding prioritization. Mr. LaFlamme advised that he believes identifying common themes is beneficial. It was noted that the Committee recommended not adopting several policies.

Recommendations ‘not to adopt’ are also presented to the Board for approval. A verbal overview of the policy categories was provided (Categories A – F). See Attachment A (at the end of Minutes) for a written description.

### **6.3 VSBA Model Policies**

A copy of the VSBA Model Policies Index was distributed. Mr. Aither provided a brief overview of the VSBA document. The review of the VSBA Model Policy Index is also a standing Agenda item. The Committee utilizes this document to identify new and/or modified VSBA policies. All VSBA policies have been legally vetted prior to being posted to their web site. The Committee was advised regarding VSBA’s labeling of policies as Required, Recommended, or Policies to Consider.

### **6.4 Policies to Discuss**

#### **6.4.1 Security Cameras (F26) - Recommended Policy / Compare with Video Surveillance Policy (BUUSD - F41)**

A copy of the VSBA Security Cameras Policy (F26) was distributed.

A copy of the BUUSD Video Surveillance Policy (F41) was distributed.

Mr. Aither provided an overview, advising that this policy is a bit complex. SHS was the first school in the district to install security cameras, and did adopt a Video Surveillance Policy (F41). VSBA Security Policy (F26) is fairly recent. Mr. Aither is more comfortable with the BUUSD ‘local’ policy, as he believes it fits in well with BUUSD philosophy. It was noted that an amended version of the BUUSD local policy (amendments by Mr. Cecchinelli and Mr. Aither) is not in tonight’s packet. As discussion of this policy may be a bit complex, Mr. Aither suggested that discussion of this policy be tabled until a future meeting where the amended version will be presented for review. A brief overview was provided regarding labeling of changes to policies (for presentation purposes). Verbiage being added is underlined, verbiage slated for deletion is ‘struck’ out. Mr. Aither advised that sometimes proposed policy changes involve moving wording around (without changing it). Shifting/moving of verbiage will be identified with double underlines. Mr. Valsangiacomo suggested that the amended policy be legally vetted prior to review by the Committee. Mr. Aither will see that the amended policy is reviewed by Peitro Lynn prior to its presentation to the Committee. Mr. LaFlamme advised that the current use of video goes beyond the 3 ‘goals’ listed in the BUUSD policy, and suggested that the policy be updated to include more specifics (e.g. investigating possible misconduct).

**The Committee Agree by consensus to table discussion of this policy until the next meeting.**

#### **6.4.2 Student Activities - Elementary Policy (C22) - Recommended Policy**

Two policies were distributed:

VSBA Student Activities (Elementary) Policy (C22)

BUUSD Student Activities (Elementary) Policy (C22)

Mr. LaFlamme and Mr. Griggs believe the policy as written, does follow what is currently done at the middle/elementary schools. Ms. Parker queried regarding definitions for academic requirements and the definitions of ‘wholesome’ and ‘worthwhile’ as written in the policy and questioned if lack of definition could pose issues. It was noted that the wording in the policy was legally vetted, and the Board has requested that any changes to policies be legally vetted prior to being presented to the Board for approval.

Brief discussion was held regarding separating procedures from policy, and an initiative to link policies and procedures on-line so that they are easily accessible. New policies and amendments to policies require Board approval. Creation of, or changes to procedures, do not require Board approval. Mr. Aither will send policy changes to Mr. Wells (for legal review) and copy Ms. Simmons (so she may brief the Superintendent on discussion held at this meeting).

**The Committee agreed by consensus that policies (C22 and C23) will be amended and legally vetted, and will be re-presented to the Policy Committee in April.**

Brief discussion was held regarding the protocol for updating draft policies. Mrs. Poulin advised that protocols were discussed at a previous meeting (10/19/2020) and the Superintendent agreed to take responsibility for ongoing review and updates to policies. The Superintendent may update draft policies during the meetings, or ask that changes be submitted to him by members of the Committee.

#### **6.4.3 Student Clubs and Activities – Secondary School Policy (C23) – Recommended Policy**

Two policies were distributed:

VSBA Student Clubs & Activities (Secondary) Policy (C23)

BUUSD Student Clubs & Activities Policy (C23)

See discussion under Agenda Item 6.4.2.

## **7. Old Business**

### **7.1 Public Complaints About Personnel Policy (B22) - Recommended Policy**

Three policies were distributed:

VSBA Public Complaints About Personnel Policy (B22)

BUUSD Public Complaints About Personnel Policy (B22) – Edited version sent to Board and returned to Committee

BUUSD Public Complaints About Personnel Policy (B22) – Draft version per VSBA version.

