

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

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
January 30, 2023 – 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:

Sonya Spaulding

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:

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

GUESTS:

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Ms. Parker, called the Monday, January 30, 2023, 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

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as presented. Mr. Cecchinelli was not present for the vote.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – December 19, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the December 19, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting. Mr. Cecchinelli was not present for the vote.

5. New Business

5.1 Review of BUUSD Policy Manual Index

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 01/30/23) was distributed.

Mr. Aither advised that he has added some new columns to the document. These columns pertain to procedures and have been shaded out if they do not pertain to procedures written by administrators. A key/legend has also been added to the document. Ms. Parker advised that the document has been updated by Mrs. Gilbert, to reflect policies being reviewed by VSBA, etc.

5.2 VSBA Policy Notes

A document titled VSBA Policy Notes - BUUSD Policy Committee was distributed.

Ms. Parker advised that the notes included in the packet provide information relating to policies being discussed this evening.

Mr. Hennessey requested feedback from the Committee regarding the usefulness of this information being included in the packet.

Mr. Cecchinelli requested a few changes to the document key (to provide additional clarity).

5.3 Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation and Distribution Policy (A20) (Recommended)

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview, advising that the policy has been updated to reflect that the physical location of all Board meetings is now the Spaulding High School Library.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Committee unanimously voted to present the Board with a First Reading of the amended Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation and Distribution Policy (A20).

5.4 English Learners Policy (C4) Required

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the VSBA policy amendments. Brief discussion was held regarding the amendments, including discussion of formatting changes and confirmation that some of the wording in the definitions section is required by Federal law. Brief discussion was held regarding similar verbiage in the Homeless Students policy. The Board approved a First Reading of that policy last week.

On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Farrell the Committee unanimously voted to present the Board with a First Reading of the amended English Learners Policy (C4).

5.5 Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Check Policy (B20) (Recommended)

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker advised that this policy was sent to legal counsel for review (as requested at last month's meeting). The policy has been amended to be consistent with information provided by legal counsel. The Committee held lengthy discussion, including; other policies or procedures that may exist (relating to required training), current software utilized for many types of training, utilization of the policy as part of the 'on-boarding' process, the policy's relevance to many forms of discrimination/bias (gender, sexuality, identity, special education etc.), the 'costs of background checks' section of the Selection section, events/circumstances that disqualify individuals for employment, discussion of the various abuse 'registries' utilized as part of the background check process, and whether or not the policy needs to be more specific when identifying registries being used. It was noted that some individuals are required to be on registries regardless of conviction status. It was noted that some registries are available to the public and some are not.

The Committee agreed to make minor amendments to the draft policy, to send the draft policy back to legal counsel for review and possible additional edits, and to add the policy (B20) to the February Agenda.

5.6 Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities Policy (C22) (Recommended)

Copies of Policies C22, C23, and C24 were distributed.

Ms. Parker provided an overview of the VSBA recommendation regarding consolidation of numerous policies and noted that the 'equity consultant' is the VSBA consultant, not the District's. Discussion included; section II D, 1 - 4 of Policy C23 (which is not included in Policy C22) and whether this information is necessary in the policy or could be included in student handbooks. Mr. Aither advised that this section has been beneficial in the past. The Committee discussed if Policy C22 (Section 2, B, 4) addresses the concern. Mr. Aither is concerned that the section in Policy C22 does not address the requirement for parental permission or require adoption of rules to prohibit lewd and obscene speech. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding any link between Policy C23 and Policy E20 (Community Use of School Facilities). It was noted that Policy C22 does refer to 'community-sponsored and not related to curriculum' activities and states that those activities are addressed in the District's policy on Community Use of Facilities. The Committee agreed to amend that sentence by adding 'Policy E20' at the end of the sentence.

On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo, the Committee unanimously voted to present the Board with a First Reading of the amended Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities Policy (C22).

6. Old Business

None.

7. Other Business

Mrs. Poulin advised that Mrs. Spaulding requested that the Committee discuss Policies D32 and D23. The policies are both titled Selection of Instruction Materials. VSBA's new Policy D23 was reviewed by the Committee in December and it was decided to put the new policy on hold until VSBA writes model procedures, and that Policy D32 will be rescinded after Policy D23 is adopted. VSBA removed Policy D32 on 05/11/22. VSBA indicated that D32 was removed because "language in model policy no longer aligned with statute – possibly revisit at a later date". VSBA revisited the issue in November 2022 and wrote the new policy (D23). It is Mrs. Poulin's understanding that VSBA believes it is better to be without a policy, than to have a policy that is not aligned statute, and is concerned that the District is leaving this policy (D32) in effect while it waits for VSBA to write procedures for D23. Concern was voiced that the VSBA website does not include more detailed information regarding how Policy D32 no longer aligns with statute. Mrs. Farrell will contact VSBA for details regarding how D32 is no longer aligned with statute. Policies D32 and D23 will be added to the February Agenda.

Mr. Aither advised that the Drug and Alcohol Policy (C2) being put forth for a Second Reading and adoption, has an incomplete definition of the word 'drugs', and queried regarding adding that policy to February's agenda. Mr. Aither would prefer to make changes to the policy before it is fully adopted. It was noted that the policy is slated for adoption next week, and the Committee will not have met prior to that meeting. Ms. Parker believes that the District was going to make a recommendation to the VSBA that they

amend the model policy to properly define 'drugs'. Ms. Parker suggested that the Board move forward with the policy adoption and amend it in the future when VSBA amends the model policy.

Brief discussion was held regarding a VSBA policy audit. The audit will most likely not occur until the summer of 2023.

8. Future Agenda Items

February:

- B20 - Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Check Policy (Recommended)
- D23 and D32 – Selection of Instruction Materials (D23 VSBA new Policy 11/01/22 / D32 VSBA deleted policy 5/11/22)

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Monday, February 20, 2023 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. Boltin the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin