

South Orange Maplewood School District
Policy Committee of the Board 2021
December 13, 2021 - 7 pm
Agenda

Superintendent: Dr. Ronald Taylor

Committee Chair: Susan Bergin

Members: Elissa Malespina, Erin Siders, Student Representative Noah Morros

Administrative Liaison: Susie Budine, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services

The Committee reviewed and discussed the feedback received from Board members concerning the policies noted below:

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

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

1540.1 Employee Personal Relationships

- Discussion regarding who would report allegations;

2417 Pupil Intervention and Referral Service

- Board Member Bergin shared comments from other board members regarding removing language for LRE and including language for certificated staff instead of just teaching staff.
- Wording changed that I&RS could not be used to delay an evaluation; wording as is is better;
- It's also a legal standard not to deny a student's referral;
- Committee suggested referencing the specific policy and the NJAC to the policy.
- Change "principal" to "principal or designee";

2421 Career & Vocational Ed

- Program should be introduced to 8th graders as well;
- Invitations sent to students on information nights;
- There's an informational assembly for this program;
- Board Member Malespina feels information should be available to parents and students as an option -- not just because it's statutory;
- Administration does not think that the District should be marketing for students to leave the District programs;
- Vocational schools have opportunities to advertise and market themselves;
- Risk the loss of revenue - should be a broader conversation;
- Policy will be placed on the C&I agenda for additional discussion.

2467 Surrogate Parents and Resource Parents

- Question about who should serve as the surrogate parent coordinator -- whether the assistant superintendent for special services or supervisor.
- Add "or superintendent's designee"

3283 Electronic Communications School Staff

- Question of whether the policy applies to students over 18;
- Policy applies to students in schools.
- Add alcohol, tobacco or marijuana as a substance;
- The problem with Snap chat, once viewed, it can no longer be viewed -- would like to add language to the policy;
- Remove the word "sender" and make it regardless of gender, identity, etc...."
- Revise the same language in the Policy 4283 policy as well.

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

- No discussion;

4283 Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members And Students

- Revise the language to reflect the same changes as in Policy 3283 above.

5111 Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students

- No discussion;

5460.2 Bridge Year Pilot Program

- Discussion about the year cut off;

7450 Property Inventory

- Question of whether all electronic devices can be inventoried regardless of the price;
- Check with the business office about value of equipment;

8467 Weapons

- Board Member Bergin explained that the language that weapons that look like toys are not included was added by board to Strauss Esmay policy;
- State provides strict guidelines, if we make changes, need to have legal counsel to review the language;
- Need to determine that edits are necessary under the law and that changes to Strauss Esmay version comply with law;
- Circumstances concerning expulsion or suspensions are different and there's an allowance for administrative nuances on a case by case basis.
- Have legal review the language;
- Board Member Bergin stated that the suspension moratorium does not circumvent state law;
- Consider language to add the appropriate statute to the policy;
- Board Member Malespina suggested to add language that the Superintendent shall notify the Board if a weapon is retrieved on school grounds;
- Discussion on the timeliness of the information versus submission of the information;

b. Policies in Process of Being Prepared for First Reading**2422 Health & Physical Education**

- Additional discussion will take place in C&I Committee and may possibly be held;

2415.04 Title I – District-Wide Parental Involvement

- Board Member Malespina asked if the District has a parent involvement committee now;
- Funded through the Parenting Center - very limited funds;

- Will follow up with C&I to see if these programs are already in place;
- Board Member Siders suggested language to be inclusive of guardians; for the purpose of the policy, parent involvement includes...familial ...”

2415.20 Every Student Succeeds Act Complaints

- No discussion;

2480 Alternative Education Programs

- Policy requires additional discussion;

3221 Evaluation of Teachers

- Question of whether board needs to adopt regulations;
 - Will determine whether the language included regarding the adoption of regulations for these policies are a special allowance due to the nature of the policies;
 - If not, can remove the language on regulations in the personnel policies
- Concern that the policy says we have a DEAC and we don't have one.
 - Had conversations with SOMEA in the pre-COVID year;
 - Do not think the DEAC is a requirement;
 - Beginning in the 18-19 school year, DEAC is not required and the district shall have the option of whether to continue the DEAC.
 - Double check with Strauss Esmay;
- Policy speaks about a School Improvement Panel - do we have one?
 - District Admin will look into this;
 - Follow-up with legal;
- Would like to add into the policy of the amount of evaluations and corrective action plan and information on how the evaluation process is proceeding; Don't want to be in a situation that staff receives tenure by default;
- Wants it codified in the policy that this is a practice that needs to be continued;
- Example, Supt. shall work out a process to appropriately update the board via the appropriate committee for professional evaluation throughout the year;

3222 Evaluation of Teaching Staff Members, Excluding Teachers and Administrators

- Add the same language as discussed in Policy 3221 above.

3223 Evaluation of Administrators, Excluding Principals, Vice Principals & Assistant Principals

- Add the same language as discussed in Policy 3221 above.

3224 Evaluation of Principals, Vice Principals & Assistant Principals

- Return the language as “designee” as the individual making observations;

3142 Nonrenewal of Nontenured Teaching Staff Member

- District should stick with the policies as much as possible based on the recommendations from Strauss Esmay;

4146 Nonrenewal of Nontenured Support Staff Member

- No discussion.

5519 Dating Violence at School

- Policy will be held for next month.
- Also need feedback from Sexual Harassment Taskforce.

5116 Education of Homeless Students

- Policy will move forward for first read;

Three Perkins Audit policies:

6115.01 Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls – Allowability Of Costs

6115.02 Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls – Mandatory Disclosures

6115.03 Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls – Conflict Of Interest

- All policies should be put forth for first read;

8330 Student Records

- FFT Committee wasn't sure why this policy was in their committee;
- Policy will be referred to C&I;

9130 Public Complaints and grievances policy

- Board member Malespina presented her draft of this policy;
- Some language came from policy at school district in Florida;
- The policy references procedures to implement this, but does district have the procedures;
- Will send a link to a form for the procedures for filing public complaints and grievances;
- District needs to have procedures;
- Step I will be informal at the school level;
- Step II is a referral to the school admin and person would complete a form;
- Committee meets to address the concerns;
- If not resolved, should be moved to a district committee/review;
- Want to have a diverse group of people as part of the committee as well as students;
- Would like to see a member of the elementary, middle or high school representative from the student body on the committee;
- Student councils are elected at all school levels;
- Student council member would be a good - their voices should be heard;
- Can parents or students challenge the resources;
- Board Member Bergin asked about appeals of decisions to remove policies if there is no party to request the appeal;
- resources will not be removed without going through the board committee; add language about a public hearing;
- Board Member Bergin stated that the original policy addresses grievances about more than resources (also for operations and staff) – would this proposed process apply to those grievances as well;
- Question of whether there should there be a different policy to challenge other things not related to materials;
- Drafts of the policy as it relates to grievances about materials as well as grievances on other topics will be prepared for review;
- Board Member Malespina reported that she had spoken with a lead district librarian about the draft policy regarding grievances under development;
- Policy should also be reviewed by the C&I committee;
- Board Member Siders stated that the SLT should review the policy in consultation with staff such as librarians before it is presented to the board;

- Board Member Malespina would like to get the policy through first read as soon as possible;
- Board Member Bergin stated that the committee needs more time due to the multiple drafts and versions of the policy that Board Member Malespina gave to Ms. Moore;
- Will try to prepare for Executive and C&I Committee to review;
- Provide a draft to SLT to send it to the librarians;
- Board Member Malespina offered to provide a draft of the grievance form and make it a google form;

2240 Controversial Issues

- Board Member Bergin did not think this policy should be moved for first reading, but if it was, would like to start with the District's policy as the launching point, rather than Strauss Esmay;
- Not sure that it requires major changes;
- Committee agreed to leave the current version of the policy as is and do not bring for first reading;

Due to time constraints, the remaining items on the agenda were not discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.