

LYME-OLD LYME SCHOOLS

Regional School District #18

A Private School Experience



in a Public School Setting

Policy and Communications Committee Meeting

February 8, 2022

Committee Members Present: Jason Kemp, Policy Committee Chair; Suzanne Thompson, Communications Chair; Laura Dean Frazier; Martha Shoemaker; Steven Wilson

Administration Present: Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Bridget Compagno, Director of Communications and Marketing

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Policy Update

Mr. Neviaser reviewed Policy 3260 *Disposal of Obsolete or Surplus Equipment/Materials*. The reason for the review of this policy was due to the exclusion of wording in the policy related to addressing donations of equipment or materials. This issue came up at a recent Board of Ed meeting when the Old Lyme Rowing Association recommended two crew boats be donated to another school district, and the Board's policy did not address this situation.

Mr. Neviaser recommended verbiage for donation acceptances be added as #4 under the "Procedures" section of the policy, i.e., *The superintendent [or Board of Education] may authorize the donation of such equipment or materials to organizations....*" The committee agreed to this addition to the policy and gave feedback on the wording. Mr. Neviaser will take their suggestions and develop the proper wording for addition to Policy 3260. This policy will come before the Board at their March 2 meeting.

Mr. Neviaser reviewed current Board of Ed Policy 6144 *Controversial Issues*, Policy 4118.21 *Academic Freedom* and Policy 0521 *Equal Opportunity Statement*. The review of these current policies took place due to a request by a resident (Jim Miller of Lyme) that the Board of Ed adopt a resolution proposed by Mr. Miller at the August 4 Board meeting which related to the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)'s discrimination policy (PO521). [The proposed resolution can be found in the minutes of August 4, 2021 which can be found [here](#).]

Ian Neviaser, Superintendent of Schools

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The Board reviewed the wording of the policies and discussion ensued on teachers not indoctrinating students with their personnel views and best practices for study and discussion of controversial issues.

Mr. Neviasser reviewed some alternate language to consider adding to Policy 3260 (*Controversial Issues*) that was distributed by CAFE in their document titled *Issues in Teaching Controversial Content/Dealing with Controversial Issues*. The committee discussed this at great length. Mr. Neviasser will take the feedback received and draft changes to Policy 3260. This draft will be sent to the committee, and they will review again at their March 8 meeting.

Mr. Neviasser reviewed a CAFE document entitled *An Act Deterring Age Discrimination in Employment Applications*. Essentially, this act makes it a discriminatory employment practice for an employer to request or require a prospective employee's age, birth date, or school attendance or graduation dates on an initial employment application. Mr. Neviasser noted that the district's application follows this legislation, and he did not find a need to create a new policy as this is already law and the district follows the law.

Communications Update

Bridget Compagno introduced herself for the benefit of the new committee members and gave a brief explanation of her duties as the Director of Communications and Marketing.

Mrs. Compagno reported on the next edition of the quarterly *Focus on Education* newsletter which will focus mainly on the 2022-2023 school budget. She noted that with the new format, she might be able to include a few items of interest besides the budget, and she asked the committee members for their input. This edition will be published on March 9.

Discussion followed on the PreK-8 Facilities Study and the best ways to glean input from the community on this study. Mrs. Compagno suggested forming two or three focus groups vs. a community survey. The committee discussed the pros and cons of such an endeavor. Mrs. Compagno reported on ways to form focus groups that are representative of the entire community.

Mr. Wilson reported that he will be presenting a summary of the communications (mostly emails) that the Board of Education receives. These summaries will be reported under the "correspondence" section of the Board's monthly agenda, which will commence at the March 2 Board of Education meeting.

Mrs. Compagno reported on a newly published Board of Education newsletter which will go out to parents electronically the third week of every month. This newsletter reports on upcoming Board meetings, links to past presentations and any other newsworthy items.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.