

The New London Board of Education Policy Committee meeting was held on March 19, 2024 via Zoom teleconferencing.

1. Call to Order

Nathan Caron, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Present for the Committee: Nathan Caron – Committee Chair
Bianca Alexis - Sylvain – Committee Member
Elaine Maynard-Adams – Committee Member
Colleen Delaporta-Wells – NLEA Representative
Scott Garbini – Community Representative

Absent for the Committee: Betsy Perkins – Community Representative

Present for the Administration: Kristea A. Francolino – Manager of Executive Support Services
Christine Pemberton – Executive Director of Talent & Human Resources

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Motion by Ms. Delaporta-Wells, seconded by Ms. Alexis-Sylvain, to accept the minutes of the January 9, 2024 Policy Committee Meeting.

Motion carried, 3-0-2

***Abstaining: Ms. Maynard-Adams
Mr. Garbini***

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, that the following items, as set forth on the Consent Agenda for the Policy Committee meeting of March 19, 2024, be approved unless removed by a committee member or the Superintendent of Schools:

1. Rescind the Following Policies

- a. Series 5000 – Pledge of Allegiance (Information included in Policy 6115)
- b. 6114.81 – Emergency Suspension of Policy During Pandemic
- c. Series 6000 – IDEA – Alternative Assessments (Information included in Policy 6162.3)

Motion carried, 5-0

• Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

A. Approve Policy 5124 – Reporting to Parents and Guardians

i. 5124 – Reporting to Parents and Guardians

Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve Policy 5124 – Reporting to Parents and Guardians.

Mr. Caron asked that we add guardians in addition to parents throughout the policy for continuity of language.

Motion carried, 5-0

B. Approve Policy 5126 – Student Recognition

i. 5126 – Student Recognition

Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve Policy 5126 – Student Recognition

Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to amend the language in item 2 to state “Are criteria for the award established by the Superintendent and/or their designee acceptable to the staff?”

Motion carried, 5-0***Vote on main motion as amended, Motion carried, 5-0***

C. Approve Policy 5145.53 – Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth

ii. 5145.53 – Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth

Motion by Ms. Maynard-Adams, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to approve Policy 5145.53 – Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth.

Motion by Mr. Garbini, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to remove the term Opportunity Transfer.

Motion carried, 5-0

Mr. Caron stated that he wants to ensure that the language regarding pronouns is the strongest in terms of inclusive language. Mr. Garbini agreed and stated that using the word preferred or chosen is suggesting that gender identity is a choice when it is neither, and noted that they are

moving away from using it to use different words. He asked if there was a way to modify the language so that it does not have to be updated very often with every change, but remains inclusive over time. Ms. McGuire stated that this is currently the model from CAGE, and that the terms used are preferred and chosen. The CSDE's best practice has just recently been updated in January 2024, which has been reviewed in detail with administration and mental health providers. This is currently the most recent model policy from CAGE, but it would be possible to remove the words chosen and preferred where necessary.

Motion by Mr. Caron, seconded by Mr. Garbini, to amend paragraph 4 to state "...school personnel use a student's name and pronouns consistent with the student's gender identity", and under names and pronouns amend the sentence to state "The schools shall use the name, gender, and pronoun consistent with the student's gender, except where required by law on records /documents."

Motion carried, 5-0

Vote on main motion as amended, Motion carried, 5-0

5. Discussion of Policy 5131.911 – Bullying & Safe School Climate Plan

Ms. Francolino shared that this policy is on the agenda as it was a request from Ms. Alexis-Sylvain from a previous meeting. She added that there are going to be some revisions and updates to the policy and the accompanying forms, and so it will be seen on a future agenda as well for further discussion. Ms. Alexis-Sylvain asked what the course of action would be for a student who commits multiple bullying offenses. Ms. Rivera shared that the Code of Conduct would be followed, and it would depend on whether the act was deemed bullying or not. Discipline may involve anything up to and including expulsion, though that is the last case scenario. She added that the legislation changes terminology and a systemic form statewide for 2025-2026, but that the District is choosing to implement in 2024-2025.

6. Committee Member Comments

Ms. Maynard-Adams stated that this is the first meeting that she has attended since she has not chaired the committee, and thanked Mr. Caron for running a remarkably good meeting. She thanked all who offered comments and suggestions, maintaining that it is the best committee of the Board.

Mr. Garbini also reiterated that this is the best committee. From being a past Board President to current community member representative, the work that is done here is amazing. He agreed that Mr. Caron did a great job as Chair. The work done here is for change and he is thankful for all that is being done for the District and the students.

Mr. Caron thanked everyone for volunteering their time.

7. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Garbini, seconded by Ms. Maynard-Adams, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristea A. Francolino
Manager of Executive Support Services