



POLICY/COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 29, 2026

Virtual Meeting - 3:30 p.m.

Committee Members: Ellen DePinto, Chair
Pamela Cassidy, Beth Fiore, Linda Rad

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

Minutes

1. AI Committee Handbook - Dr. Hart reviewed the AI Handbook with the committee. The AI committee met four times throughout this school year. The committee consisted of staff, parents, and students. This committee collected data regarding AI use in schools. They developed ethical intentions such as transparency, academic integrity, critical literacy, data privacy and safety, fairness, equity and age appropriateness. There will be no AI specific policy however, our Academic Integrity and Acceptable Use policy will include AI and speak to the AI Handbook. This handbook is intended to be a fluid document as AI is ever-changing. Protocols for Teachers & Staff include understanding the SAMR model, AI is a tool, establishing clear AI use guidelines such as the “traffic light” system, model responsible practices, and transparent citation. Protocols for students include understanding the “traffic light” system to know when to use AI, practice citation and acknowledge AI use, develop critical thinking and verification, respect intellectual property, and safety measures. The handbook also mentions professional development timelines to gain key competencies. The committee is still working on a vetting rubric to evaluate AI tools, review cycle for all protocols, formalize a grievance and feedback loop, and integrate AI literacy into curriculum. Dr. Hart is getting input from leadership and will keep the policy committee informed.
2. Religious Exemptions Protocol (*Mahmoud*) - Dr. Hart reviewed a Religious Exemption Protocol document with the committee. This was brought to our attention because the district received a request to be exempt from a core novel found in a literacy unit because it substantially conflicted with their religious beliefs. This relates to the Mahmoud Vs. Taylor Supreme Court case which ruled that public schools must allow parents to opt their children out of curriculum that substantially interferes with their religious beliefs. When an opt-out request is received by any staff member, it should be forwarded to both the building principal and the appropriate supervisor. The principal and supervisor shall forward the request to the superintendent as notification. A meeting shall be scheduled between staff and the parent to review the opt-out request. The meeting will be to determine that the material/book substantially interferes with the religious development

of the student, and the material/book poses a threat of undermining the student's religious beliefs and practices. It will also discuss what accommodations and alternate assignments can be made. Before the final decision is communicated to the parent, the superintendent should be advised as to the result of the parent meeting and the course of action that is planned for the student. A discussion with BOE counsel may occur as needed.

3. 3000 Series Revisions

- a. Policy 3231 - Outside Employment as Athletic Coach. This policy relates to staff members who may coach outside of our district and may require accommodations such as a work schedule adjustment. Dr. Hart will make a minor revision to the first sentence of this policy and will move forward with first reading.

4. Handbooks - The committee will review the Board of Education Handbook and the Board Committee Handbook for general comments and feedback. The committee will send ideas on how to improve upon these documents to Ellen for her to organize for the next committee meeting.

5. Policy Tracking Document: (Strauss Esmay Audit and Completion of 3000 series)
Bylaw 0175 - The Strauss Esmay audit identified bylaws 0173-0177 as needing updates. However 0175 is the only one needing an update as all others were previously addressed during our review process. Bylaw 0175 refers to Contracts with Independent Consultants. This will need to be added to our manual. Dr. Hart will look into and bring this back to committee.

Policy 1110 - Strauss Esmay flagged policy 1110 Organizational Chart as needing an update. We do not have this policy. This policy is not mandated. We review the district organizational chart in the personnel committee. We will add this policy but it will be very simple and state that we have an organizational chart and it is available for review in the business office.

Policy 1642 - Earned Sick Leave. This is a mandated policy that the Strauss Esmay audit flagged as us needing for our manual. Dr. Hart will bring this policy back to committee for review and adoption.

The following policies 1570, 1620, 1636.01, 2230, 2414, 2422, 2440 were flagged by the Strauss Esmay Audit as needing an update, however, these policies were previously addressed by the committee in the fall. These policies were reviewed and updated but were not reflected in the manual at the time of the audit.

Policy 2416.01 - Postnatal Accommodations for Students. This policy was briefly discussed and the committee decided to keep it flagged but to move on to more pressing policies. This policy is not mandated and could be considered at a later date.

Policy 2428.1 - Standards Based Instructional Priorities. This policy is not mandated. We currently do not have this policy but it may be good to have. Dr. Hart will bring this back to the committee for review and adoption.

Policy 3216 - Dress and Grooming - was flagged in the audit and reviewed by the committee again and we decided to keep it as is.

Policy 3324 Right to Privacy, 3340 Grievance, and 3351 Healthy Workplace Environment are all missing from our manual. These are not mandated policies but may be good to have. Dr. Hart will bring these back to the committee for review.

Policy 3410 - Compensation. This policy was not in the Strauss audit but Dr. Hart noticed it in their model policy manual. The Board of Education sets compensation when not in contract. Dr. Hart will look into this and bring it back to the committee.

Policy 3440 - Travel Expenses. This policy was previously approved to be abolished but never removed from the manual. This was a clerical error that will be corrected.

Agenda items: policy 3231

Next Meeting: Monday, Jun 1, 2026 @ 3:30