

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
Policy Committee
Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
208 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection**

ACSD District Vision and Mission

OUR VISION

Our vision is for all ACSD students to reach their full learning potential, have a sense of belonging in our schools, and enrich our community and the communities where they live in the future.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide high-quality, equitable, and varied learning environments that inspire a passion for learning and growth among our students.

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum

Jamie called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

Jamie McCallum, Steve Orzech, Ellen Whelan-Wuest, Laura Harthan, Dr. Wendy Baker, Dr. Laura Nugent

B. Public Comment - Agenda Items

No public comment

C. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of 5/7/2024

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Jamie McCallum Status: Passed

D. Committee Discussion:

1. A21 - Public Participation at Board Meetings

Jamie reminded that at the most recent full board meeting, members of the state and community engagement committee brought this issue up as a potential barrier to community engagement at board meetings.

Ellen said she strongly feels that breaking up the public comment so that some public comments come at the end of the meeting. Steve noted that the board has, in the past, had members of the public talk at great length on topics and take up a lot of time at board meetings. Ellen agreed that a limit on timing is important and useful, but her main issue is making members of the public wait until the end of the meeting to speak.

The board discussed whether it would be best or appropriate to aim for proposing this change through policy or procedural changes.

The committee agreed that the policy, as written, doesn't establish or require any particular order of public comment, and that it would make sense to move forward with Ellen (or whoever wants) to request that this item be added to the agenda of a full board meeting.

2. Policy/Governance discussion: ENDS policies

Jamie explained that his understanding is that an ENDS policy is a framework that allows us to create a policy whereby the superintendent would understand our goals and would potentially be evaluated by the extent to which the superintendent met those goals.

Jamie included some sample ENDS policies in the Boardpaq documents.

Wendy had asked Jamie about ENDS policies when she met with Jamie during her onboarding, she explained that having an ENDS policy means you can measure other policies against that, and also establish progress monitoring and progress monitoring schedules around meeting that policy.

Puts in policy- these are the ends that are really important to the district, which is important because a Strategic Plan is not binding.

Steve asked if Wendy, as superintendent is comfortable with the absolutes that are in the sample language that we have in Boardpaq.

Wendy replied that anyone can scrutinize our ability to meet our goals, and these are the ends so there has to be a plan with a timeline that the superintendent brings to the board in reporting on it.

Wendy explained that having this kind of policy makes it easier for the administration to clarify that these are the ends we are striving for.

Ellen said that it sounds like an important point in what Wendy explains is that this type of policy doesn't have a timeline attached to it, and it's more like establishing the destination we want to get to and not the means of getting there. But it does mean the administration will have to report on our progress getting there, and ensure that these goals are more protected in policy rather than a non-binding Strategic Plan, which could be abandoned by a new board at any time.

Wendy suggested looking to the roles and responsibilities policies from other districts like those whose ENDS policies we referenced today, to see how they augment or support the ENDS policies and where those are different from our current roles and responsibilities policies.

Linking the roles and responsibilities to the ENDS policy helps make it clear that any changes in roles/responsibilities should speak to making progress toward the ENDS policies.

Jamie asked how we would go forth with drafting a new policy like this without having a VSBA draft to start from. Wendy suggested that starting with the strategic plan would make sense. Another idea would be to consider some ends that are not as weighted academically. But starting with figuring out which of our goals in the strategic plan would make sense in an ENDS policy and starting from there.

Jamie shared a concern he has heard that an ENDS policy can shift authority from the board or limit the board's ability to govern. He asked Wendy to explain that, if she can. Wendy offered that when this concept was first rolled out it was about holding the Superintendent accountable and ensuring that the Board would not interfere with that. It would give people the ability to think broadly about how to support the superintendent to do the right thing. For example, in small rural schools the conversation is often about keeping local tradition vs. doing what needs to be done to bring students ahead. Those things can sometimes be at odds. So superintendents often need to identify things that have to happen, like a supervision and evaluation practices. There is a previous agreement about what that looks like but it is not implemented consistently across the district. This fall there will be new rubrics rolled out to ensure consistent effective supervision and evaluation in every school.

Ellen clarified that this would not be a policy that would allow the superintendent to anything with the justification of meeting the policy or working towards the ends. Wendy confirmed that this could not violate charter or law. She also suggested researching how ENDS policies do or don't play out in different districts, whether these are controversial and why.

Ellen volunteered to work on drafting something for the committee to consider. Laura said she would help with that as well.

3. E20: Community Use of School Facilities

Board discussed whether or not our current policy on the use of district facilities.

Ellen asked if we could first ask our lawyers to review our current policy to establish where and if it needs revision/strengthening.

Laura pointed out that in the past we've started to make changes to policies only to find out that what we had was considered by VSBA as model policy, so it may be prudent to review first before making changes.

Laura also suggested that with whatever policy we have, any requests for use of facilities should go through a legal review.

Wendy asked where we could find the referenced E20 procedures- Laura found it on the ACSD website.

Steve asked if there are any stipulations in either policy (current and recommended) that would allow to limit based on private entities using school buildings. Ellen found a section in the VSBA policy recommendation that speaks to this.

Wendy offered to speak with Pietro Lynn about ways to revise and update our current policy, which does feel fairly minimal.

The committee supported this course of action.

E. Public Comment - Any Topic

F. Adjournment

Jamie thanked Dr. Laura Nugent for her work with our committee the last few months.

Steve brought up that Barb Wilson had emailed the board with the district's current superintendent evaluation process and that this committee may need to be ready to act on revising our policy and procedures related to this.

Wendy and Jamie discussed working over the summer ways the board could evaluate current district policies to ensure that equity takes place as intended. This would start with a review of what is out there and has been adopted by other districts that are farther ahead of ACSD in some ways on this issue. For example, we may not have in policy anything that speaks to curriculum materials being cross-cultural.

Wendy said that the summer would be a good time to start thinking about how the committee start to engage with finding a person or organization that has done this well. She suggested contacting the national school board association first.

Steve pointed out that the committee should work through the policy manual to review what needs to be updated over the summer, as well. Wendy said she'll be reviewing our policies in depth so she can take notes on what policies need updating. Jamie suggested that he take all the A policies, Steve take B, Ellen will do C & D, Laura will do E/F. The rule is to flag any policies that were adopted more than 3 years ago (2021).

Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Whelan-Wuest

Move: Steve Orzech Second: Ellen Whelan-Wuest Status: Passed

*Public Comment Guidelines:

Public comments are encouraged and welcome at each regular board meeting during the period designated for public comment. Comments are limited to three minutes per person. Citizens will be called to make their statement by the board chair. Public comments regarding personnel, students or legal matters will not be heard by the Board.