

PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Special Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting Title: Policy Subcommittee of the Board of Education

Date: Monday, October 18, 2021

Time: 4:00 PM

Place: Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Crystal St. Lawrence, Chair, Foster White and Ruthe Boiczuk

Also Present: David Levenduski, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Members Absent: Tom Arcari, Deborah Hardy, and Becky Tyrrell, Ex-officio

Early Departures: None

Chair Crystal St. Lawrence called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

The following policies were up for review and discussion:

Students:	Policy No. 5131.1 Bus Conduct –REPLACE
Students:	Policy No. 5145.6 Sexual Harassment--REPLACE
Students:	Policy No. 5146 Student Privacy—REPLACE
Students:	Policy No. 5141.3 Health Assessment and Immunizations—REPLACE
Instruction:	Policy No. 6172.7 Reporting to Parents—REPLACE
Community Relations:	Policy No. 1250 Visits to the Schools—REPLACE
Community Relations:	Policy No. 1330 Use of School Facilities—REPLACE
Personnel:	Policy No. 4420 Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace—REPLACE
Personnel:	Policy No. 4010 Non-Discrimination—REPLACE
Bylaw:	Policy No. 9325 Meeting Conduct—HOLD
	Policy No. XXXX Credit for On-Line Courses—HOLD
Community Relations:	Policy No. 1150 Possession of Deadly Weapons or Firearms—NEW
Community Relations:	Policy No. 1250.5 School Volunteers, Student Interns and other Non-Employees—NEW
Business:	Policy No. 3519 Green Cleaning Programs—NEW
Students:	Policy No. 5131.911 Bullying Prevention and Intervention--REPLACE

Mr. Levenduski discussed the following changes to each policy:

Policy No. 5131.1 Bus Conduct –REPLACES

This policy has been revised to make permanent a temporary COVID-19 provision concerning compliance with health and safety protocols. We have also added a provision to clarify that student behavior on school transportation must be in compliance with all school rules and regulations.

Policy and Reg. No. 5145.6 Sexual Harassment--REPLACES

In light of the recent Notice of Interpretation issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, we have revised this policy and administrative regulations to clarify that Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. We have further revised the administrative regulations to address practical application of Title IX's requirements by, among other things, clarifying definitions and appeal process.

Policy No. 5146 Student Privacy—REPLACES

In light of guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education's Student Privacy Policy Office, this policy has been revised, and the accompanying model notification, to clarify when the administration must obtain prior written consent of a parent or student before administering a student survey related to certain topics, and when the administration must provide parents or students notice and an opportunity to opt out of participation. Minor revisions were also made to reflect statutory language.

Policy No. 5141.3 Health Assessment and Immunizations—REPLACES

The following policy has been revised to conform with Public Act No. 21-95, regarding the implementation of vision screenings, and Public Act No. 21-121, regarding the reporting requirements for children with a diagnosis of asthma. Under the new law, districts must report, on a triennial basis, the total number of children having a diagnosis of asthma at the time of enrollment, in grade six or seven, and in grade nine or ten (rather than grade ten or eleven, as previously required.) If the district altered its health assessment requirements for the 2020-21 school year in light of the COVID-19 public health emergency, and it reverts back to its usual timeline for assessment requirements, the district should ensure that it has health assessments on file for each student in accordance with existing state law.

Policy and Reg. No. 6172.7 Reporting to Parents—REPLACES

This policy has been revised to comply with Public Act No. 21-46, as revised by the budget implementer, which requires the board of education to (1) offer parents the option of attending parent-teacher conferences during periods of remote learning in certain instances. The new law also requires, among other things, that school districts collect certain emergency contact information and provide, after January 1, 2022, a document to be developed by the State Department of Education concerning educational, safety, mental health, and food insecurity resources at any parent-teacher conference required during a period of remote learning. The revised policy is accompanied by administrative regulations addressing these requirements, which districts can further customize to reflect district-specific parent-teacher communication requirements.

Policy No. 1250 Visits to the Schools—REPLACES

This policy has been revised to make permanent the language requiring visitors to comply with any health and safety protocols in place at the time of a visit.

Policy No. 1330 Use of School Facilities—REPLACES

This policy has been revised by adding a new Section F, which requires users of school facilities to comply with any applicable health and safety protocols.

Policy and Reg. No. 4420 Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace—REPLACES

In light of the recent Notice of Interpretation issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, we have revised this policy and administrative regulations to clarify that Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. We have further revised the administrative regulations to address practical application of Title IX's requirements by, among other things, clarifying definitions and appeal process.

