



POLICY/COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 12, 2026

Virtual Meeting - 3:30 p.m.

Committee Members: Ellen DePinto, Chair
Pamela Cassidy, Beth Fiore, Linda Rad (abs.), David Rizza (alt.)

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

Minutes

1. Freedom to Read Policy and Regulation
 - a. Policy 2535 - Library Materials (New): Dr. Hart brought our proposed language from the previous meeting to the attorney for review and provided information based on their discussion. The proposed language is as follows:

Paragraph 1: To that end, the Board of Education will provide the school library staff member with the tools and professional development to ensure materials are developmentally appropriate for the PreK-8 students served. Materials with significant educational value that may also touch upon sensitive topics must prioritize the educational, literary, artistic, and scientific merit over any adverse content. All materials selected shall be consistent with student interests, the district curriculum and be developmentally appropriate for the grade levels served. This language is intended to guide future selections. Removal of any material is guided by regulation 2535.

Paragraph 2: The tools and resources provided to the school library staff members are, but not limited to: professional research and literature such as the School Library Journal, webinars, professional conferences, Common Sense Media, and MackinVision software.

Paragraph 3: When a library staff member identifies the purchase of a material that may contain sensitive content, that material may be sent to the administration for review. The material may also be presented to the Ed/Tech Committee of the Board for review.”

The attorney recommended we identify the items that describe the “how” vs “what” and consider placing the “how” in the regulation because regulations provide the “how” in terms of implementation. The board should consider that although the statute gives the board authority to collaborate with the library staff for material selection, some may interpret adding this language as managing the district or facilitating de-facto censorship. The attorney also suggested a paragraph for us to consider instead of paragraph 3: “If a library staff member identifies the purchase

of material that may contain sensitive content, prior to presenting the material to the Superintendent or designee as per section C(3) of policy 2535, the staff member shall present the material to a review panel consisting of the building principal, Supervisor of Humanities, and another librarian (“the Panel”). The Panel’s review process may include presentation of the material to the Ed/Tech Committee of the Board of Education for further review.” The committee spent some time discussing which portion of the language should live in policy and which should live in regulation. One board member was concerned about the length of the statement and asked if we could streamline it. One member expressed concern that having a review panel and presentations to the Ed/Tech committee could be seen as censorship. A board member shared that according to the policy and also statements from Governor Murphy’s press release, limiting or restricting access to any library material deemed developmentally inappropriate for certain students is not considered censorship. The committee also discussed a way to standardize the process for books that may be flagged as containing sensitive material or possibly age-inappropriate. The committee agreed that the best way to move forward was to keep the process as is mentioned in paragraph 3 of the attorney’s suggestion. The committee agreed that paragraph 1 will be included in the policy, paragraph 2 will be removed and the revised paragraph 3 will be included in the regulation.

- b. Regulation 2535 - Library Materials (New): The committee reviewed the regulation and recommends the addition of the attorney’s proposed language be included. The scope of the regulation will need to be expanded to include a section C for the selection process for library materials that may contain sensitive content.
 - c. Policy 2530 – Resource Materials (Revised) The committee agreed that no further changes are needed to this policy and it is ready for first read.
 - d. Regulation 2530 – Resource Materials (Revised) The committee agreed that no further changes are needed to this policy and it is ready for first read.
 - e. Policy 9130 – Public Complaints (Revised) The committee agreed that no further changes are needed to this policy and it is ready for first read.
 - f. Regulation 9130 – Public Complaints (Revised) A committee member asked if it is in statute that the Superintendent has to select the board member who will serve on the review committee for textbook complaints or if the board would be able to make that selection as they are now in policy 2535 for the library book complaints. Dr. Hart will look into this and get back to us. The committee agreed to move forward with the current revisions and will consider revising again if changes to the review committee selections are allowed.
2. Alert 236: The committee reviewed these policies and agreed to move them forward to first read.
- a. Bylaw 0142.1 - Nepotism
 - b. Policy 1220 - Employment of Chief School Administrator

3. Policy Tracking Document for Review (if time). Dr. Hart received the manual audit from Strauss Esmay and will share it with the committee so they can review it and cross reference it with our tracking document. He will be reviewing it shortly and advised that Strauss can update policies for us for a fee. We will discuss this at our next committee meeting.

Agenda items: Policy and regulations 2535, 2530, 9130, bylaw 0142.1, policy 1220

Next Meeting: Monday, February 9th @ 3:30PM

Summaries of Policy and Regulation Revisions

Bylaw 0142.1 - Nepotism

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-6.2 has been readopted without any material revisions. Some of the provisions have been reorganized in Bylaw Guide 0142.1 to better align with the administrative code.

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-6.2 requires every Board of Education to implement a nepotism policy that must include the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-6.2 as a condition of receiving State aid making Bylaw Guide 0142.1 mandated for all school districts.

Policy 1220 - Employment of Chief School Administrator

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-3.1 addresses the Executive County Superintendent's review of certain employment contracts. The detailed provisions in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-3.1 for the review of a Superintendent's contract by the Executive County Superintendent are included in Policy Guide 1620 - Administrative Employment Contracts, which was updated in Policy Alert 235 in July 2025. Policy Guide 1220 has been revised with a few revisions to the legal citations. A Board may revise the Recruitment Procedures and Qualifications sections of Policy Guide 1220 to meet local requirements. The Employment Contract section of Policy Guide 1220 addresses the requirements of a Superintendent's employment contract. QSAC Governance Indicator 3 requires a Board to adopt a policy that addresses the review and approval of a Superintendent's employment contract by the Executive County Superintendent making Policy Guide 1220 mandated