

ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM No. 13-08-14

ACTION ITEM: (Y/N) Y

SUBJECT: Board Policy Subcommittee Recommendation – 1st Reading Approval

INFO. CONTACT: Dr. Marcie Holland PHONE: 919-732-8126

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Policy # 1742: Responding to Complaints (Revised)
2. Board Policy Subcommittee Meeting minutes for April 19, 2013

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the board an opportunity to approve on 1st Reading Approval new and revised policy reviewed and approved by the Board of Education's Policy Subcommittee.

BACKGROUND: The Orange County Schools Board of Education Policy Subcommittee met on July 22, 2013. Members of the Subcommittee Donna Coffey, Brenda Stephens, Debbie Piscitelli are supported by the board attorney and administrative staff.

Board of Education Policy #2410 states "It is through the development and adoption of written policies that the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the school system; it is through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its written policies that the Board shall exercise its control over school operations."

During the July 22, 2013, meeting, the Policy Subcommittee recommended revisions to the following current policy. The revised policy is as follows:

Policy # 1742: Responding to Complaints (Revised)

Meeting minutes for an earlier Subcommittee meeting are also included.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: There is no financial impact associated with this agenda item.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education approve the revised policy listed above for 1st Reading Approval.

Rescinds Policy Number:

Issued:

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

The Board is committed to providing an effective means for parents and the community to voice concerns and complaints. The Board also strives to resolve concerns and complaints whenever possible. To this end, the Board has established the following processes:

- informal resolutions of specific concerns (see General Process below);
- public hearings and public comments at Board meetings on subjects of concern to parents and the community (Public Participation at Board Meetings, policy 2310);
- procedure for parental concerns regarding the curriculum (Parental Inspection and Objection to Instructional Materials, policy 3210);
- specific processes for addressing disciplinary consequences (Board policies in the 4300 series);
- processes as provided by law for special education students (Special Education Programs/Rights of Disabled Students, policy 3520; ~~Disciplinary Action for Exceptional Children/Disabled Students, policy 4307~~);
- grievance procedure for addressing concerns regarding specific decisions, especially where there are concerns that Board policy or law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, including discrimination claim on the basis of sex or disability. (Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, policy 1740/4010, Employee Complaints and Grievances, policy 7220).

Numerous other policies provide opportunities for parental input, including Parental Involvement, policy 1310/4002.

GENERAL PROCESS

Complaints that are not specifically included in other policies should be addressed in the following manner:

- The complaint should be received, and addressed at the level closest to which the complaint originated. For example, a complaint regarding a classroom should be heard first by the teacher. A complaint regarding the school should be addressed first by the principal.
- Any Board member ~~or staff member~~ receiving a complaint should ~~make sure that the complaint has been appropriately referred to him or her and if not, assist the complainant by identifying appropriate personnel~~ advise the individual to contact the Superintendent.
- ~~Once appropriately referred, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, the complainant should be informed of the options for further review of the complaint.~~
- ~~A complaint or series of complaints that raise significant issues about the educational program or the operation of the schools is an opportunity to further examine the success of the school district in meeting its goals and objectives. When feasible, a group representing various perspectives and interests, such as teachers, administrators, students and parents, should discuss the issue and make recommendations to appropriate personnel or to the board.~~

~~The superintendent is responsible for communicating the requirements in this policy to board members and staff on a regular basis.~~

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -47

Cross References: Public Participation at Board Meetings (policy 2310), Parental Inspection and Objection to Instructional Materials (policy 3210), Special Education Programs/Rights of Disabled Students (policy 3520), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740), Student Behavior policies (4300 series), Employee Complaints and Grievances (policy 7220), Parent Involvement (policy 1310)

April 19, 2013

The Orange County Board of Education's Policy Subcommittee met on the above date in its offices located at 200 East King Street, Hillsborough, NC with the following business taking place:

Donna Coffey called the meeting to order at 11:15 am.

In attendance: Donna Coffey, Chair; Dr. Debbie Piscitelli and Brenda Stephens, Board subcommittee members; Patrick Rhodes, Superintendent; Jonathan Blumberg, Attorney; Dr. Denise Morton, Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Marcie Holland, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Jonathan Blumberg suggested that the committee begin with those discussed previously. First, Denise Morton discussed policy 3420: Student Promotion and Accountability. Dr. Morton recommended a complete replacement with the current NCSBA policy. Superintendent supports Dr. Morton's recommendation. Jonathan Blumberg agreed and stated that the more we use the NCSBA policies, they will be easier to update at a later date when changes are needed.

