MILLVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes October 19, 2026

Dr. Rasmus called the Millville Area School District Policy Committee Meeting to order at 5:10 pm.

Committee Members Present: Greg Hemsarth

Administration/Staff/Others Present: Dr. Joseph Rasmus, Superintendent; Dr. James Meadows, Director of Interventional Support; Matt Mills, Secondary Principal; and Chelsea Rosenberger, Board Recording Secretary

- Dr. Rasmus explained that the committee meeting schedule had been modified due to the availability of committee members and changes to the originally planned Wellness Committee meeting. He explained that the September Policy Committee meeting included extensive discussions that prevented the committee from completing its entire agenda. So, this meeting would continue what was incomplete from the prior meeting.

Updated MASD Policy 249 – Bullying/Cyberbullying

- Dr. Rasmus reviewed proposed updates to Policy 249, Bullying/Cyberbullying, based on recommendations from PSBA. He explained that the revisions were primarily intended to update terminology and incorporate emerging technology-related concerns. A significant revision involved expanding the definition of cyberbullying to address artificial intelligence and artificially generated or modified media.
- Dr. Rasmus explained that the updated policy also addresses the procedures for reporting bullying and cyberbullying; investigation requirements; threat assessment considerations; determination and documentation of findings; and administrative responsibilities for responding to reported incidents. He noted that, following Board approval, the district would be required to display the policy in classrooms.
- Mr. Hemsarth questioned whether the district has jurisdiction over cyberbullying that occurs outside school hours and does not involve a district-issued electronic device.
  - Dr. Rasmus explained that the district must establish a connection between the incident and the school environment. He provided examples of circumstances that could establish district jurisdiction, including: threatening communications involving activities occurring during the school day; messages referencing violence or harassment that would occur on school property; communications transmitted using district-issued devices or district email accounts; incidents involving personal devices during school hours; and conduct that creates a threat to student safety or substantially disrupts the educational environment.
  - Dr. Rasmus emphasized that incidents occurring entirely outside school, without a sufficient connection to school operations, generally fall outside the district's disciplinary jurisdiction. In those circumstances, administration may recommend that parents contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Mr. Hemsarth asked whether the district would have jurisdiction if a student received a personal email outside school hours but subsequently opened the message on a district-issued device during the school day.
  - Dr. Rasmus explained that such circumstances can fall into a legally uncertain area. He indicated that the use of a district email account would establish a

clearer connection to the district. However, merely opening a personal communication on a district-issued device would require additional consideration of the circumstances. He emphasized that the district must evaluate each situation individually and determine whether there is a sufficient connection to school operations.

- Mr. Hemsarth questioned whether evidence originating outside school could be considered when investigating bullying that also occurred on school property.
  - Dr. Rasmus explained that the answer would depend on the circumstances, the nature of the evidence, and whether the conduct could be connected to the school environment. He noted that bullying generally involves repeated conduct, but a single serious threat may still warrant school disciplinary action under other applicable policies and that administration would consult the district solicitor and school police officers when jurisdiction or evidentiary questions arise.
- Mr. Meadows asked whether the district continues to utilize the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.
  - Dr. Rasmus indicated that the program is no longer actively utilized and that its implementation gradually diminished over time.
  - The committee discussed previous bullying prevention initiatives and the difficulty of determining whether those programs produced measurable improvements in student behavior.
- Dr. Rasmus expressed interest in reviewing whether the district's restrictions on student cell phone use have reduced cyberbullying incidents. He explained that one of the anticipated benefits of restricting personal electronic devices during the school day was a reduction in inappropriate electronic communications and related disciplinary concerns.
  - Mr. Hemsarth expressed interest in reviewing before-and-after data to determine the effectiveness of district initiatives.
  - Dr. Rasmus agreed that measurable data would be beneficial and indicated that the district now has a stronger framework for evaluating behavioral trends.
- Dr. Rasmus discussed changes in the educational environment over time. He explained that administrators increasingly encounter situations in which parents challenge disciplinary decisions or do not support school-based interventions.
  - The committee discussed the importance of preventive interventions and consistent expectations.
  - Dr. Meadows explained that the district also utilizes Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which maintains behavioral information separate from Sapphire. He noted that this information could provide another source of data for evaluating student conduct.
  - Dr. Rasmus explained that the elementary school has an established PBIS framework, while the secondary school is working toward developing an appropriate model. He emphasized that the secondary program must be developmentally appropriate and should not simply replicate the elementary school's approach. Dr. Rasmus explained that developing a secondary-level PBIS framework is one of the district's MTSS goals.

