



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: October 29, 2024 ~ 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Attendees: William McKersie, Melissa Szymanski, Maureen Caraballo, Silvia Robles, David Barone, Melissa DeLaBarrera

Key Discussions:

1. Policy Development and Legal Review Process:

- Dr. McKersie emphasized the importance of a thorough three-month policy development process.
- Legal counsel, especially Suzanne Volpe, Esq. of Keane & Beane, is essential for ensuring policies are legally sound.
- Dr. Szymanski highlighted the need for effective and efficient policy development, referencing past issues with excessive wordsmithing.
- Silvia Robles noted her familiarity with the committee's typical review process driven by state changes.

2. Policy 6741 - Contracting for Professional Services:

- Maureen Caraballo discussed the need to update the purchasing policy (6741) to adjust restrictive thresholds, currently set at \$10,000, which she deemed cumbersome.
- Increasing the threshold to \$20,000 was proposed to provide flexibility and reduce frequent RFP processes.
- David Barone suggested a multi-tiered award contract system to minimize RFP frequency, advocating for direct contracting with vetted vendors and emphasizing equity in contracting, especially for minority and women-owned businesses.

3. Policy 5100 - Student Attendance:

- Dr. McKersie introduced a revised student attendance policy focusing on chronic absenteeism.
- Silvia raised concerns about the gap between the policy and current practices, particularly regarding written notifications for absences.
- The committee stressed the need for clear communication with parents about new notification requirements and the importance of aligning the policy with state and federal guidelines.

4. Policy 0115 - Bullying and Harassment:

- The committee discussed the appeals process and board involvement in individual student decisions.
- Concerns about potential board overreach were expressed, and the need for legal guidance on board involvement in disciplinary appeals was agreed upon.

5. Policy 2245 - Student Liaison Representative:

- The selection process for student liaisons was reviewed, with David raising concerns about the limited selection committee.
- The need for broader student involvement in the selection process and clear criteria for selection was emphasized to ensure fairness and inclusivity.

Next Steps:

- Follow up on action items and discuss the outlined policies in the next meeting (Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.)

Action Items:

- ☐ Maureen Caraballo will research professional services contract thresholds at other districts and provide an update.
- ☐ Dr. Szymanski will consult the district's legal counsel regarding appropriate appeal levels for harassment and bullying incidents.
- ☐ Dr. McKersie will review the student liaison policy with student representatives, faculty advisor, and principal, providing feedback on potential selection process improvements.

Melissa DeLaBarrera

Submitted by:

Melissa DeLaBarrera

District Clerk