

South Orange Maplewood School District
Policy Committee of the Board 2021
November 8, 2021 - 7:00 pm
Meeting Notes

Superintendent: Dr. Ronald Taylor

Committee Chair: Susan Bergin

Members: Elissa Malespina, Erin Siders

Administrative Liaison: Ms. Susie Budine, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services

1. Board Policy Reviews and SLT (and Administration) Input

a. Policies for **Second Reading (review any comments received)**

0143.2- Student Representatives to the Board of Education - No comments;

2425 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Program - No comments;

2422 Health & Physical Education -

- Need to incorporate board feedback. Concerns on how the policies are implemented in the District. Question on sex education committee and community groups.
- Question: Who will take care of the elementary curriculum?
 - Current methodology should be the nurses along with the PE teacher. Perhaps a health teacher can be shared at the elementary level as a recommendation.
 - Same for the health and physical education supervisor.
 - It starts at the elementary level --needs to be a discussion;
 - Elementary nurses do not have time to teach as well.
 - Marshall is unique because they have double the number of kindergarten students compared to Jefferson - with no kindergarten students.
 - Feedback provided to SLT but policy is still not ready; Hold for next month;

2431 Athletic Competition - Can move forward for 2nd reading; needs decisions made by SLT.

b. Policies in Process of Being Prepared for **First Reading**

[1540.1] Personnel - Employee Personal Relationships

- Question of whether this policy is needed; SE does not have such a policy; it puts the BOE in a complicated circumstance;
- Staff dating, even when being discreet, may make other teachers/staff feel “uncomfortable;” potential for bias if focus is on how it makes others feel; language was removed to focus on keeping a professional environment;
- Focus is on the supervisory versus subordinate type relationship;
- Imbalance of power can become a big issue;
- Want to clearly explain the supervisory role.

- Question of whether it applies to anyone in the supervisory role, i.e., central office, SLT; It should be spelled out.
- Someone dating a cabinet level member and a person who works at a school, does that designation, with no evaluative relationship, an issue? Is the District overstepping with that conversation;
- How specific does the District want to be for adult relationships;
- Thinking about special education teachers with a para in the classroom; Would want to think through that and break it down;
- Perhaps the way to do it is by describing the relationship rather than listing the positions; The person in the non-supervisory position would not be transferred;
- It shouldn't just apply to a principal or the supervisors -- there's an imbalance of power between other administrative levels beyond the principal.
- There should be a definition of what a supervisory relationship is, rather than listing them all.
- Language needs to be reviewed and shared with the Personnel Committee for feedback; Send Personnel the revised version policy and allow them to discuss; add to the agenda for first reading;
- One idea is to say that such a relationship is discouraged unless handled in accordance with the policy.

2417 Pupil Intervention and Referral Service

- There was a first read a few months ago; Policy was held to wait for Asst. Supt. of Special Services to come on board;
- Don't want the policy to conflict with the statute;
- I&RS policy cannot be used to deny an evaluation;
- Code says when a child is referred for an evaluation, general education interventions must take place first and be unsuccessful before evaluations can be conducted -- the most common way is through I&RS. I&RS allows for formalized general education interventions to take place and be tracked prior to referral.
- Language can be misconstrued that we cannot refer a child back to I&RS. We can reword or remove the text.
- Some parents have not had a good experience getting "stuck" in the I&RS process without engaging an attorney for assistance.
- If you put into place a plan, and implement, collect data, and the child is not making progress, that's the key to I&RS. Some students are making progress through I&RS and it's appropriate for them; Some students do not make progress and it's incumbent for the team to recognize that the child is not making progress. When a child is not making progress and not having appropriate access to their education, that's when the I&RS team should consider referral to the child study team for potential evaluation.
- There are no regulations for this policy but there should be.
- Add in the fifth paragraph - the I&RS team putting together a plan, collecting data, and after an established period of time, if the child is not making progress, referral to the CST.
- Ms. Budine will reword and send it to the committee.

2421 Career & Vocational Ed

- This will be discussed in the SLT meeting; and will follow-up with C&I as well.
- Would like to see more advertisement for vo-tech students;
- District has been using Union County Vocational school;
- It was very hard to gather information about vocational schools; It is an option for our students and parents should be informed.
- Every student who attends our District, we want to keep them;
- But if asked, District allows them to come in and present to students;
- Want to improve our current programs;
- Union county is a shared time program so that we don't lose the students;
- Essex County does not offer this option;
- The District removed the vocational type programs from our schools; either it's budgeted to add the programs back to our schools or partner with the vocational programs schools;
- It's important to think about who gets marketed to and that it is not a way to remove students the district is not serving well.

2467 Surrogate Parents and Resource Parents

- Questions regarding requiring a criminal background for resource parents;
- Criminal background checks required for resource families who are being compensated;
- Policy is rarely needed.

3283 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL STAFF (M)

- Board members made comments to the policy;
- Changes should be reflected in policy 4283 as well.

4219 Commercial Driver's License Controlled Substance & Alcohol Use Testing

- Need to add in contracted bus drivers and employee bus drivers.
 - We don't contract with the driver -- we contract with the vendor;
- Add BA or ABA as the designated person;
- Discuss this Legal Counsel;
- The involvement by an employee in a motor vehicle collision ... "may trigger a post-accident drug and alcohol test."
- This can serve as a deterrent.