- Mr. Hemsarth discussed his conversations with educators and administrators in other school districts. He explained that some schools successfully incorporate positive behavioral practices into classroom routines without formally identifying the practices as a schoolwide PBIS program. He expressed concern that explicitly introducing PBIS terminology at the secondary level could generate resistance from students who remember previous versions of the program.
  - Dr. Rasmus acknowledged that this was a reasonable consideration. He emphasized that the secondary team remains in the early stages of planning and that a final implementation model has not yet been established.
  - Dr. Meadows discussed the district's implementation of Navigate360 lessons at the secondary level. He explained that teachers have five school days to complete one assigned lesson.
  - Dr. Rasmus emphasized that preventive instruction is preferable to responding only after behavioral problems occur.
  - Dr. Meadows reported that he and Mr. Mills planned to visit classrooms to evaluate the fidelity of Navigate360 implementation.
- The Committee was amenable with the proposed Policy 249 revisions for Board consideration.

MASD Policy 805.2 – School Security Personnel

- Dr. Rasmus reviewed the proposed updates to Policy 805.2, School Security Personnel. He explained that the proposed revisions were relatively minor and primarily clarified the responsibilities of the district's School Safety and Security Coordinator, of which he has been appointed. Dr. Rasmus explained that the coordinator is responsible for overseeing school safety and security operations, including school police personnel and compliance with applicable state and federal requirements. The policy also addresses the coordination of required training and resources for students and employees. He explained that the district must comply with school safety training requirements established under Act 55 and other applicable regulations. Dr. Rasmus referenced recent professional development activities involving situational awareness and behavioral health. He explained that the district has been systematically addressing required training obligations and is making satisfactory progress toward compliance. He added the importance of Act 80 days in providing adequate time for mandatory professional development.
- The Committee was amenable with moving forward with this policy for Board consideration.

Approval of 104-AR-2 – Reasonable Break Time and Lactation Accommodations

- Dr. Rasmus reviewed the updated Administrative Regulation 104-AR-2, Reasonable Break Time and Lactation Accommodations. He explained that the district currently has employees requiring lactation accommodations and that administration has been working through the practical scheduling considerations associated with those requests. Dr. Rasmus explained that the employee's supervisor works directly with the employee to identify appropriate times and locations for lactation breaks. In situations

involving classroom teachers, administration may need to arrange coverage for instructional periods.

- ➢ Mr. Hemsarth expressed concern regarding language in the administrative regulation addressing whether employees must be compensated during lactation breaks, questioning whether the language was consistent with the district's historical practice.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus explained that the district has historically accommodated teachers by providing one instructional period of approximately 40 minutes. He indicated that the district has generally maintained compensation while providing these accommodations.
- ➢ Mr. Hemsarth questioned whether the regulation should be clarified to accurately reflect district expectations and applicable requirements. He asked how the administration would respond if an employee requested four instructional periods for lactation accommodations.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus explained that such a request would require additional review and consultation with the district solicitor. However, he explained that the district's historical practice has generally involved providing one 40-minute period.

- ❖ Dr. Rasmus suggested that administration may need to develop a more structured process for identifying anticipated accommodation needs before finalizing instructional schedules for the following school year. He explained that the district's secondary schedule is particularly challenging because certain specialized courses have limited scheduling flexibility.

Discontinuation of 106-AR-0 – Guides for Planned Instruction

- ❖ Dr. Rasmus recommended discontinuing Administrative Regulation 106-AR-0, Guides for Planned Instruction. He explained that the regulation reflects an outdated approach to documenting curriculum and instructional planning. Dr. Rasmus indicated that maintaining the outdated administrative regulation is unnecessary.

Discontinuation of 122-AR-0 – Reimbursement for Extracurricular Activities

- ❖ Dr. Rasmus reviewed the existing Administrative Regulation 122-AR-0, Reimbursement for Extracurricular Activities. He explained that the regulation is a legacy document that no longer reflects district practices. The regulation contains provisions regarding reimbursement for meals and other expenses associated with student extracurricular participation.
- ❖ Dr. Rasmus referenced language providing meal reimbursement of approximately $5 per student for certain extracurricular activities. He explained that the district does not currently follow this practice. As part of the district's ongoing review and cleanup of administrative regulations, he recommended discontinuing the outdated regulation.
- ❖ The discussion also referenced a similar legacy administrative regulation concerning athletic activities.

Proposed 122-AR-0 – Extracurricular Activities

- ❖ Dr. Rasmus presented a proposed replacement Administrative Regulation 122-AR-0, Extracurricular Activities. He explained that the proposed regulation incorporates

updated PSBA language and establishes clearer distinctions between curricular and extracurricular activities. He reviewed criteria used to determine whether an activity is considered curricular.

- Dr. Rasmus explained that the proposed regulation also addresses equitable opportunities for noncurriculum-related student activities.The updated language establishes expectations for allowing student groups to meet and participate in activities under appropriate conditions.
- The committee discussed the distinction between district-sponsored curricular activities and student-initiated, noncurriculum-related activities.
  - Mr. Hemsarth questioned language defining noninstructional time. He noted that the beginning of the regulation identifies specific periods considered noninstructional, while another section appeared to provide the building principal with authority to determine appropriate meeting times. He questioned whether the language could create an inconsistency.
  - Dr. Rasmus explained that the intent is to provide the building principal with appropriate discretion to approve student activities without interfering with required instruction.
  - The committee discussed adding language permitting activities during other times deemed appropriate by the building principal.This would provide flexibility while preserving the established definition of noninstructional time.
- Mr. Hemsarth questioned whether student clubs and other activities were currently meeting during the district's MTSS period.
  - Dr. Rasmus explained that the secondary schedule has been intentionally designed to accommodate several responsibilities during the MTSS period including: academic interventions; student progress monitoring; club and activity advising; gifted education responsibilities; professional learning community meetings; and additional academic support.
- Dr. Rasmus compared the secondary MTSS structure with the elementary school's intervention model. He explained that the elementary school has established dedicated intervention periods that allow teachers to group students according to identified academic needs.
- The Committee was amenable to moving forward with the administrative regulation, provided that the language concern be addressed.

Proposed AR-122.1 – Equity for Noncurriculum-Related Student Groups

- The committee reviewed the proposed administrative regulation associated with Policy 122.1, addressing equity for noncurriculum-related student groups. The discussion focused on ensuring that student groups are provided appropriate opportunities to meet while maintaining the district's instructional priorities.
  - Mr. Hemsarth questioned whether the definition of noninstructional time should be clarified to recognize the building principal's discretion to authorize additional meeting opportunities.
  - Dr. Rasmus agreed that language allowing other times deemed appropriate by the principal could provide useful flexibility.

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Approval of 126-AR-0 – Class Size

- Dr. Rasmus presented Administrative Regulation 126-AR-0, Class Size. He explained that the regulation was a historical district document that required revisions to align with current Board expectations and district practices.
- Dr. Rasmus reviewed previous language establishing a class size range of approximately 25 to 30 students for kindergarten through sixth grade.He explained that the Board had previously discussed and established 25 students as the threshold for considering an additional elementary classroom section. The existing regulation did not clearly reflect that expectation. Therefore, the proposed revision establishes a maximum of 25 students per elementary classroom rather than retaining the previous range. Dr. Rasmus indicated that current elementary enrollment trends support the revised threshold.
- Mr. Hemsarth expressed concern regarding language indicating that classes with fewer than 10 students would be eliminated or considered for elimination. He questioned whether the provision could unnecessarily restrict the district's ability to offer courses with limited enrollment.
  - Dr. Rasmus acknowledged that low-enrollment courses have been an ongoing scheduling consideration. He explained that the district has expanded elective and career and technical education opportunities over time, creating additional course options for students. However, offering more courses can also result in smaller enrollment numbers within individual classes.
  - The committee discussed circumstances in which maintaining a course with fewer than 10 students may be appropriate.
  - Mr. Mills noted that the regulation includes a provision allowing final approval by the Superintendent. He explained that this provides an exception when circumstances justify offering a class with fewer than the established minimum number of students.
  - Dr. Rasmus agreed that the provision provides necessary flexibility.
- The Committee was amenable to presenting this update to the Board for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned the meeting at 6:06 pm.

Chelsea Rosenberger
Board Recording Secretary