



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

New Britain Board of Education Policy Committee Meeting

October 18, 2021 – 6:00 PM | New Britain Educational Administration Center

Call to Order and Opening

Mr. Nicholas Mercier, Policy Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

Board Members Present

Mr. Anthony Kane*, Mr. Joseph Listro*, Mr. Nicholas Mercier*, Ms. Diana Reyes*, Dr. Violet Jiménez Sims*

*Committee member

CSDNB Staff Present

Ms. Maryellen Manning#, Ms. Kristin Salerni, Dr. Nicole Sanders#, Ms. Nancy Sarra, Mr. Mark Spalding#

#Participated remotely

New Business

Review and Approve Minutes from the Policy Committee Meeting on September 20, 2021

There were no recommended changes to the minutes from the Policy Committee Meeting on September 20, 2021.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve the minutes from the Policy Committee Meeting on September 20, 2021 as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

Review Policy 6200.00 – Adult Education

Mr. Mark Fernandes, Principal of New Britain Adult Education, brought forward this policy for revision due to changes that took place in the state statutes in 2011. Per C.G.S. 10-67, students must be seventeen years or older to qualify for adult education programs.

Recommended revisions to the Board Policy Statement include:

- Strike “sixteen” in the first sentence of the second paragraph and replace with “seventeen”
- Strike “shall” in the first sentence of the third paragraph and replace with “may”

Mr. Mercier recommended that Mr. Spalding, Director of Pupil Services, review last paragraph of Policy 5134.00 – Students who are Pregnant, Married and/or Parents to ensure that is in compliance with current state law.

Ms. Reyes motioned that the Board approve revised Policy 6200.00 – Adult Education at their next meeting, seconded by Dr. Jiménez Sims. Motion carried unanimously.

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Review and/or Re-affirm Policy 6162.30 – City-Wide Group Testing Program (Approved March 1, 1993)

Committee members recommended striking the current language of the Board Policy Statement and replace with:

“The Board of Education recognizes that various student tests may be mandated or required by State and/or Federal Law. Any additional grade level universal testing conducted by the school district shall be in alignment with one of the following purposes:

1. To provide information on student comprehension with the goal of providing feedback to teachers in order to guide classroom instruction
2. To assist in the evaluation of established curricula and to facilitate the curriculum revision process
3. To provide information helpful to parents and/or guardians regarding their child's academic performance
4. To assist in the screening of students who may be eligible for placement in specialized programs of instruction
5. Any testing that is required as a condition of a grant or other funding source

The results of any universal testing protocols, as well as State and Federally mandated testing, may be reported out to the Board of Education at their request at least once per year as part of an update on academic growth in the district.”

Committee members further recommended changing the policy name to “Districtwide Student Assessment Policy.”

Mr. Listro motioned that the Board approve revised Policy 6162.30 – City-Wide Group Testing Program at their next meeting, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.

Review Policies:

- **4118.231/4218.231 – Staff Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use on School Premises**
- **4118.231/4218.231 – Drug Free Work Place**

Legal counsel at Shipman and Goodwin reviewed these two policies and recommended striking Policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Staff Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use on School Premises because much of the intent was carried over into Policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Drug Free Work Place. Shipman updated the Board Policy Statement and Administrative Procedure of Policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Drug Free Work Place and provided committee members with redline copies and final drafts of their recommended revisions.

Dr. Jiménez Sims motioned that the Board approve revised Policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Drug Free Work Place and strike policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Staff Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use on School Premises at their next meeting, seconded by Mr. Kane. Motion carried unanimously.

The Policy Committee recommended that legal counsel at Shipman be asked to look at Section IV.D of the Administrative Procedure of Policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Drug Free Work Place in order to see if the language regarding the confiscation of drugs could be amended to focus more on safety in schools while also reducing the burden on administrators. It was requested that any recommended revisions be brought to the Policy Committee for review.

Review Policy 5131.00 – Student Discipline Code

Dr. Nicole Sanders, Senior Equity and Talent Officer, spoke to committee members about how she and Superintendent Sarra have been working with the security staff at NBHS to take a closer look at this policy in light of recent events. She shared some general recommendations that include cleaning up references to old policy numbers, increasing the level of specificity with regard to defining what constitutes a dangerous weapon, and ensuring that the language regarding alcohol, tobacco, and

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smoking is in alignment with revisions to Policy 4118.231/4218.231 – Drug Free Work Place.

The Policy Committee recommended that administrators should continue looking at the Administrative Procedure and bring any recommended revisions forward.

Committee members reviewed the Board Policy Statement itself and made the following recommendations:

- Strike “educational environment” from the second sentence of the first paragraph and replace with “culture and climate”
- Strike second paragraph and replace with “Appropriate behavior in school is essential for creating a safe and positive culture and climate. Appropriate behavior includes pro-social habits, such as respect for oneself, others, and the rights of all students and staff.”
- Strike third paragraph
- Insert the following paragraph between the third and fourth paragraphs: “When students are unable to meet the expectations required to maintain a safe and positive school climate they may be subject to progressive discipline. This may include restorative practices, conflict resolution, or additional consequences with a focus on helping the student to develop the necessary skills through tiered interventions.”
- Strike the fifth paragraph
- Strike sixth paragraph and replace with “No student shall be suspended, excluded, or otherwise disciplined on account of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law.”
- Add “Corporal punishment is not allowed as part of the disciplinary procedure” to the end of the policy

Mr. Listro motioned that the Board approve revised Policy 5131.00 – Student Discipline Code at their next meeting, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.

Review Policy 4148.00/4248.00 – Reasonable Physical Force

Committee members agreed that the language from the current policy is still in alignment with general state statutes.

Mr. Mercier recommended that the following paragraph be added to the end of the Board Policy Statement:

“The district shall work to provide appropriate training on the proper use of restraint to members of staff who, by their job description or duties, may be reasonably expected to need to use restraint practices frequently in the course of their regular duties. Staff not trained in restraint protocols will utilize staff members who have been trained in such practices when, in their best judgment, waiting for such assistance will not put the student or other in risk of potential harm.”

Ms. Reyes motioned that the Board approve revised Policy 4148.00/4248.00 – Reasonable Physical Force at their next meeting, seconded by Mr. Listro. Motion carried unanimously.

Review Administrative Procedure for Policy 6144.10 – Exemptions from Instruction and School Activities

The new Administrative Procedure for Policy 6144.10 – Exemptions from Instruction and School Activities was shared with committee members. It was recommended that the Administrative Procedure be included on the next Board agenda as information sharing.

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Discuss Potential Policy for Remote Learning

Superintendent Sarra explained that the Connecticut State Department of Education is recommending that the Board of Education adopt a policy for the current school year to address limited exemptions from in-person school and eligibility for and provision of continued educational opportunities.

The Policy Committee recommended adoption of new Policy 6300.00 – Remote Learning as follows:

“The Board of Education, to the limits that are allowed by the State Department of Education, shall allow the use of Remote Learning in the following situations: (1) to students who must be in COVID-19 isolation or quarantine, (2) to address localized outbreaks in a school or specific school district, and (3) in rare and individualized circumstances, for students with elevated risks from COVID-19 exposure due to co-habiting family members with documented vulnerability to COVID-19.

The District shall develop procedures to enact this policy pursuant to State guidance and shall be charged with updating these guidelines as guidance from the State Department of Education changes.”

Mr. Listro motioned that the Board approve/adopt new Policy 6300.00 – Remote Learning at their next meeting, seconded by Mr. Kane. Motion carried unanimously.

Closing and Adjournment

Ms. Reyes motioned to adjourn at 8:14 PM, seconded by Dr. Jiménez Sims. Motion carried unanimously.

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