

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Policy Committee Agenda
November 30, 2015
4:15 p.m.
501 Kings Highway East, Suite 210
Superintendent's Conference Room

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by Karen Parks at 4:18. Committee members in attendance were Jennifer Kennelly, Donna Karnal, and Anthony Calabrese. Phillip Dwyer, BOE Chairman, was also in attendance as was Karen Parks representing the Administration. Jennifer Kennelly moved to add the item "Election of Chair" to the Agenda. Donna Karnal seconded and approved 3:0:0.
- II. Election of Chair of Policy Committee – Anthony Calabrese nominated Jennifer Kennelly and Donna Karnal seconded. Jennifer accepted nomination and was elected 2:0:1
- III. Approval of Minutes - One suggested edit was made to the October 12 minutes; the date was changed from November 9 to November 30 in Section III, and approved with edit.
- IV. Discussion of Board of Education Handbook (*DRAFT, Revised May 7, 2015*) – Jennifer Kennelly asked Phil Dwyer, who chaired the committee to write the BOE Handbook, to share the history and purpose of the Handbook. Phil explained that the idea of the Handbook came from the CAFE Conference, when several board new board members attended 4 years ago. There was a strong feeling by the board that BOE members would find it easier to learn if everything was in one place. Pam Iacono, who was the BOE Chair at the time, asked Phil to chair the committee and the full board adopted the Handbook on June 26, 2012. Phil described the Handbook as a vehicle to state "what is," containing statements from state statute, BOE past practice, BOE By-laws, BOE Policy, and Town Charter. Changes in those documents would require changes to the BOE Handbook. Some of the text in the document in front of you is in red because it reflects changes in the By-laws since the Handbook was created. Paul Fattibene, a BOE member and past Policy Committee member, asked that the Policy Committee ensure that there is no confusion between the Handbook and the By-law language. Phil also explained that there are approximately 9 instances throughout the Handbook where "board practice" is parenthetical. He feels that the questions for the Policy Committee are:
 - Is the Handbook useful to the BOE and if not, then this committee should recommend to the BOE that the Handbook be eliminated;
 - Does the red text conform to the meaning/language of the By-laws?
 - Should BOE past practice be considered in the Handbook and if not, then bring to the full BOE for discussion.

The PC committee members discussed Mr.Dwyer's questions/recommendations and agreed that the Handbook is a useful document and that if there is confusing language, that they should work on that language to eliminate confusion rather than eliminate the

Approved 1/4/2016

Handbook. Members then went through the Handbook page by page and discussed, making the following recommendations for changes:

- p. 7 A. change “fourteen” to “sixteen” regular BOE meetings to reflect current practice;
- p. 8, A. #10 should there only be one meeting in an odd year when there are elections?
- p.8, A. #11, delete the words “with the primary purpose? And add “included in this meeting”;
- p.8, B. Change Mooney’s “7th edition” to “most recent edition”;
- p. 9, C Insert “By-laws, Article V, Sec 7” in place of Board Practice; put language on hold as John Llewellyn may be proposing new language;
- p. 9, Section F, put on hold as Jen Kennelly is researching;
- p. 10, H, Superintendent’s Report, the current language is more about board comment and should probably describe the Superintendent’s Report;

There was not time to continue the discussion at this meeting beyond page 10 Open Board Comment. Will continue discussion at the next available board meeting.

- V. Open Discussion/Public Comment – Jennifer Kennelly proposed meeting on December 8 at 7:00 pm immediately before the regular board meeting to select 2016 meeting time and dates for the Policy Committee. All members agreed.

No members of the public were present.

- VI. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

All meetings will be held at 501 Kings Highway East, Superintendent’s Conference Room unless otherwise noted.