

DRAFT MINUTES

SAU 39 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021

BRICK SCHOOL, COMMUNITY ROOM

PRESENT: SCSD Board Members: Steve Coughlan (Minute Taker), John Glover, Laura Taylor (non-voting); **ASD Board Members:** Elizabeth Kuzsma (Chair), Josh Conklin; **MVSD Board Members:** Sarah Lawrence; Jessica Hinckley (via Zoom); **Administrative Assistant** Abby Wallace, **Superintendent** Adam Steel (left at 11:30 AM).

Chair Elizabeth Kuzsma – Call to order at 9:05 AM. Jessica is unable to attend in person due to being out of town. All votes taken were roll call votes.

Approval of Minutes: Steve moved to approve the minutes of 6/19/21. John seconded. Approved unanimously.

Policy BEDC Quorum: Josh is OK with keeping the existing policy, note it as reviewed this year, and adopt it in the SAU, OR adopting the model and adding our existing language defining quorum. Steve recommended keeping the existing policy. Motion to accept recommendation made by Josh, seconded by John, unanimous.

Policy BEDD Rules of Order: Discussion of preference for BEDD or BEDDA. Sarah recommended rescinding BEDD in Mont Vernon, moved by Sarah and seconded by Steve, unanimous.

Policy BEDDA Board Meeting Rules of Procedure and Order: Steve moved to recommend adopting BEDDA model, seconded by Sarah, unanimous.

Policy BHC Board Staff Communication: Steve recommended adopting the model with minor edits (“problems” instead of “issues”). Discussion of board member visits to schools. Decided to omit “Official visits” language from the model, and we do not do those, and we want to encourage board members to visit the schools without needing board authorization first.

Chair Kuzsma asked the committee for guidance as to what to allow for participation from non-committee member attendees. The consensus was that it was committee meetings are open to the public to observe. Board members attending and participating may resolve concerns early, before formal review at the SAU Board, but only Souhegan has the luxury of an additional board member being able to attend and participate without causing a quorum of one of the boards to form, causing an unwarned meeting of a district board, so Amherst and Mont Vernon School Board members not on the committee are limited to commentary in the Trello Board. The consensus was that participation by non-members of the committee is at the chair’s discretion.

Discussion continued around the fine distinctions between staff members communicating to a board or to a board member, who is not empowered as an individual to receive or react to work-related communications outside the chain of command and formalized procedures. John suggested defining terms clearly within this policy so the lines are as clear as possible. He will do that, and the committee will take this up at the next meeting to consider if the edits make it sufficiently clear. Laura brought up the recent Supreme Court ruling about freedom of speech in schools. Her concern is that disallowing

speech by a teacher by calling it unethical is suppressing free speech. The consensus was that the speech needs to flow through proper channels so that it can be acted on, and not circumvent them.

Policy BIB School Board Member Development Opportunities: John questioned whether boards are keeping a calendar of opportunities and budgeting for board development. NHSBA provides many free opportunities for free training. Adam cautioned that budgets for board development should be transparently discussed at budget-development time. The draft based on the model requires that a board be thoughtful in budgeting, even if the budget is set to \$0, and does not require that any particular sum be budgeted. John will make further edits to reflect current practice around planning, budgeting, and publicizing board training.

Policy BIBA School Board Conferences, Conventions and Workshops: Consensus is to incorporate the desired content into BIB, and rescind BIBA. Motion to rescind BIBA and replace with the improved BIB made by John, seconded by Josh, unanimous.

Policy BIE School Board Member Indemnification: Adam clarified that the existing indemnification through Primex does not apply if a board is grossly negligent. Abstaining from a negligent motion does not provide protection for a board member, only a vote against the grossly negligent action will be defended. This policy should be adopted in the SAU as well. Minor typos (tab vs space) needs to be edited, and the district/SAU should purchase, not the board. Motion to recommend the sample with the edits made by Sarah, seconded by John, unanimous.

Policy BKA Liaison with School Board Associations: John recommends that this is not needed, as BK covers this well. Motion to accept recommendation made by John, seconded by Sarah, unanimous.

Policy BK School Board Memberships: John recommends language to make the model more aspirational than prescriptive. Typo noted for editing. Motion to recommend John's edits made by Josh, seconded by John, unanimous.

Policy BID Board Review and Signing of Manifests: Josh recommends rescinding the Amherst policy (the only one) because the subject is covered in DK. Motion to accept recommendation made by Josh, seconded by Beth, unanimous.

Policy GBEBE Employment of Relatives or Persons with Romantic Personal Relationships: Does not exist anywhere, but related language exists in Souhegan GBEA (Staff Conflict of Interest). Discussion of various potential scenarios. Adam requests that something be adopted because this situation occurs frequently, and the Superintendent needs authority to take actions if needed for this circumstance in all districts and the SAU. Josh will review GBEBE and Souhegan GBEA language and bring back a recommendation.

Policy EHAC Electronic/Digital Records and Signatures: Josh recommends adoption, but with committee input on optional clause D3. Adam is OK with including D3 because it makes technically difficult actions optional, not required. Committee agrees that the language in D3 about maintaining a list of passwords/PINs should be eliminated. Laura asked who is covered by the policy. John stated that it applies to everybody. Concern about Fall Registration being made more difficult raised, but general agreement it should not be impacted. Motion to accept recommendation made by Josh, seconded by Sarah, unanimous.

Policy JLCH DNR: Jessica recommends that we adopt the model because it's important to have uniform guideline how to act in the event the situation ever arises. Nurses input also supports. Motion to accept recommendation made by Jessica, seconded by Sarah, unanimous.

Policy JLCG Exclusion of Students from School for Illness: Jessica recommends adopting the model, but would also like to hear from the nurses on readmission criteria. Trello card tagged to Deanna C. for more input. It may be adequate to just have school nurses set readmission criteria as part of the policy, but consensus was to defer until Deanna can comment.

Policy BJ School Board Legislative Process: Josh reports consensus is that it is not needed. Josh made motion to not adopt, John seconded, unanimous.

Policy JICI-R Modification of Weapons Expulsions: John states that NHSBA recommends rescinding because it's now covered in JICD, but we don't have JICI-R adopted anywhere, so no action required. Josh will check that our JICD is up to date.

Acceptable Use Policy: Steve states that the AUP is not a board policy, but rather an administrative policy written because there is a board policy that requires the Superintendent to develop one. In his review of the Student and Staff AUP policies (requiring them to adhere to the AUP), he discovered that there is no corresponding policy applicable to members of the public who use school networks, which is now commonplace. Policy KICL is proposed to cover users of the SAU network who are not students or employees, based on a pared down JICL. Edit recommended to reword "he/she". Motion to recommend Adopting KICL with edit made by Steve, seconded by John, unanimous.

Policy GBEAB Code of Conduct: Steve recommended this to apply the code of conduct to non-certified staff. Adam believes this is not needed, as it gives no additional powers to the Superintendent, and the NH DOE adoption was to allow for suspension or revocation of licenses. The only added power this would give the Superintendent is in the case of a romantic relationship between a non-certified staff member and a graduated student. Discussion of scenarios and how they would be handled with or without GBEAB. Consensus is not to adopt. Steve will review his memo detailing related policies and bring back a new set of recommendations that do not include GBEAB.

Policy B. Public Statement (Mont Vernon only): Not needed if BCA is adopted, because it is covered in BCA, School Board Member Code of Ethics. But if the (deferred) recommendation on BCA is to not adopt it, then this is left as a stand-alone item to be considered. Moved to the future discussion on BCA.

Policies BGA/BGAA Policy Development System: Recommendation to rescind BG, BGA, BGB, BGC, and BGE, adopt updated BGAA instead. BGAA is the NHSBA new model replacing the others, and is edited to reflect the SAU 39 unified process for policy review and adoption. Minor typo edits needed in BGAA draft. Motion to accept recommendation made by Steve, seconded by John, unanimous.

Policy BAAA School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures: Discussion about inclusion of certain items that are not currently reviewed by the board as de facto policies. Model to be amended to have the board informed about changes to employee handbooks and job descriptions, and board approval for student handbooks, which are considered as policies. Motion to recommend amended version made by Steve, seconded by Sarah, unanimous.

John Glover asked a question about notifying the board of consultations with attorneys from the last meeting, and Adam clarified his processes.

Policy BBBF Student Member of the School Board: Steve recommended no adopting because Souhegan uses a different process as defined in the SHS constitution to have a Community Council representative to the Board instead. Motion to accept the recommendation by Josh, seconded by Steve, unanimous.

Policy BBBH Organization and Operation of the SAU Joint Board: Applies to SAU only. Jessica recommends adoption. Steve recommends just numbering it BBBH, not BBBH-S. Consensus to accept Amy Facey's recommendation to expand protected classes consistent with existing Policy AC. Concern raised that some elements of the model may overlap other adopted SAU policies; Steve will review and make recommendations to resolve conflicts for the next meeting. Motion to accept recommendation (subject to subsequent conflict resolution amendments) made by Steve, seconded by Jessica, unanimous.

Policy BECA Intra-Board Communications by Email: Recommendation by Beth to rescind (only in MV), as not necessary, covered by BHE, School Board Use of Email. Motion to accept recommendation made by John, seconded by Sarah, unanimous.

Policy BHE School Board Use of Email: Recommendation to adopt in all Districts made by Beth. Motion to accept recommendation made by Sarah, seconded by Beth, unanimous.

Policy BEDH Public Participation in School Board Meetings: Beth blended the model with our existing policies to reflect current practice. Question if public participants are required to state their address in law, or just by policy. Law just requires identifying the speaker at a meeting. Preference is to just to ask name and town of residence. Discussion about how to handle correspondence in minutes. Correspondence is required to be retained for at least three years under Policy EHB, and is discoverable through Right-to-Know requests. John identified some ambiguous phrasing in the model around managing public comment. Beth will review the draft taking these concerns into account. Time running out, it was decided to pick up discussion of this policy at the next meeting.

Next Meeting is scheduled for **July 29, 2021, 9AM-Noon**, at the **Brick School**. Meeting time was extended from 2 hours to 3 hours to accommodate the remaining work. An additional meeting was added for **August 3, 2021, 9AM-Noon** at the **Brick School**, anticipating that the work will not be finished in the currently scheduled meetings.

Motion to adjourn made by Steve, seconded by John, unanimous. Beth declared the MEETING ADJOURNED 12:05 PM.