Jonathan Blumberg suggested that we read the policy in full since they were not available earlier. Subcommittee members agreed to read the policy together in the meeting. Jonathan Blumberg read the policy aloud.

Discussed section B. Student Promotion Standards. The promotion standards must be developed and approved by the Board. Generally speaking, procedures are managed through the administration of the school district and not approved by the Board. In this case, there is a level of oversight needed as part of the standards for these procedures to also go to the Board.

The subcommittee conducted a review of the full policy and discussed questions throughout. A question about J. Children of Military Families and how this applies to the promotion standards was asked. Jonathan Blumberg suggested that we consider this issue on a case by case basis.

The next policy discussed was 4600: Student Fees. Jonathan asked Dr. Morton to discuss why this policy was under review. The issues center on collecting instructional and non-instructional fees, which Dr. Morton addressed by adding an additional statement.

Jonathan Blumberg read the general statute. He suggested a sentence be added that the second paragraph that the approved fee schedule will be submitted to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Another point is the idea of whether or not a non-instructional fee should be waived. If engaging in a voluntary activity, this policy does not obligate the school system to waive the fees.

A revision to the second sentence in the second paragraph is as follows: Any fees imposed for participation in instructional programs (including drivers' education) will be waived or reduced for students....

Dr. Morton asked for clarification about what the intent of the policy given that in the past the policy was intended to address instructional fees only.

Brenda Stephens would like to have the information continue to be provided to the Board regarding fundraising and collection of dues at schools because of the overall cost that a student or student's family might have to pay.

Dr. Piscitelli made the motion both policies 3420 and 4600 be presented to the full Board at the May 13, 2013, meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Policy 7270, School Safety, was discussed. Jonathan Blumberg explained that information related to student altercations is necessary in order to provide guidance to staff. Before further discussion, Dr. Holland presented policy 5025, Prohibition of Alcoholic Beverages, be added as a part of this review as there is not currently a policy to address visitors and alcohol on campus. Donna Coffey recommended that this policy and others that impact the community be posted clearly in schools, on the website, and at athletic fields.

Dr. Piscitelli made the motion for 5025 to be presented to the full Board. The motion was approved unanimously.

A discussion was held regarding guidance for principals/administrators on notifications of sex offenders in the area. The subcommittee members recommended that the district establish a protocol to address notifications that may include notifying law enforcement, notifying parents, and putting the registered sex offender on notice. One suggestion is that the School Resource Officer be a point of contact.

Next the committee discussed 5020 Visitors to Schools. The subcommittee discussed animals in the schools or at events on school grounds. Jonathan Blumberg recommended adding section B.4. to state: Unless specifically approved through policy 3550 (Animals in Schools) or policy 4220 (Service Animals), visitors to any school system property are prohibited from bringing animals of any kind within or on the premises of school facilities. Cross references will need to be made to policies 3550 and 4202.

Brenda Stephens made a motion for 5020 to be presented to the full Board. The motion was approved unanimously.

The subcommittee discussed policy 3550: Animals in Schools. It was recommended that the first sentence state: Animals may be brought into the classroom on a very limited basis and only for educational purposes. Other discussion included the consideration that we request a veterinarian certify that animals, where possible, are not carrying diseases or posing health

risks to students and staff. It was suggested that the responsibility be with the principal to take all steps possible to ensure safety and health are maintained. Additionally, the principal should have more responsibility to monitor and approve animals in the school. Also, it should put the responsibility on the person bringing the animal(s) to be required to document appropriate vaccinations and is safe for the school environment. Dr. Morton will work to put a form and process in place for principals to use. The form would need to include how it is benefiting the educational program. It was agreed that Dr. Morton would bring the policy and form back to the policy subcommittee at the next meeting.

Attorney Blumberg led a discussion of a new policy, 2122. As part of the discussion, minor edits were made. Attorney Blumberg also made it clear that the new policy gives the Board Chair the authority to take action such as issuing a verbal or written reprimand to other Board members.

Debbie Piscitelli made a motion to present the new policy to the whole Board. It was approved unanimously.

The subcommittee reviewed minutes from the February 1, 2013, and March 1, 2013, Board minutes.

Meeting adjourned at 1:57 pm.