It was noted that this policy was sent to the Board for approval. The Board returned the policy back to the Policy Committee without approval of the First Reading. Mr. Aither provided a brief overview of the changes that were previously made. Mr. Aither will see that the amended policy is legally vetted prior to review by the Committee.

Brief discussion was held regarding policy F22 that was approved by the Board in an attempt to move policy approval forward, but that the Board required that the policy be legally vetted and that a report be brought back to the Board. Mr. Aither cautioned that once a policy is adopted, it is 'etched in stone'. It was clarified that after a policy has been adopted, the Board may rescind the policy or request that it be amended.

Mrs. Poulin advised regarding the Board's comments/concerns, and read the following from the 02/25/2021 Board Meeting Minutes:

*In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Cecchinelli provided a brief overview of changes made by Mr. Aither relating to the Appeals to the Board section and removal of legal references. Concern was raised regarding changes/rewording made to the policy written by the VSBA, and why the VSBA language is being changed. Concern was raised that the VSBA policies have been vetted by legal counsel prior to publication. In response to a query, it was noted that the BUUSD did not have the policy reviewed by legal counsel after making changes. Mrs. Spaulding advised that the VSBA has advised her that if the BUUSD makes changes to VSBA policies, those changes should be vetted by BUUSD legal counsel. Concern was raised that the policy may not provide an avenue for individuals to pursue complaints in sensitive situations and when retaliation is a concern. It was requested that the Policy Committee also address this concern. A parent addressed the Board advising that the policy appears to indicate a move towards restorative language, and she would like the Committee to also review that aspect during the policy's upcoming review.*

***On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Cambel, the Board unanimously voted to table discussion of the Public Complaints About Personnel Policy (B22), to send the policy back to the Policy Committee for review, and to have a First Reading presented at a future Board meeting.***

This policy; Public Complaints About Personnel Policy (B22) – (Recommended Policy) will be added to a future agenda to discuss as directed by the Board.

#### **7.2 Update on Tuition Policy (C26)**

Mr. Aither advised that the BUUSD has conferred with VSBA regarding this policy. VSBA has advised that the BUUSD should 'pause' working on this policy, and that they will be providing additional information in the future.

### **8. Other Business**

#### **8.1 Discussion of a Summary Report to the Board For Each Policy Being Presented for Action**

Mr. Aither advised regarding the process for policy approval, advising that a number of policies have been returned to Committee due to questions from the Board. Mr. Aither proposes that each policy sent to the Board, have a brief statement attached. The statement will advise Board Members of discussion held at the Committee level. This 'statement' will assist the Board in better understanding the rationale behind the decisions made by the Committee. It is hoped that this process can speed up the policy approval process. It was agreed that the statement will be an unbiased, Committee written statement that will include various opinions that were voiced at the Committee level.

### **9. Future Agenda Items**

- F26 - Security Cameras - Recommended Policy / Compare with Video Surveillance Policy (BUUSD - F41) (April)
- C22 - Student Activities - Elementary Policy - Recommended Policy (April)
- C23 - Student Clubs and Activities – Secondary School Policy – Recommended Policy (April)
- B22 - Public Complaints About Personnel Policy - Recommended Policy (April)
- C29 – District Equity Policy (April)
- D30 – Field Trips (spring 2021)
- C26 – Tuition Payment (under review by VSBA)
- High Priority Policies as Identified by Administrators (these will be separate Agenda Items by policy)

### **10. Next Meeting Date**

The April 19, 2021 meeting has been cancelled (due to April Break)

The next Meeting is Monday, April 26, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Google Meet

### **11. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:58 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*

ATTACHMENT A

**POLICY NUMBERING SYSTEM**

Categories:

- A: Board Operations
- B: Personnel
- C: Students
- D: Instruction
- E: School-Community Relations
- F: Non-Instructional Operations

Numbering Scheme:

- 1 – 19 VSBA Required Policies
- 20 – 29 VSBA Recommended Policies
- 30 – 39 VSBA Policies to Consider
- 40 – 49 BUUSD Local Policies (not from VSBA)

Example: A1 is a VSBA Required Policy

EDITING PROTOCOL

~~Verbiage being deleted will use the strike-out feature.~~

Verbiage being added will be underlined.

Verbiage that has only been moved within the policy will have double underlines.