

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
Policy Committee
Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 19, 2024, 4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
VIRTUAL ONLY**

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

Meeting called to order at 4:21pm

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

Jamie McCallum, Ellen Whelan-Wuest, Steve Orzech, Laura Harthan, Jason Chance were present

B. Public Comment - Agenda Items

Jason wanted to join and listen because going through policy discussions as a full board meeting is difficult, so he wanted to join to be able to answer questions or clarify his positions from the full board meeting in a more productive space.

C. Committee Discussion:

1. Policy: D6 Class Size

Jamie explained that an updated version of the draft revisions to D6 are in everyone's email inboxes for discussion, focusing on the suggestions that are highlighted as well as edits and suggestions that Mary Heather Noble shared with the committee members earlier this week.

Jamie noted that he and Wendy added in pieces to this revised draft based on VSBA guidance for how to uphold equity in policy decisions

Steve noted that revisions here don't speak to the strength of the objections some board members about transportation and equity. Ellen said she sees providing more choice as upholding equity as well. Steve asked if this policy would be explained and translated into multiple languages for non-english speakers. Wendy affirmed that yes, that would happen.

Steve has no objections to adding the revisions, but he will go with the will of the majority of

the board.

Wendy affirmed that it would be incumbent upon her to make sure that there are controlled choice circumstance, with priorities and procedures developed to make sure that there is equitable implementation of this or other policies.

Jamie disagrees with the characterization of this policy proposal as a backdoor for anything, and he doesn't see the committee advocating for anything like this.

Jamie explained that he made these revisions not as a direct response to everything raised in the board meeting, but because he felt like Wendy's responses and suggested revisions were useful.

Jamie is still in favor of this current version.

Ellen commented that it's hard to avoid discussions around this policy and revision becoming part of much bigger issues. If we were talking about a district wide school choice model that relied on people providing their own transportation, that scale would be a concern for equity that feels different from what we are discussing, which is the rare but real situation when class enrollments are too small and we need something to address those situations.

Wendy shared that she has reflected on the fact that there are inequities that are known and inequities that we anticipate or are concerned may become real. And right now, we know that there are students in a school who do not have equitable access to the required and necessary classroom size for best educational outcomes. And, she shares some of the concerns about potential for inequity, and the procedural implementation of this will be key to addressing those.

Laura offered that she is concerned about transportation access being equitable, but also recognizes that we need something on this right now and we need to move forward.

Jason asked if we can commit to providing transportation regardless, and providing transportation to after school care if that is what is needed, and having sufficient access to nursing/medical care.

Wendy said it sounds like Jason is saying that a family who may want to take advantage of this may have requirements for more access to nursing care than 1 day/week. She said we would do this anyway- we fill in nursing care based on where the highest needs are. We would make sure that health needs are taken into staffing considerations anyway.

The after school piece, there is an after school program in Ripton now and anyone would have access to that.

Wendy also explained that there are existing routes for transportation in and out of Middlebury from Ripton, so accessing that would fairly straight forward.

Jamie asked if the way this would play out is that a family reaches out and says they would be interested in volunteering and then what would happen? Wendy explained that it would probably be a process of the initial application asks if a family is interested, and then ask for them to outline what they would be looking for in attending that school. From there procedure would work to assess family requirements and once students are enrolled, the needs of the school- including those other students- would be part of planning for staffing, logistics, etc.

Ellen and Laura agreed with Steve's earlier comment that they agree with moving these revisions forward to the full Board for a first read. Jamie also agrees.

Jason affirmed that he hopes we can get in front of anything that feels like barriers that might restrict access of this option. Jamie suggested we could delete the sentence that says “under certain circumstances we might not be able to provide transportation?”

Wendy said she thinks what will make the difference with families will be communication from Central office with families to help them to know about this opportunity, explaining that the District is prepared to make accommodations as needed to ensure its available to families who want to explore it, and if you are interested in exploring it then there are accessible and multiple ways of doing so (electronically, in person). For example, not relying on something like “Just let your principal know.” Working with Emily, Wendy is confident they can design the right outreach and approach to this so that it is something that families can equitably access.

Jamie will update the revised version to reflect the new warning date and will send it to Darcie to make sure it’s part of the January 6th package for the full Board meeting.

2. Policy: C30 School Residence

D. Public Comment - Any Topic

No public comment

E. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:20

Move: Ellen Whelan-Wuest Second: Jamie McCallum 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.