4283 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS AND STUDENTS (M)

- See above.

5111 Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students

- Wanted to be clear that residency checks are not targeting students of color;
- The board approved the use of online database; May want to add language that this program should not be performed without a plan in place or on the basis of a hunch;

- The purpose of the pilot is to reduce bias; Okay to add the language but remove the vendor name;
- Add the language from the comments;
- The visa portion is an option;
- The McKenny Vento law prohibits us for asking for proof of residency;

5116 Education of Homeless Students

- Hold until next month; Needs more work and discussion.

5460.2 Bridge Year Pilot Program

- Discussed whether to change the liaison to principal or designee;
- The District does not have flexibility to increase the age requirement for students with IEPs; There's a law that encompasses the students beyond 21; Bridge program not really intended for this program -- allows students to transition out of high school and be ready for college;
- District cannot fluctuate the rules;

7450 Property Inventory

- Hoping that the policy can still go forward;
- Question of whether there is another policy that encompasses equipment less than \$2,000.
- Maybe in the Resources policy; Can we lower the amount;
- This is tied into "equipment". Anything under \$2,000 is categorized differently; need to look at other policies to see if there's another policy for electronic equipment;
- Bring to FFT to let them discuss;

8330 Student Records (M)

- As the Board considers annual budget, consider digitizing;
- To move forward for first reading with review by FFT.

8467 Weapons

- Rationale for this policy: An off duty PO parked in the parking lot who flashed a gun when asked to move his car;
- Question of adults not being able to carry a gun in the school;
- Question of whether we were allowed to ban everyone including those with a special permit on school property; District is allowed to ban weapons.
- Committee is in favor of banning everyone except those on active duty;
- Language will be added to the policy that the banning of weapons applies to everyone;
- Correction officers and retired officers should not be allowed in the school with their firearms.
- Additional questions regarding imitation firearms; Want to add the language to the policy;
- Add language that the lead admin, principal, or designee shall search the individual for the weapon.

- Add language that notification of authorities will be to the “the municipality of the district building”.

c. Policies for near future months

C&I

2260.1 Cultural Competency (reference to PD from 5120 being added to 3244)

2415.04 - Title I – District-Wide Parental Involvement

2415.20 Every Student Succeeds Act Complaints (M)

2423 Bilingual and ESL Ed (M)

2480 Alternative Education Programs (M)

5519 Dating Violence at School

5530 - Substance Abuse - awaiting response to questions from committee

EC

FFT

6115.01, 6115.02, 6115.03 - additional policies needed for Perkins audit; awaiting Strauss Esmay

7436 Drug Free Workplace (M)

8600 - Transportation - are hazardous routes ready? If so add them and ELL transportation to policy; integration revision (hold for end)

9713 - Recruitment by Special Interests - Shannon Cuttle to revise

Personnel

3134 Assignment of Additional Duties

3142 Nonrenewal of Nontenured Teaching Staff

3230 - Outside Activities

3244 In service training (reference to PD from 5120 being added to 3244)

3221 Evaluation of Teachers

3222 Evaluation of Teaching Staff Members Exclusive of Teachers and Administrators

3223 Evaluation of Administrators Exclusive of Principals, VPs, and Asst Principals

3224 Evaluation of Principals, VPs, and Asst Principals

4146 Nonrenewal of Nontenured Support Staff member

Policy

9410 Broadcast Media Relations

d. Strauss Esmay Policy Alert Review

The following alerts were sent out to committees to review. C&I and Personnel have flagged policies to review; FFT has not responded.

[Alert 223](#) (in Drive)

[Alert 224](#) (In Drive)

[Alert 225](#) (In Drive)

The committee breakdown is:

000	Bylaws - EXEC
1000	Administration: EXEC
2000	Program: C&I
3000	Teaching Staff Members: PERSONNEL
4000	Support Staff: PERSONNEL
5000	Students: C&I
6000	Finances: FFT
7000	Property: FFT
8000	Operations: FFT
9000	Community: POLICY

2. New Business

- a. Create document regarding policy review process to share with committees
 - Need a document to map out the process for policy implementation and roll out;
 - Need to work out which committee meets first and which one meets last;
 - Meet with Dr. Taylor and Ms. Budine to streamline the process.
- b. A lot more challenges regarding books;
 - Make sure that our policies are up to date and start getting push back on books in the library;
 - Has not been updated by Strauss Esmay in approximately 10 years;
 - Will try to get guidance from ALA for what they are doing;

3. Old Business

- a. From Ms. Malespina - Asked about this at one of our meetings but want to follow up again on the idea of us somewhere either in a spreadsheet or on the agenda etc. to get a list of the people who worked on writing/reviewing the policies.
 - i. Want to make sure that the District is aligned and keeping track of the policies and the reasons why such changes were made to the policies;
 - ii. Master review policy chart -- make sure it's not in the non-conflicted policy drive;
 - iii. How to track changes from Strauss Esmay

4. Items Related to BPW Settlement/Elementary Integration per David Ruben email "The BPW settlement agreement requires the district "to update its written integration plan

("the Integration Plan") setting forth how integration is to be accomplished and which includes specific goals and timetables for completion."

- save for end of meeting -Board Member Malespina recused

None

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.