

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
November 21, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Parker, Chair (BT)
Alice Farrell, Vice Chair (BT)
Thomas Kelly (BC Community Member)
Jon Valsangiacomo – (BT Community Member)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC)
Tim Boltin (BC)

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sonya Spaulding

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Luke Aither, SHS Co-Principal

GUESTS:

Michael Boutin Andy McMichael Sue Paxman

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Ms. Parker, called the Monday, November 21, 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

Sue Paxman addressed the Board, regarding Policy C10 (Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students. Ms. Paxman, referring to BTMES only, advised of her belief that there is definitely bullying going on and that she will provide proof at a later date. Ms. Paxman does not believe the policy is being adhered to.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – October 17, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo the Committee voted 3 to 0 to approve the Minutes of the October 17, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting. Mr. Kelly abstained.

5. New Business

5.1 Review of BUUSD Policy Manual Index

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 11/18/22) was distributed.

It was noted that a ‘Procedure’ column has been added to the document. The column will be updated to indicate when procedures are created and linked to policies as appropriate. It was noted that some policies contain procedures when required by law, and the column should be updated to reflect that. It was noted that use of the column will need to be refined to indicate additional information, e.g. procedures by school (as necessary – some procedures are district wide, some are building specific). Mrs. Gilbert was thanked for her efforts in tracking VSBA changes and keeping the documented updated.

5.2 VSBA Model Policies

A copy of the VSBA Model Policy Index was distributed.

A document titled ‘VSBA Policy Work – BUUSD Status – Updated 11/15/22’ was distributed.

Ms. Parker queried regarding whether the VSBA Index is duplicative. Brief discussion was held. It was noted that the VSBA Index is sometimes updated prior to the BUUSD Index. Ms. Farrell queried regarding personalization of policies (at the District level). It was noted that VSBA policies have been modified as appropriate and that more ‘personalization’ is defined in Procedures. It was noted that changes to VSBA Model policies do require legal vetting.

5.3 Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy (A22) (Recommended) VSBA Updated 09/12/22

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

A copy of an email from Mr. Hennessey to the Policy Committee (dated 11/18/22) was distributed. The email provides information regarding why VSBA is making policy amendments or recommendations.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the changes. Brief discussion was held regarding the changes. It was noted that Mr. Hennessey sent an e-mail (to Committee Members) regarding the reasons for VSBA policy changes. Mr. Hennessey will provide Mrs. Gilbert with a copy of the email so that it can be posted as an addendum.

On a motion by Mr. Valsangiacomo, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Committee voted 3 to 0 to present a First Reading of Policy A22 (Notice of Non-Discrimination) to the Board. Mr. Kelly abstained.

5.4 School Visits by Board Members Policy (A33) (Consider) VSBA Removed

A copy of the Policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker advised regarding the reasons VSBA believes this policy is no longer necessary. Brief discussion was held and it was noted that the District does retain copies of rescinded policies. It was noted that all Board and Committee Members are required to have background checks. Procedures relating to school visits will remain in place.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the Board rescind Policy A33 (School Visits by Board Members).

5.5 Board Relations with School Personnel Policy (A34) (Consider) VSBA Removed

A copy of the Policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker advised regarding the reasons VSBA believes this policy is no longer necessary. Brief discussion was held. It was noted that even if the policy is rescinded, procedures/guidelines can remain on the website. Procedure discussion will occur at the Board meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Valsangiacomo, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the Board rescind Policy A34 (Board Relations with School Personnel) and that the Board hold discussion regarding retaining procedures on the District's website.

5.6 Students Who Are Homeless Policy (C13) (Required) VSBA Updated 09/12/22

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Ms. Parker provided an overview of the VSBA amendments. It was noted that the VSBA policy did not 'catch' all of the 'first person' changes. Brief discussion was held and the Committee agreed to make some minor amendments to assure consistency within the policy (change 'homeless students' to 'students who are homeless'). Mr. Hennessey will advise VSBA regarding the perceived oversight. In response to a query from a community member, it was noted that the Committee cannot discuss individual student matters. In response to a query, it was noted that the schools assist students (regardless of housing status) with many different issues (hygiene, supplies, laundry, etc.). Mr. Aither suggested that the policy be reviewed and edited to assure 'people first' language. Mr. Hennessey will advise VSBA regarding the findings of the Committee (regarding 'first person' language).

The Committee agreed to have the policy edited, and to bring it back to the Committee level at the 12/19/22 meeting.

5.7 Student Distribution of Literature Policy (C27) (Recommended) VSBA Change 10/03/22

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Ms. Parker advised regarding the VSBA amendments. Brief discussion was held and the Committee agreed to make minor edits (remove the word 'Director' where it appears in the policy).

On a motion by Mr. Valsangiacomo, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Committee agreed to amend the policy as discussed, and to present Policy C27 (Student Distribution of Literature) to the Board for a First Reading.

5.8 Selection of Library Materials Policy (D22) (Recommended) (VSBA Change – Replaces D31)

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Ms. Parker provided an overview of the changes from VSBA. This policy is now a 'recommended' policy, rather than a policy 'to consider'. If Policy D22 is adopted, Policy D31 can then be rescinded. Brief discussion was held, including creation of procedures that are required by policies. Mr. Hennessey advised that the District currently has capacity issues which are delaying the creation of procedures. Discussion was held regarding the timeframe for procedure creation. Mr. Aither advised that the procedure committee is trying to prioritize procedure development and that all policies have procedures, but they are not necessarily in the same format or location. Mr. Aither advised that the schools have operational procedures in place. It was suggested that the 'Procedures' column (on the Policy Index) be split in two (Operational Procedures and Formally Documented Procedures). Mrs. Farrell queried regarding how the District will respond if someone challenges the availability of procedures (are they readily available?). Mr. Kelly queried

regarding the method/process for access to procedures, and what procedures are being added or deleted. Mrs. Farrell suggested that the Policy Committee's discussion of procedure development be provided to the Board so that the Board will not need to hold discussion on that matter. Ms. Parker advised that she will be providing an overview at the Board meeting and welcomes additional input from Committee Members.

On a motion by Mr. Valsangiacomo, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Committee unanimously voted to present the Board with a First Reading of Policy D22, and to recommend that Policy D31 be rescinded after Policy D22 is adopted.

5.9 Title I, Part A: Parent and Family Engagement (E1) Required (VSBA Change 09/24/21)

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Mr. Hennessey advised that administrators are not ready to present at this time and there is not much to discuss at this point.

Mr. Hennessey believes that the policy should be ready for presentation at the December meeting. Mrs. Farrell asked if the lack of this policy will have any impact on the CFP grant application. Mr. Hennessey will look into this matter. Brief discussion was held regarding the process for completing the work necessary to move forward with this policy. Policy E1 will be added to the December agenda.

6. Old Business

None.

7. Other Business

In response to a query regarding the status of the inquiry to VSBA (for policy review/comparison of BUUSD Policies to VSBA Policies), Mr. Hennessey advised that he has not yet reached out to Sandra Cameron.

8. Future Agenda Items

December:

- E1 - Title I, Part A: Parent and Family Engagement Policy (Old Business)
- C13 – Students Who are Homeless Policy (Old Business)
- C15 – Student Conduct and Discipline Policy
- B20 – Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks Policy
- C2 – Student Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- C22 – Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities Policy
- D23 – Selection of Instructional Materials Policy

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Monday, December 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. Valsangiacomo the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin