

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy Review Subcommittee, Monday, October 22, 2018, held at Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 11 a.m.

In attendance were Mary N. Antocci, Chair, Elaine M. Rabbitt, Kristine E. Nash, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

1. Call to Order

The meeting first came to order at 11:39 a.m.

The subcommittee recessed at 11:42. There was a power outage throughout Dudley and parts of Webster. The meeting was relocated to Charlton Middle School.

The meeting reconvened at 12:17 p.m. at Charlton Middle School.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with corrections regarding the education requirement for substitutes: two year degree for day to day subs, and four years/ certification for extended employment subs.

3. Communications

Dr. Nash reported that District Counsel James Cosgrove responded to questions raised by the chair at the October 11 meeting regarding our legal requirements with respect to benefits for long term substitute teachers.

Mr. Cosgrove raised many good questions: if we treat them as employees, they would have to be part of the union negotiations. Presently the contract specifically excludes substitutes.

Mr. Cosgrove said portions of the policy are too vague and open to interpretation.

Dr. Nash said advice from Mr. Cosgrove and the Massachusetts Association of School Committee is to have only those policies that are required by law. If you have too many policies, it is too difficult to follow them.

Massachusetts General Law would seem to indicate that we are required to provide substitutes with health benefits. We need further clarification as to the percentage they would be required to pay for them.

The subcommittee would like clarification from Attorney Cosgrove to further clarify:

- i. the law
- ii. our requirements to provide benefits based on Affordable Care Act
- iii. whether we are required to provide the same cost sharing as regular employees. Does the law apply to non-permanent employees?

If we do extend benefits the same as permanent employees, what other issues are we opening ourselves up to? Mr. Cosgrove had advised drafting a hire letter for year-long substitutes that spells out their benefits and to avoid making any association with the collective bargaining agreement, and to remove it from a policy as well.

There is a question whether the school committee should have voted in July 2017 to comply with MGL Chapter 149, Section 148, to extend sick leave benefits to substitute teachers. The subcommittee would like to evaluate fiscal impact of policy language regarding substitute teacher benefits and noted if we are defining a substitute as a temporary employee, why are we giving them full time benefits? The subcommittee noted an item for the upcoming contract negotiations is to discuss allowing instructional assistants who become teachers to carry over accrued sick leave.

School Committee chair Pauline J. Aucoin had indicated today that she wishes to revise the October 24 meeting agenda to include a policy review update. The subcommittee is finding more issues to clarify and cannot move forward on this policy at this point.

Mrs. Rabbitt said this policy is super-ceded by the law, and the subcommittee needs to have all these questions answered before moving forward with any draft. We cannot set policy that is in violation of law.

The subcommittee asked Dr. Nash to ask Attorney Cosgrove to review the three versions of policy GCG: the current version, the version proposed by Mrs. Aucoin, and the subcommittee's draft.

The Policy Subcommittee will refer the GCG as proposed for amendment to the Budget and Finance Subcommittee, who needs to look at the cost of substitute rates of pay as proposed in the amendment.

The Policy Review Subcommittee will ask Mr. Mathieu to do cost analysis of sub-rate increases after 45, 60 or 90 days.

4. Substitute Teachers Policies GCG and GCF, Answers to Outstanding Questions/To-Dos

The subcommittee will propose the deletion of policy GCF, which is a duplicate of GCG. Mrs. Antocci will present a memo explaining the rationale for not moving forward with this policy to school committee at this time.

5. Revisit Schedule of Review of District Policies

Mr. Cosgrove has suggested having only those policies that are required by law.

The subcommittee asked that we contact Mike Gilbert of the MASC for any updated policies.

6. Continue Work on A – Foundations and Basis Commitments Policies

Dr. Nash reviewed this section and said they appear to be in order. She will ask Mr. Cosgrove whether there has been any changes in federal law that what we need to note in these policies.

7. Update for School Committee Meeting

Policies are scheduled for first reading on November 14.

8. New Business

9. Next Meeting Date

Monday, October 29, 2018 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, at 10 a.m.

10. Future Agenda Items

Proposal to raise rates for extended employment substitutes.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.