

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT
Policy Committee Meeting

Monday, November 17, 2014

Minutes

- I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 4:29 p.m. by Jennifer Kennelly, Chairperson. Donna Karnal and John Convertito were also in attendance, as were Mike Rafferty and Karen Parks, both representing the administration.
- II. Approval of October 13, 2014, Minutes: Approved 3:0:0
- III. Policy #5516 Students – Life Threatening Allergies and Glycogen Storage Disease Management Policy: Although the Policy is now at the BOE table for a second reading on the November 25 meeting, there has been so much discussion among BOE members and community members, that the committee decided to do a final review of the policy in an attempt to present the board members with an edited version at the November 25 meeting. There was lengthy discussion by the committee members, who made several substantial changes to Section V, Prevention. The significance of the changes were as follows: 1.) remove the language about a Safe Snack List and the use of a specific website; 2.) replace that language with elementary schools being peanut and tree nut free; 3.) add language indicating that the District cannot “guarantee” a completely peanut and tree nut free classroom environment, but will make best efforts in conjunction with a shared responsibility with parents; 4.) add language to the hand and desk washing protocol that requires students to remain seated at their desk while eating snack.
- IV. Open Discussion/Public Comment: Several parents and teachers thanked the committee for removing the Safe Snack List and for not requiring teachers to read labels or ascertain what ingredients are contained in home baked goods because ingredients can be very deceiving and teachers are not ingredient “experts.” One teacher asked that the BOE be sure to include more protein soluble wipes in the school budgets because many classrooms do not have sinks. Many teachers commented that they appreciated the changes made at this meeting because they are not comfortable reading labels or making judgments about food items. The FEA President commented that teachers are committed to doing the best that they can to control the foods in the classroom and appreciates that the committee members developed language that gives teachers some level of comfort. Another parent commented that some of the schools are now serving a “grab and go” breakfast, but because it is supplied by Whitson’s, it will be peanut and tree nut free. Another parent asked that language be added to the school climate policy to prevent bullying of children with health issues or food allergies, and that this was cited in a recent “Dear Colleagues” letter from the Office of Civil Rights. Several additional parents and teachers commented that these changes made by the committee provide a document that “everyone can live with.”
- V. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.