

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
August 15, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chris Parker, Chair (BT)  
Giuliano Cecchinelli, II, Vice Chair (BC)  
Tim Boltin (BC)  
Alice Farrell (BT)  
Thomas Kelly (BC Community Member)  
Jon Valsangiacomo – (BT Community Member)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Nancy Leclerc  
Terry Reil  
Sonya Spaulding

**ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:**

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent  
Luke Aither, SHS Co-Principal  
Pierre Laflamme, BCEMS Principal

**GUESTS:**

Andy McMichael                      William Toborg

**1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Ms. Parker, called the Monday, August 15, 2022, meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference - Google Meet.**

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

None.

**3. Public Comment**

Mr. Toborg is questioning the Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Policy (C28), advising that he is of the opinion that the current policy opens up the District to lawsuits. Mr. Toborg would like to see the policy reviewed and revised. Ms. Parker advised that this VSBA recommended policy is currently under review by the VSBA and revisions may be presented when VSBA has completed their review.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 Approval of Minutes – May 16, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting**

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the May 16, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting.**

**5. New Business**

**5.1 Review of BUUSD Policy Manual Index**

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 08/11/22) was distributed.  
There were no questions from the Committee and no discussion was held.

**5.2 VSBA Policy Index Review**

A copy of the VSBA Model Policy Index was distributed.  
A document titled ‘VSBA Policy Work – BUUSD Status – Updated 08/11/22’ was distributed.  
Mrs. Farrell queried regarding how the VSBA selects policies to review (based on changes to laws, a cyclical schedule etc...)

**5.3 VSBA Updates for Policy Changes**

Ms. Parker and Mr. Hennessey have been in communication with Sandra Cameron of the VSBA. Ms. Parker reported that the VSBA web site has a section on policies that were removed and that section contains links to advise the reason for removal of the policy.

Under the section of recently changed policies, the date of the change is present, but there is no link to documentation that supports the changes. Ms. Parker advised that some of the changed policies have editing indicators (underline, strike-through, highlighting etc...) but there does not seem to be consistency regarding editing that identifies changes. Ms. Parker has asked if VSBA could add a link to documents that support the reasons for policy changes. Mr. Hennessey advised that he will be in contact with Ms. Cameron prior to each Committee meeting, so that he can obtain additional information and clarification on VSBA policies the Committee will be reviewing.

#### **5.4 Substitute Teacher Policy (B1) Required (VSBA Changed)**

Copies of the BUUSD current policy and the VSBA amended policy were distributed.

This is a required policy that the VSBA recently amended. Policies labeled as required, are required by statute. Ms. Parker queried regarding the removal of (on the BUUSD version of the policy) the section pertaining to training for prevention, identification, and reporting of child sexual abuse, as required by law. This information was not deleted; it was moved to the portion labeled Administrative Responsibilities, which is consistent with the VSBA Model Policy. Mr. Toborg queried regarding the 30 calendar day clause. Mr. Aither advised that statute states 30 consecutive calendar days, not student days. Brief discussion was held regarding the frequency and process for filling known lengthy absences. In response to a query regarding 'packets of information...defined by the principals', it was clarified that that line pertains to classroom information packets (e.g. substitute plans), created by classroom teachers, not required training. In response to a concern that last year, returning substitutes did not receive the required substitute training on reporting of child sexual abuse etc..., Mr. Hennessey advised that the District is working on that within the confines of the challenges of finding substitutes. Brief discussion was held, including an explanation of what constitutes substitute plans, and the Committee agreed to amend the policy to provide clarity on classroom information packets (substitute plans) created by teachers. This change is non-substantive and does not require review by legal counsel.

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Committee agreed to amend the policy as discussed and to present a First Reading to the Board.**

#### **5.5 Title I, Part A: Parent and Family Engagement Policy (E1) Required (VSBA Changed)**

Copies of the BUUSD current policy and the VSBA amended policy were distributed.

Mr. Hennessey advised that this policy has a significant number of changes (from 1 page to 11 pages in length). The policy was written by the AOE in conjunction with VSBA, who worked extensively on it for the past year. Mr. Hennessey would like the committee to have time to review the policy and recommends having the policy put in the BUUSD format and have it distributed well in advance of the September meeting. Mr. Hennessey stressed the importance of parent and family engagement and advised he wants to assure that the policy is written 'right'. Mrs. Farrell advised that she believes there is a lot of procedural verbiage in the policy. Ms. Parker queried regarding who will be completing the highlighted sections, which could greatly increase the length of the policy. Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding the Special Rule referenced on the last page of the policy. Mr. Aither advised that the District currently has Policy E1, and it will need to be amended to be in compliance with the VSBA Model Policy. Mr. Hennessey noted that Sandra Cameron (VSBA) advised that the work performed (by the AOE and VSBA) on this policy was done to assure alignment with Federal requirements and reiterated the need for the District to spend time reviewing the policy. Discussion was held regarding whether or not to keep 'procedures' in the policy, and whether or not a School-Parent Compact exists and/or if it is expired. In response to a query from Mrs. Leclerc, it was noted that many sections that need to be added in to the policy are procedurally heavy. It was noted that administrators are responsible for writing procedures and that type of work is not normally reviewed by this Committee. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding whether or not lack of this policy will impact Title I funding. Mr. Hennessey advised that as long as the District has a Policy E1, and it does, (noting that this policy, which is fairly 'hot off the presses'), he believes the District is fine. Mrs. Farrell reiterated that the policy is mandatory for LEAs and schools receiving Title I funds and queried regarding any deadline defined by the Federal Government. Mr. Hennessey is not aware of any deadline. Mrs. Poulin reminded the Committee that VSBA separates procedures using a different coding structure and has advised that if procedures are in a policy, it is because it is legally required, and the Board had agreed to keep policies as written by the VSBA. Mrs. Poulin is concerned that procedural items in this policy may be there because it is a legal requirement, and removal might put the District out of compliance. Mr. Hennessey believes the key thing is to determine what is procedural and what is policy. Ms. Parker advised regarding an e-mail from VSBA which includes resources that can be referred to when administrators are reviewing this policy.

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Committee unanimously voted to table discussion of Policy E1 until the October 2022 Committee meeting.**

#### **5.6 Role and Adoption of School Board Policies Policy (A30) Consider (VSBA Changed)**

Copies of the BUUSD current policy and the VSBA amended policy were distributed.

This policy was updated by VSBA in October of 2021. The amended policy is mainly comprised of formatting changes. It was noted that the definition of 'Policies' was amended. The section labeled Policy Adoption also has a slight change. Brief discussion was held regarding any need to adopt the amended version. Mr. Valsangiacomo believes the definition of 'policy' is much tighter in the new VSBA version.

**On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo, the Committee unanimously voted to present the Board with a First Reading of Policy A30, as amended by VSBA.**

#### **5.7 Board member Education Policy (A31) Consider (VSBA Changed)**

Copies of the BUUSD current policy and the VSBA amended policy were distributed.

This policy was amended by VSBA in January 2021.

It was noted that the amended version includes a section pertaining to training for the Board Chair and Superintendent.

Mrs. Spaulding advised regarding her experiences with past training. Mr. Aither noted that the first section of the policy pertains to training for all board members. Brief discussion was held regarding the section that provides examples of training and the Committee agreed to make minor revisions to that section.

**On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Committee unanimously voted to amend the Policy A31 as discussed and to present a First Reading of Policy A31 to the Board.**

#### **5.8 Electronic Surveillance Policy (F26) Recommended**

A copy of the BUUSD policy was distributed.

Mr. Aither advised that since the recent adoption of this policy, the Career Center is no longer part of the District, even though they continue to occupy an entire wing of the building. The policy currently in place prevents Career Center personnel from viewing live video and video recordings. Brief discussion was held regarding Mr. Toborg's suggestion that Board Members be allowed to view videos. Mr. Aither has two suggestions on how the policy can be amended to address this issue; #1. Abide by the policy as written and do not allow appropriate CVCCSD personnel to view live feeds or video recordings, and possibly allow them to install their own cameras, so long as those cameras do not take video of SHS students and #2. Amend the current policy (after discussion and approval by legal counsel) to allow the appropriate CVCCSD personnel to view live video and video recordings that include CVCCSD students. Mr. Aither advised regarding the extensive camera coverage throughout the campus, and clarified that an amendment to the policy would allow only authorized CVCCSD personnel access, no access would be granted to personnel from sending districts. Mr. Aither advised that until the policy is amended, CVCCSD camera live feeds will not be available to CVCCSD personnel, though authorized SHS personnel will continue to have access to those feeds and videos. In response to a query from Mr. Cecchinelli, Mr. Aither advised that removal of CVCCSD personnel access to live feeds does not pose a safety risk. Mr. Hennessey advised that the District will reach out to legal counsel (tomorrow 08/16/22), regarding an amendment to the policy. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding the impact of the District continuing to allow CVCCSD personnel access to live feed and recordings. Mr. Aither advised that the District would be in violation of its own policy. Mrs. Farrell advised that this policy change should also be presented to the CVCCSD Board.