Policy and Reg. No. 4010 Non-Discrimination—REPLACES

This policy has been revised to reflect changes made by Public Act No. 21-79 to the statutory definition of "veteran", who's changes become effective October 1, 2021. We have also clarified that complaints can be filed regarding discrimination and harassment, and that individuals who wish to request or discuss accommodations based on religion or disability may contact relevant school officials. In light of the recent Notice of Interpretation issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, we clarified that complaints based on allegations of discrimination or harassment for reasons such as gender identity or sexual orientation will be handled pursuant to the board's policies regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. We have also revised the regulations to reflect that complaints against Superintendent should be filed with the Board Chair, who will take appropriate steps to cause the matter

to be investigated in a manner consistent with board policy and regulation. Finally, we have clarified when timelines for investigation of complaints may be reasonably extended.

Policy No. 9325 Meeting Conduct—HOLD

Under the Freedom of Information Act, public agencies, including boards of education, must make their meetings, other than executive sessions, open to the public. We have revised this policy in light of June Special Session, Public Act No. 21-2, which requires boards of education to provide board members with the opportunity to participate in public meetings by means of electronic equipment. The new law also allows, but does not require, until April 30, 2022, public agencies to hold public meetings that are accessible to the public through electronic equipment, or through electronic equipment in conjunction with an in-person meeting. Accordingly, Section 5 of the revised bylaw, Procedures and Public Participation by Means of Electronic Equipment, is optional. However, if boards do not adopt this section of the revised bylaw, they should be prepared to accommodate any changes necessitated by pandemic-related conditions in the event that such conditions warrant a return to fully remote board meetings. This policy will be held to double-check current policy.

Policy No. XXXX Credit for On-Line Courses—HOLD

This policy was revised to clarify that remote learning provided by the District will be provided at board expense, but expenses incurred for taking an online course identified by the student and/or parent to supplement the district's offerings will be the responsibility of the student and/or parent. In light of Public Act 21-46, June Special Session, Public Act 21-2, and recent guidance from the State Department of Education dated July 15, 2021, we further revised this policy to include two optional sections. The first optional section authorizes remote learning in grades nine through twelve, beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the policy. The second optional section recognizes that there may be rare circumstances, before July 1, 2022, that necessitate programming other than in-person instruction and authorizes the Superintendent or designee to develop administrative procedures and regulations regarding continued educational opportunities, which may but need not include "remote learning," in such circumstances. This policy will be held for further information from the CSDE.

Policy No. 1150 Possession of Deadly Weapons or Firearms—NEW

The policy has been written to clarify that deadly weapons and firearms are prohibited on school transportation. The law has always prohibited possession of deadly weapons and firearms at school-sponsored activities, which includes school transportation. The revision specifies that school-sponsored activities include school transportation.

Policy No. 1250.5 School Volunteers, Student Interns and Other Non-Employees—NEW

This policy was created to make permanent the language requiring volunteers to comply with any health and safety protocols in place at the time of volunteering. As a best practice, we have added that "Group II" volunteers must have background checks at least every five (5) years and we included a five-year retention period for volunteer background check records.

Policy No. 3519 Green Cleaning Programs—NEW

This policy was created to make permanent one of the COVID-19 temporary revisions, which specifies that, pursuant to Connecticut law, a board of education may use any cleaning product approved by federal law.

Policy No. 5131.911 Bullying Prevention and Intervention--REPLACES

This policy was revised to conform with Public Act No. 19-166, regarding bullying and safe school climate. The law, which passed two years ago, contained various provisions that recently went into effect. Effective July 1, 2021, the law changes the definition of "bullying" and "school climate" adds new statutory definitions, and expands on the parental notification requirements surrounding verified acts of bullying. We also revised the policy to reflect a board's statutory obligation to post the following on their websites: 1) training materials for school administrators; and 2) a plain language explanation of rights and

remedies under Connecticut General Statutes 10-4a and 10-4b. The law requires that the training materials be posted after consultation with the State Department of Education and the Connecticut Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative. Shipman & Goodwin offers draft training materials, provided upon request, for boards to consider as they seek to comply with this requirement. The law also provides that the plain language explanation of rights and remedies will be developed and provided to boards of education by the Connecticut Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative. Finally, the policy has been revised in light of Public Act No. 21-95 which identifies additional individuals who must serve on a safe school climate committee, effective July 1, 2021.

Discussion ensued.

It was the consensus of the subcommittee to bring all of the aforementioned policies to the Board of Education for approval at their December 13, 2021 regular business meeting. Due to the upcoming election, board members will receive this information either prior to or at the November 8th Board Meeting as an information item, in order to have time to review the materials prior to their December meeting.

Mr. Levenduski will review additional policies and will reconvene the subcommittee at a later date.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY RUTHE BOICZYK THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. Meeting adjourned at 5:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joan Calistro", is written over a horizontal line.

Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes