

DRAFT MINUTES

SAU 39 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 20, 2021

BRICK SCHOOL, COMMUNITY ROOM

PRESENT: SCSB Board Members: Steve Coughlan (Minute Taker), John Glover (by phone), Laura Taylor (non-voting); **ASD Board Members:** Elizabeth Kuzsma (Chair), Josh Conklin; **MVSD Board Members:** Sarah Lawrence; Jessica Hinckley; **Administrative Assistant** Abby Wallace.

Chair Elizabeth Kuzsma – Call to order at 9:06 AM. John is unable to attend in person because it was infeasible for him to attend in person. All votes taken were roll call votes.

Approval of Minutes: Josh Conklin moved to approve the minutes of 7/13/21. Sarah Lawrence seconded. Approved unanimously.

Policies GBEAB (Code of Conduct), GBEA (Staff Ethics), GBEB (Staff Conduct), GBK/GBK-R (Staff Complaints and Grievances, Souhegan Only), GBK (Staff Concerns, Complaints): Steve Coughlan reviewed his memo recommending adoption of models GBEA (incorporating current policy items not covered in the model), GBEB, and GBK (for SAU and Souhegan only, replacing current GBK/GBK-R in Souhegan).

GBEA, Staff Ethics: Model is ethical guide for all staff. First section adopts the Code of Conduct for Professional Staff. Discussion around retaining model language requiring professional behavior by all staff on and off duty. Consensus is to retain language, even if is not enforceable through employment actions for off-duty behavior, as an aspiration of the board. There was a discussion of Laura Taylor’s concern regarding directing criticisms within the chain of command and not allowing communications to the Board. Laura T. asked if criticism outside the bounds of the policy language would then be a fireable offence. The committee decided that the policy language applied to criticisms of *people*, not other things (decisions made, materials or software selected, etc.), and as such did not limit complaints that might make their way to the board. The language was retained. The language around criticism will be pointed out at the PPC review of this policy to make sure the language is not considered excessively restrictive by staff. Motion to recommend adoption made by Josh Conklin, seconded by Sarah Lawrence, unanimous.

GBGB, Staff Conduct: Recommendation to adopt model with style changes, Discussion about whether this binds non-certified staff to the NH Code of Conduct, resulting in an amendment to say “the district reserves the right to take employment action against any professional employee” Motion to recommend adoption in all districts and the SAU made by Steve Coughlan, seconded by Sarah Lawrence, unanimous.

GBK, Staff Concerns, Complaints, and Grievances: GBK/GBK-R (Complaints and Grievances) exists in Souhegan only; a similar process is needed for the SAU employees. The proposed draft blends the Souhegan existing policy with the model and is proposed for Souhegan and the SAU only. Discussion about exactly who the policy would apply to led to the understanding that this is about a process to accomplish a goal (complaint or grievance resolution) and not who may avail themselves of the process. Existing GBK in Amherst and Mont Vernon should be rescinded

because they are being replaced by GBEA/GBEB. Recommendation to rescind GBK in Amherst and Mont Vernon, adopt revised GBK in SAU and Souhegan by “Sarah Lawrence”, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

GBEAB, Code of Conduct: Model not recommended for adoption, based on discussion with Adam Steel last week. Moved by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous

Policy GBEBE, Employment of Relatives or Persons with Romantic Relationships: A section of Souhegan Policy GBEA (Conflict of Interests) covers this topic. Recommendation to rename Souhegan Policy GBEA (since there is now a new one) to GCR, remove the paragraph addressing employment of relatives, and adopt GCR and GBEBE in all Districts and the SAU. Motion to approve recommendation to adopt GCR in all districts, removing last paragraph and adding a cross-reference “See also Policy GBEBE.” made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous. Motion to approve recommendation to adopt GBEBE by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy JLI, Joint Loss Management: Recommendation to rescind because it will be replaced with new Policy EB, motion made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy EB, Workplace Safety Program & Joint Loss Management Committee AND Policy EBB, School Safety: Per NHSBA recommendation, recommendation to adopt policies EB and EBB, and rescind policy ADD (replaced by EBB). EB is replacing JLI, previously recommended to be rescinded. Needed in all districts and SAU. Motion to recommend approving EB made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous. For EBB, Laura T. questioned how the reference to online resources interacts with other policies and laws. The discussion expanded to the scope of online resources being regulated. Consensus was to leave the language as proposed. Motion to recommend EBB for the 3 boards, and not the SAU, made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by JV, 4 in favor, 1 opposed (John Glover), motion passed. Motion to recommend rescinding policy ADD made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy JIA Student Due Process: NHSBA recommends rescinding, but we don’t have it, so no action required. Motion to take no action made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy JI, Student Rights and Responsibilities: Recommended to adopt the model in all districts. Because JI, JIC and JICD all are being changed at once, and are related, John Glover asked if we could consolidate them all in to one comprehensive policy. Consensus was to retain them as separate policies for many reasons, including the potential to accidentally not follow the interacting laws, and because these particular policies change frequently through legislative action. Motion made to recommend JI by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy JIC, Student Conduct: Josh recommended adopting the model, but using the term “Student Handbook” everywhere in model where “Code of Conduct” is used. Question about MTSS-B references questioned in the Trello card and not yet responded to by administrators. Committee will resolve it’s issues, but defer the final decision to a future meeting to give administrators a chance to clarify concerns. Laura T. raised the concern that the Souhegan Student Handbook content is determined by the Community Council. Model paragraph B needs to add delegation to Community Council as well. Josh Conklin will make edits (and style guide edits), in anticipation of administration final input.

Policy JICD, Student Discipline and Due Process: Recommending adoption of the model with style edits, including references to Student Handbook instead of Code of Conduct. Notice to parents amended to 12 hours from 24 hours so a student suspension can begin on the next day if necessary, per CL's recommendation. Brief discussion about removing references to Saturday detentions led to no change, in case we ever desire to implement them. Brief discussion of use of "pupil" and "student" intermingled in the same policy. The RSA uses "pupil", but semantically "student" encompasses "pupil", and "student" is used much more frequently in the model than "pupil". Josh will harmonize references, using "student". Laura T. inquired if we could adopt these policies because Student Handbooks are much larger than just discipline, and the conclusion was that there is no problem with the practice. Motion to accept recommendation made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded, by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy BFE, Administration ins Policy Absence: Recommendation to adopt existing policy in the districts in the SAU as well, and including style edits, motion made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy BA, School Board Self Evaluation: Josh created a template to use for evaluation. Recommendation to adopt Josh's recommended form as BA-R, consistent with our treatment of the Superintendent Evaluation policy, CBI and CBI-R. Decision to create BA/BA-R in a single document. Motion to adopt Josh's edit of AFA-R as BA/BA-R, move it to the SAU for adoption, and rescind AFA-E in Mont Vernon, made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy GBCE, Training and Information Relative to Child Sexual Abuse Prevention: John Glover made style changes to the model. Laura T. asked if there is a cost impact of this policy. Beth Kuzsma said that there may be an impact in ASD because there is an expanded definition of "designated volunteer" there, but administration is working on finding more cost-effective training methods. Designated volunteers are defined in policy IJOC. Motion to recommend adoption of edited version made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by John Glover, unanimous.

Policy BBAA, Board Member Authority and Responsibilities: Sarah Lawrence made edits as requested at the 6/19/21 meeting, blending the model with our existing policy. Motion to recommendation adoption in the three districts and the SAU, with style editing, made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy BIA, New Board Member Orientation: Josh recommends we retain our existing policy over the model. Not needed at the SAU. Just requires updating each policy with a "Reviewed" date. Motion to accept recommendation made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy JLCI, Coordinates School Health Program: Sarah recommends not adopting because we handle the issues covered under this optional policy in our own ways. Motion to accept recommendation made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by John Glover, unanimous.

Policy GBCD, Background Investigations and Criminal Records Check: Beth Kuzsma has asked Adam Steel if there are changes to the law from the latest legislative session, and until we hear back, she recommends deferring action on this policy to a later meeting. AW will remind AS to answer.

Policy ADD was recommended to be rescinded earlier in the meeting.

Policy JCA, Change of Class or School Assignment, Best Interests, and Manifest Hardship: John Glover suggests some edits to the Model, including style issues. Model procedure 1.a. changed to allow for a meeting within 10 days (the law) or a later date mutually agreed. Discussion around how the process works and is documented if the Superintendent initiates the change, and the parents agree – no dispute-resolution meetings then would happen. Documentation happens in Section 3, where Superintendent notifies the board. John Glover will edit policy based on discussion, and further discussion deferred until the administration has commented on it.

Policy JLCG, Exclusion of Students from School for Illness: Comments received from Nurses, but Meg Beauchamp is going to check it with legal counsel, so action deferred until final review.

Policy JEC, Change of School or Assignment – Manifest Educational Hardship: Recommendation to rescind, as it is replaced by JCA. Motion to approve recommendation made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy BHC, Board Staff Communication: John Glover added a broad definition of who is “staff”. Discussion of whether this applies to volunteers. John Glover’s language seems to cover volunteers, and the committee is content with that. Motion to adopt Steve Coughlan’s language as amended by John Glover made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy JLCJ, Concussions: Recommendation to adopt the Model language, but add back in the final Reporting paragraph from our existing policy. Motion to approve recommendation made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Policy BGD, Board Review of Administrative Regulations: Recommendation to remove reference to Policy CHB in the existing versions as it does not exist in any district, and adopt it in the SAU as well. Motion to approve recommendation made by Sarah Lawrence, seconded by Josh Conklin, unanimous.

Discussion about consolidating KH, KHA, and KHB into one comprehensive policy. Steve Coughlan is willing to draft a consolidated policy is the committee would prefer it. The consensus of the committee is to consolidate, and Steve Coughlan will prepare a draft for the 7/29/21 meeting.

Next Meeting is scheduled for **July 27, 2021, 9AM-Noon**, at the **Brick School**.

Meeting adjourned by Chair Kuzsma 11:57 PM.