

## DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee Policy Review Subcommittee, Monday, March 11, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, 9 a.m.

In attendance were subcommittee members Mary N. Antocci, Chair, Elaine M. Rabbitt; Kristine E. Nash, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools; Matthew Greenberg, Food Services Director; Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

The meeting came to order at 9:05 a.m.

1) Approve Minutes

The Minutes of the Policy Review Subcommittee Meeting of Monday, February 25, 2019, were approved by the chair.

2) Communications

3) Review policies requiring legal or urgent updates

- Policy JLCC-A Life Threatening Allergies

The district's policy JLCC-A does not match the model policy as offered by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees in 2015 and used by the Hanover Public schools, among others. This was distributed along with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education booklet, Managing Life Threatening Allergies, on which the policy is based. Mrs. Antocci said the district will replace its policy with the language found in Hanover's version. Training sessions will be offered. Dr. Nash will look for any updates to this policy and once drafted in the district's format, it will be renamed JLCEA, with the regulations named at JLCEA-R. This will be presented to the school committee at its meeting of Wednesday, March 27 for first reading.

4) Review policies for potential improvement

- Policy JQ – Student Food Services Accounts– R. Mathieu, M. Greenberg

District Food Service Manager Matthew Greenberg spoke to the subcommittee concerning the collection of unpaid balances. The balances rise each year, and parents and students know there are no repercussions. The subcommittee discussed sending these to a collection agency.

Mrs. Antocci said she has discussed this possibility in the past with Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations. Mrs. Antocci said she learned certain collection agencies work pro bono, and then a percentage of what is collected is given back to the district. Mrs. Antocci said this keeps the student out of the picture.

Mr. Greenberg presented data to show the biggest balances are at the secondary level. It is unlawful to withhold activities or participation for students with unpaid balances.

Mrs. Rabbitt noted that donations have covered some delinquent accounts. School secretaries make the decision as to what family accounts these donations will offset. Mr. Greenberg said these are families on free and reduced lunches.

Mr. Greenberg said the cafeteria debt gets zeroed out at the end of the year and the balances are paid through the general fund. In that last two years, the balances have equaled the cost of employing a teacher. He said the debt escalates by \$5,000 every two months.

Dr. Nash asked Mr. Greenberg to create a list of those in arrears in excess of \$100.

Notices will go out at the primary schools to talk to parents about the effect of the balances through the communications folder. Other methods of communication were discussed such as a pop-up message on the Parent Portal.

The subcommittee noted that the full school committee is not required to vote to hire a collection agency. There are provisions for this in the policy. Mr. Greenberg agreed to speak to the full committee to explain the collection efforts.

Of the district's 3,800 students, Mr. Greenberg estimates 60% are in arrears in some form.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked Mr. Greenberg to provide statistics, and a side by side comparison to show that nearly \$100,000 has been lost in four years, and the additional expense of sending emails and letters with postage. This information is vital as cafeteria revolving fund will soon take care of the elementary library coordinators' salaries.

Mrs. Rabbitt said this item will also be the topic of the March 26 meeting of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee.

Mrs. Rabbitt also suggested the school handbooks be used to inform parents and students about the cafeteria procedures and policy.

#### 5) Other Items

Policy AC - If a student, community member or employee, or coordinator wishes to file a complaint, they need to contact a school administrator, or view the Civil Rights Laws/District Coordinator Information that will be loaded on our website with a link to the policy.

Policy ACAB, Sexual Harassment – The chart is accurate and there are no changes proposed.

Policy ACE, Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability: The district does not currently have this policy. If we adopt it, we need to add the title of Compliance Coordinator for Title II of the ADA to the Civil Rights Chart discussed above. Title II. Non-Discrimination Based on Disability. We need to remove the references policy IGB, as we do not have this policy and it does not apply.

Policy ADC, Smoke-Free Environment – Mrs. Antocci said the district’s policy is too specific. She recommended deleting our current policy and adopting the MASC policy.

Mrs. Antocci has designed a chart in Google Docs to record policy action. She asked that columns be added to allow for cross references and Mass. General Law citations.

Next Meeting dates: Monday, March 18 at 9 a.m. and Monday, April 8 at 10:30 meetings,

Future Agenda Items: Revisit policy GCG, the need to return to the school committee to assess a higher substitute rate.

The following will be sent to the full committee for consideration at the March 28 meeting:

Policy JLCEA, with the regulations named at JLCEA-R, life threatening allergies

A discussion concerning Policy JQ, food services accounts

Policy ACE, Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability

Policy ADC, Smoke-Free Environment

6) Adjourn

The chair adjourned the meeting at 12 p.m.