

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

King's Fork High School
351 King's Fork Road, Suffolk, VA 23434
Media Room, 2nd floor
February 23, 2026

Present:

Members

- ✓ Mrs. Kimberly Slingluff, **Committee Chair**
- ✓ Mr. Sean McGee, **School Board Chair & Committee Member**
- ✓ Mrs. Valerie Fields, **School Board Member**

Participants

- ✓ Wendell M. Waller, Esquire, **School Board Attorney**
- ✓ Renee Davenport, **Legal Administrative Assistant**

Attendees

- ✓ Ms. Karen Jenkins, **School Board Member**

➤ Call to Order.

- The meeting was called to order by Board Member Slingluff.
- The committee approved the minutes from the January 2026 meeting. Committee Chair Slingluff did not get a chance to review them.

➤ Unfinished Business

• Policy Section 7-7.4 – Fraternization Policy

- Committee discussed language in the proposed Fraternization Policy that the “School Board does not prohibit personal relationships between employees”. A concern was raised as to whether the policy is too restrictive. Dr. Gordon sent an email in his absence from the meeting, stating in his opinion the policy is not necessary. The current policies cover this, and it duplicates what has already been established. Attorney Waller stated that certain aspects of this policy can be found in current policies of the school board and in regulations of Suffolk Public Schools, but not in a single policy or regulation. Chair Slingluff stated that she would like to see some type of mandatory disclosure put in the policy when it comes to a subordinate and a superior because of the very nature of the fact that it does create the opportunity for favoritism, etc. She would like to add in the last sentence of paragraph D, “or at work events.” Chair Slingluff added that paragraph H prohibits certain activities, but there are no consequences such as a warning, letter of reprimand, etc. Committee member McGee noted that the board member that requested this policy has not voiced any comments regarding language in the proposed policy. Attorney Waller suggested that the committee consider how a policy of this nature would affect employee morale, especially if there are a number of interpersonal relationships within the school system. The

policy would have more weight if this was a major issue within the school system that needs to be addressed, otherwise you could be opening up something unnecessarily. The committee should balance the need for this policy against employee morale. The committee discussed what may have precipitated this policy and why the PRC should move forward with the policy. Further discussion included having a reporting requirement of interpersonal relationships to the Human Resources department if the employee is in a managerial position or if the person is their subordinate. Language will be added to have mandatory disclosure to HR and that the employee is subject to discipline and consequences. Also, it was suggested that there be a definition for "fraternization." Policy will be moved to the next PRC meeting in March with changes discussed.

- **Section 2-3.2 – Meetings Generally and Time Limitation**

- Committee member McGee shared his opinion that this policy will create more issues for him as the School Board Chair and could also delay the meeting with discussion about whether the meeting should be extended. He would like to revisit the policy on the 10-minute time limit for board discussion. Dr. Gordon commented in his email that "this is a school board policy matter, but it would be extremely difficult to limit meetings to two hours." The committee discussed reviewing the school board policy that has the 10-minute time limit for board member and to limit that time to 3 minutes. Committee member Fields agreed regarding the time limit but suggested that the committee should revisit the issue of adding items to the agenda on the night of the board meeting. She stated that caused a lot of extended time at our last meeting. Committee member McGee suggested that we look at the Norms policy which might address that. Attorney Waller stated that this might also be addressed by the General Assembly. He further stated that the FOIA Council recommended to the General Assembly, legislation that would prohibit public bodies from adding things to an agenda and then voting on the added item on the night of the meeting. This may have come about because members of the public were voicing concerns that public bodies were adding items to the agenda and then voting on those items without affording members of the public an opportunity to offer comments. There will possibly be some exceptions to this legislation. Attorney Waller added that there are already exceptions to the school board policy on voting on items that are added to the agenda, but the PRC can also revisit language regarding adding items to the meeting agenda on the night of the meeting. Committee Chair Slingluff added that we should address the language of requiring 16 days to add items to the agenda. She continued that we should make things more conducive to add items to the agenda. Attorney Waller explained that even though board members may not be able to satisfy the 16-day requirement, board members can still exercise the right to have items added on the night of the meeting. Attorney Waller will send pending legislation to committee members for their perusal. Committee agreed not to send this policy to the board. Attorney Waller will also send the PRC information regarding reducing the number of minutes members have for a debate. These items provided by Attorney Waller will also be added to the next PRC meeting to discuss.

➤ **New Business**

- **POLICY SECTION 1-7.4 – Programs and Services**

- Committee Member Fields called attention to language in Section D. 1. Committee Member Fields stated that she would like the language “in addition to” added in lieu of “organizations such as” because we have a contract with the VSBA and all board members are encouraged to participate in that training. She added that the language “such as” could be any organization, but the language “in addition to” suggest that it would be an imperative to attend the VSBA and COSSBA first. It would indicate that members would have to attend the VSBA and COSSBA as opposed to making it an elective. Committee Chair Slingluff stated that we currently don’t have to attend meetings of the VSBA, so that would change the policy to indicate that board members have to attend meetings of the VSBA and this would reduce the amount of available funds for board members to attend conferences and training not sponsored by VSBA. PRC members discussed trainings that are not mandatory, replacing the language of “VSBA and COSSBA” to “VSBA or COSSBA”, and meeting the requirement of attending a VSBA or COSSBA training during their tenure. Attorney Waller reminded members of the Committee that paragraph E addresses Committee Member Fields concerns because if all newly elected members to the school board attend a basic training from the VSBA, it would at least mean that all of the board members are on the same page at the beginning of their designated term. Committee member McGee stated that his experience with trying to attend an initial meeting with the VSBA was unsuccessful because it fell on a day that he had another meeting and he wasn’t able to get another training through them. Also, the question was raised when the policy says required, is there a consequence when someone doesn’t make it? The committee discussed that there is a consequence under the Virginia Code when members do not turn in the Conflict-of-Interest form, but there is no consequence when a members of the school board fail to attend trainings. However, Attorney Waller stated that one of the consequences not specifically provided for in the Virginia Code, but could be imposed is by the court when a board member has not participated in training and later found by the court to have violated a particular provision of the Virginia Code, is that a court may be less lenient with the board member because the board member had an opportunity to go to a training to understand what a board member was expected to do but didn’t take advantage of it. The committee discussed required trainings other than VSBA and COSSBA. Chair Slingluff would like to make it clear that board members don’t have to come back to the dais again when Board dynamics change in order to attend trainings not sponsored by VSBA. Committee Member McGee stated that he would like to have language in policy that a board member can attend whatever training A board member would like to attend without having to come before the board. Committee Member McGee stated that he was recently questioned by a constituent as to why the board is being questioned regarding membership in outside organizations, when the same level of scrutiny is not directed at the school superintendent. Committee Chair McGee went on to state that board members are so concerned with controlling the board and he believes that board members should have the autonomy to attend whatever training they would like to attend without having to come to the full board and request permission. The committee also considered having to provide materials and agendas from outside

meeting sources and removing point 2 of section F (should have been G). Members discussed distributing materials to other board members from meetings that they attend without approval from the host organization. The PRC also decided to have a written report under Section 2F. In the second F section which should be G, the committee asked that language be deleted that would require notification to all board members when any board member is going to training in (1) and (2). Attorney Waller suggested that materials from training can be provided if it does not violate any proprietary rights of the owner of the material. The changes on this policy will be sent out to the committee for approval. After the approval, the policy will be presented as a first reading at the March 12, 2026 school board meeting.

- **POLICY SECTION 7-31.5 – Code of Ethics Policy**

- Attorney Waller provided two policies. One is the original code of ethics policy that includes language provided by Committee Member McGee. The other is the same but adds language provided by Board member Jenkins in italics. Attorney Waller explained the differences in the two policies. Committee member McGee and Committee Chair Slingluff wanted the combination policy without the italics sent to the full school board for First Reading. Committee Member Fields wanted to have language proposed by Board Member Jenkins also included in the policy for First Reading. Committee Member Fields would also like to have consequences included in the Ethics Policy if the Ethics policy is not adhered to. She asked the other committee members to explain their unwillingness to support language proposed by Board Member Jenkins. Committee Chair Slingluff indicated that she thought it was redundant. Board Member Fields thought that the additional language would enhance the policy. By vote of 2 to 1, the PRC agreed to move the policy for First Reading at the March 12, 2026 meeting of the full school board without additional language proposed by Board Member Jenkins.

- **POLICY SECTION 2-2.6 – Norms and Protocols**

- The discussion to remove the Norms and Protocols policy. Committee Chair Slingluff suggested that due to time constraints the PRC may want to move this policy to our next meeting, but she wanted to speak on this policy. Committee Chair Slingluff expressed the opinion that if a board member wants to censure another board member by bringing it before the full school board for vote, there is no need for norms and protocols. Committee Chair Slingluff expressed the opinion that what is currently in norms and protocols can be covered by the Ethics Policy. She would like an onboarding handbook for school board members, so that newly elected members will know what they are required to do. By having an onboarding handbook, a Code of Ethics policy and the ability to censure a fellow board member during a public meeting, there is little or no need for norms and protocols. Committee Member Fields was of the opinion that norms and protocols should not be repealed. Committee Member McGee stated that the board keeps adjusting the Norms and Protocols policy to try and play catch up with the next problem that arises and the board is not getting ahead. The committee will table this policy until the next PRC meeting after receiving the board's input regarding the Code of Ethics policy. Attorney Waller suggested that the committee consider suspending the Norms and Protocols Policy to see how things go and then determine whether there remains a need for norms and protocols.

➤ **Business by Committee Members**

- None mentioned.
 - Committee Chair Slingluff requested a copy of the audio recording of today's meeting from Ms. Davenport.
- Next meeting will be Monday, February 23rd, 2026 at 3:30 at King's Fork High School (Media Center).

➤ **Meeting Adjourned.**