**The Committee agreed to contact legal counsel as discussed, and to table discussion of Policy F26 until the September Committee meeting.**

In response to a query, Mr. Hennessey advised that there are no other policies that would require changes due to the departure of CVCC from the BUUSD.

In response to a query, Mr. Aither advised regarding the difference between a school official and a school administrator.

### **6. Old Business**

#### **6.1 Policy on Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol for Students and Staff (C14) Required**

A copy of the draft BUUSD policy was distributed.

Mr. Aither advised that administrators met and it was determined that he will be the District's Grievance Coordinator. Mr. Aither has not yet updated the policy, or the existing Grievance Form (an attachment to the policy), as discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Kelly noted that the previous minutes reflect that the policy and grievance form were to be amended and presented to the Committee with amendments (for review and approval), and queried the inclusion of this item on the agenda without the agreed upon amendments.

Mr. Aither advised that this is a required policy that is currently not in place. Mr. Aither noted that there are procedures in place.

Ms. Parker queried regarding how the Committee wishes to proceed. Brief discussion was held regarding the inclusion of the name and contact information of a specified Grievance Coordinator. Mr. Aither suggested that if the contact name and contact information were included on the Grievance Form, that would satisfy requirements. Mr. Aither advised that he can amend the Grievance Form tomorrow and have it included with the policy for presentation to the Board. Mr. Cecchinelli requested that the policy be written in the correct/standard font. The Committee had originally agreed to review the amended documents prior to presentation to the Board, but there is concern that this required policy needs to be in place as soon as possible.

**On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo, the Committee unanimously voted to bring a First Reading of Policy C14, with the discussed changes, to the Board at the 08/25/22 Board meeting.**

## **6.2 Use of Restraint and Seclusion Policy (C70 – New) Recommended – Replaces C34)**

Copies of the current BUUSD Policy C34 and VSBA Policy C70 were distributed.

Mr. Hennessey advised that policy C70 is basically the same as policy C34, and just the policy code is changed. Brief discussion was held and it was noted that Policy C34 contains verbiage for definitions, and policy C70, contains hyper-links to the same information. Policy C70 is classified as a ‘recommended’ policy. Policy C34 was classified as a ‘to be considered’ policy.

As C70 is a new policy, it will require approval by the Board (First and Second Readings). After Policy C70 is adopted, policy C34 needs to be rescinded. Mr. Kelly believes the Committee should review the final formatted copy of C70 prior to presenting it to the Board.

**The Committee unanimously agreed to have a properly formatted version of Policy C70 presented at the September Committee meeting.**

## **6.3 Procedure Development Update**

Mr. Aither advised that the Procedure Development Committee did not meet over the summer. Administrators were working on updating handbooks, which do contain procedures. Mr. Aither doesn’t believe any traction has been lost, and advised that the Committee will pick back up where they left off in the spring. Ms. Parker queried regarding any benefit that might be gained by linking the handbooks to the Policy/Procedure web page. Mr. Aither has concern that students/parents might be misled or confused by including too much information on one page of the site. It was agreed that a better option would be to have a statement on the Policy/Procedure page, directing students/parents to view individual school sites for additional information.

## **7. Other Business**

Mr. Valsangiacomo queried regarding the use of ‘Chat’ during meetings as not all meeting participants have access to the feature.

Mr. Valsangiacomo suggested that the Chat feature be disabled. At Board meetings it is usually announced that the chat feature is not being monitored or responded to.

## **8. Future Agenda Items**

There are a number of policies currently under review by VSBA, but it is not known when they will complete their review.

Mr. Cecchinelli suggested that the Committee review Policy A21 Public Participation at Board Meetings. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns has a similar policy that covers a lot more and he would like the Committee to review the VLCT policy.

### September:

- C70 - Use of Restraint and Seclusion Policy - Recommended – Replaces C34)
- C31 – Admission of Resident Students Policy (VSBA Removed) (from Parking Lot)
- C32 - Eighteen Year-Old Students Policy (VSBA Removed) (from Parking Lot)
- A33 – School Visits By Board Members Policy (VSBA Removed) (from Parking Lot)
- A34 – Board Relations with School Personnel Policy (VSBA Removed) (from Parking Lot)
- D32 – Selection of Instructional Materials Policy (VSBA Removed) (from Parking Lot)
- E32 - Visits by Parents, Community Members or Media Policy
- F26 – Electronic Surveillance Policy
- A21 – Public Participation at Board Meetings Policy

### October:

- E1 - Title I, Part A: Parent and Family Engagement Policy (E1) Required (VSBA Changed)

## **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Monday, September 19, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

## **10. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Kelly, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 7:31 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*