

Addendum
BUUSD Board Meeting
May 24, 2023

On Tue, May 23, 2023 at 9:44 AM Jasmine Wible <jasmine.bliss@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Board Members,

Please read the below statement aloud during public comment at BUUSD board meeting on May 24th.

UVM partnered with the Vermont AOE to implement Positive Behavior In Schools (PBIS). BUUSD made the initiative to adopt PBIS framework within our schools. UVM defines PBIS as “the integration of research based practices and interventions, data based decision making, and positive student supports. Successful PBS implementation in a school creates operationally defined and valued outcomes using research- validated practices. The shift from reactive and aversive approaches to managing problem behaviors to a preventive and positive focus creates reduced numbers of problem behaviors and enhances learning quality for all students.... PBS focuses on changing adult behavior as a precursor to changing student behavior.”

During the board meeting held November 10, 2022 our BUUSD superintendent shared Behavioral Data. In this report he states: “We can also say that more and more of our students are coming to school each day with significant social/emotional/behavioral challenges. Those two factors are making it challenging to stay on top of restorative and proactive approaches to helping students when they are having a hard day. When we need to be in a more reactive mode, this will typically lead to a more traditional and punitive approach, which leads to an increase in out of school suspensions.”

and,

“You should know that students who experience challenges with regulation (and/or mental health) are not necessarily documented in our behavior referral system. We try to work through other supportive measures (consult with school counselors, behavior supports, administrators, school psychologists, and therapists) first to address the needs of individual students, and more often than not this practice is much better for the students learning experience and future success.”

Barre Town Middle and Elementary school has used ZERO of their PBIS coaching hours. I reached out to the Barre Town PBIS team and asked to be part of the team, as parent involvement is part of the framework, and they refused. I was invited and joined the Preschool MTSS team (similar to PBIS) with open arms, however, Barre Town staff refused to participate.

On April 17th, parents of 4th graders received a letter instituting Detention Fridays. In this email, the assistant principal states that on Fridays, “Any student that has missing and/or incomplete work, has received two or more behavior referral forms or one major (level two) behavior referral form” during that week will be put in a room to serve time or simply put, detention. In fact, a number of 4th grade children reported to their families that their teachers said “because of your bad behavior, we are implementing detention early”. I asked principal Jennifer Nye if, for example, a student refuses work as a result of their disability, would they receive detention. She confirmed this to be true.

On July 19, 2022, the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) issued guidance called “Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The guidance reminds public elementary and secondary schools of their obligations under a Federal disability civil rights law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), to provide the services, supports, interventions, strategies, and modifications to policies students with disabilities need to address any disability-based behavior, including behavior that could lead to discipline. The guidance explains that when schools do discipline students with disabilities, they must do so in a nondiscriminatory manner.”

The U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona said “Too often, students with disabilities face harsh and exclusionary disciplinary action at school. The guidance we’re releasing today will help ensure that students with disabilities are treated fairly and have access to supports and services to meet their needs – including their disability-based behavior. We also expect that districts utilize the federal American Rescue Plan dollars to build capacity, provide professional learning opportunities for educators and school leaders, and hire additional staff. These resources will also help schools live up to their legal obligations, support an equitable recovery for all our

students, and make sure that students with disabilities get the behavioral supports and special education services they need to thrive. "

Some Behavior Interventionists in this district are not trained or certified as a BI. Third party agencies typically require a 40 hour RBT (registered behavior technician) course and a passing certification exam. When I asked school personnel for my child's BI qualifications, I was told she trained via a PowerPoint presentation "about autism" and went to school for "Veterinary". My child has not had a successful year. Due to discrimination of my child's disability-based behavior, my child has school-related trauma and is receiving tutoring at home, per doctor's orders. He is on a waitlist for an alternative placement as Barre Town isn't equipped to provide him proactive and positive supports. Had his support staff and teacher been properly trained, he likely would have had a different outcome.

In order to effectively implement PBIS with fidelity, you need staff and administration buy in. Staff needs training and time to participate in training. Please ask the curriculum committee to look in to the matter of the PBIS hours. We need to hold administrators accountable!

Thank you,

Jasmine Wible
Barre Town Resident

DRAFT

BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
May 17, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Parker, Chair (BT)
Emily Reynolds, Vice Chair (BT)
Michael Boutin (BC)
Thomas Kelly (BC Community Member)
Jon Valsangiacomo – (BT Community Member)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent

GUESTS:

Ellen Kaye Joellen Mulvaney

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Ms. Parker, called the Wednesday, May 17, 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

None.

3. Public Comment

Ms. Mulvaney addressed the Committee, advising of a racial incident that occurred in 2004; a suit was filed by the parents of the student, and she believes that there were conditions put in place by the courts as part of the settlement. Ms. Mulvaney believes that part of the settlement included the addition of anti-racism curriculum at the schools (for all students). Ms. Mulvaney provided some historical information regarding the implementation of anti-racism curriculum, and advised that an additional part of the settlement, was that there would also be training provided to teaching staff. Ms. Mulvaney is requesting that the Committee look into what from the settlement agreement is still in place, and to assure that training is in place for teachers and other staff.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – April 19, 2023 Policy Committee Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo, the Committee unanimously agreed to approve the Minutes of the April 19, 2023 Policy Committee Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1VSBA Policy Audit Discussion with Mrs. Cameron

Mrs. Cameron is not available to attend this evening's meeting. Mr. Hennessey advised regarding available options; 1. Mrs. Cameron can attend the next Policy Committee meeting, 2. Mrs. Cameron can have a discussion with the Board Chair and Policy Committee Chair (advising regarding what an audit would entail). Mr. Hennessey believes that given where the District is, he does not believe it would be worth the \$1,500 expense to have an audit performed. Mr. Valsangiacomo would like to know if Mrs. Cameron has reviewed the District's Policy Manual Index, and how the audit 'measures' the status of the District's policies. After brief discussion, it was agreed to move forward with option 2, with the Policy Manual Index being shared with Mrs. Cameron prior to the telephone conference.

5.2 Review of BUUSD Policy Manual Index

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 05/12/23) was distributed.

Mr. Hennessey advised that there is nothing new to highlight. The District is starting to 'plug in holes' regarding links to procedures. The document is a 'live' document. Once the document is filled in more completely, it will be posted on the District's web site.

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5.3 Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy (B3) Required

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview. Mr. Boutin queried regarding the lack of the 'Employer Responsibilities' section. Ms. Parker noted that in the next policy, VSBA moved that section to a different part of the policy. The lack of Employer Responsibilities in Policy B3 may have just been an oversight on the part of VSBA. Brief discussion was held regarding the process for Committee action (voting or by consensus). This issue may need to be discussed at the Board level.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the policy, with the Employer Responsibility sentence added to the Policy section, and to submit the Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy (B3) to the Board for a First Reading.

5.4 Tobacco Prohibition Policy (B7) Required

Copies of the BUUSD and VSBA policies were distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the policy. Mr. Boutin queried regarding why the policy does not include any verbiage related to parental notification. Mr. Hennessey advised that parental notification is more of a procedural matter, and procedures are in place. In response to a query, Mr. Hennessey provided clarification regarding the definition of 'areas adjacent to schools'.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Valsangiacomo, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the policy as presented and to submit the Tobacco Prohibition Policy (B7) to the Board for a First Reading.

6. Old Business

None.

7. Other Business

Mr. Valsangiacomo advised that he has watched some of the anti-bias/anti-racism training, and he encourages other Committee Members to do the same.

8. Future Agenda Items

June meeting:

- Child Nutrition Act Wellness Policy (C9) – Parking Lot Item B
- Proficiency Base Learning Policy (D1) – Parking Lot Item C
- Policy Audit Discussion

Update Parking Lot Item A: Add that this item was added by Mr. Aither – regarding definition of 'drug' – address in summer 2023.

Mr. Valsangiacomo cautioned that changes to the definition of 'drug' should be vetted by legal counsel, and that it is his understanding that the Committee wanted clarification of 'drug' to be incorporated into the policy prior to the start of the 2023/2024 academic year.

The Committee was cautioned that the adoption of policies does take significant time (Committee review, legal vetting, First and Second Readings), so policies that are needed for the next academic year will need to be worked on sooner rather than later.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin