



POLICY/COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

July 19, 2023

Virtual Meeting - 4:00 p.m.

Committee Members: Jodi Bettermann, Michele Mencer, Randall Peach, Elizabeth Fiore

Administrative Staff: Dr. Jonathan Hart, Superintendent of Schools
Jason Bohm, SBA/Board Secretary

Minutes

1. A proposed Cell Phone Resolution was reviewed, and the Committee agreed to put it on the Board of Education agenda for August.
2. Several policies from Alert 230 regarding updates to health services, personnel, and records were reviewed.
 - a. Policy 5305 - Health Services Personnel
 - i. New Jersey Administrative Code was readopted with updates to roles and responsibilities for school nurses and the school physician. This mandated policy has been revised by Strauss Esmay to make the policy language consistent with the Code regarding requirements for school physicians.
 - b. Policy 5308/Regulation 5308 - Student Health Records
 - i. New Jersey Administrative Code sections related to student health records were readopted with updates to policy language to be consistent with the Code.
 - c. Policy 5310/Regulation 5310 - Health Services
 - i. New Jersey Administrative Code sections related to health services were readopted with minor revisions that include updates to terminology and a reordering of the provisions in the Code. Policy 5310 was updated to align with these changes to the Code and to remove provisions that are duplicated in the Regulation 5310.
3. Advocacy
 - a. Teacher Retention - Pensions & Educator Shortage Legislation
 - b. S3440 - Revision of the definition of Sick Leave under 18A
 - i. Dr. Hart sent an email to Senator Gopal, Chair of the Education Committee, advocating against the expansion of sick leave proposed in Senate bill S-3440 on June 29 in advance of the senate vote on the bill.
 - ii. On July 3, 2023, Governor Murphy signed bill [A-5060](#) which expands the use of sick leave for school district employees. From the Governor's press release: "Under the new law, school district employees may use sick leave for the following reasons:
 - To recover from a physical or mental illness, injury, or other health condition and/or take the time to have it diagnosed, treated, or cared for;
 - For preventative medical care;
 - To assist a member of their immediate family – including parents, spouses, siblings, and children – with the diagnosis, treatment, and/or care of a physical or mental illness, injury, or other health condition;
 - For circumstances related to domestic or sexual violence;

- For the death of an immediate family member, for up to seven days;
- To attend school-related conferences, meetings, functions, or other events for their child;
- In connection with a closure of the school or facility caring for their child.”

Prior to this bill, district employees could use sick days for their personal illness or a doctor’s visit. Contractually, we also allow 3 personal and 4 family illness days in addition to an employee’s sick days. Sick days are cumulative for employees.

- iii. The Committee will need to consider updates to sick leave policies (Policy 3432/4432).
- c. Chapter 44
 - i. At the state level, Chapter 44, also called the 2020 School Employee Health Benefits Reform Law, will be reviewed this year to determine if it has yielded the savings projected at the time it was adopted.
 - ii. Our district has not seen any savings as a result of the implementation of Chapter 44, and the Board of Education has adopted resolutions in June 2021 and August 2022 to advocate for relief from this provision. Our budget for 2023-24 includes \$150k in additional costs to cover the provisions of Chapter 44.
- d. Safe and secure homes schools and communities
 - i. The Committee discussed a sample resolution entitled “Safe and Secure Homes, Schools and Communities” from Appendix A in the NJSBA’s Firearms Safety Task Force’s [Final Report](#) issued February 28, 2023. The report suggests that local Boards of Education have a role to play in the sharing of information on safe storage of firearms as it relates to the safety of the community’s children. Committee members agreed to have Dr. Hart work on this resolution to customize it to the needs of our community. Suggestions that this might be an opportunity for our school police officers to get involved was also discussed. An updated resolution will be discussed at the next Committee meeting with the objective to put this on the October Board of Education agenda to coincide with Safe Schools Week.

4. Agenda items: Policy 5305, Policy 5308, Policy 5310, and the cell phone resolution

5. Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 30, at 4 p.m.