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Seymour Board of Education



POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 22, 2016

Central Office

7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

James Garofolo

Jay Hatfield

Jennifer Magri

Yashu Putorti

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools

Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent

Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Syriac called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:02 p.m.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Mrs. Syriac asked for nominations for the Chairperson of the Policy Committee.

Mr. Putorti nominated Ms. Magri. Mrs. Syriac asked for nominations three more times, hearing none, Ms. Magri is appointed the chairperson of the Policy Committee. Mrs. Syriac turned the meeting over to Ms. Magri.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Policy Discussion and Possible Action

1. 6145.21 - Instruction – Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics

Mrs. Syriac explained that this policy was up for discussion because there were questions from Board Members regarding having athletic activities on Sundays and if scrimmages are considered games. The policy specifically addresses fall sports. Mrs. Syriac said she was unaware why and when this policy was created. Mr. Hatfield said he felt the first paragraph should be deleted because the policy does not dictate guidelines for the spring or winter sports. There was some discussion that the CIAC policy dictates the schedules. Ms. Magri said that the CIAC policy indicates that we should follow league rules. Mr. Putorti suggested we leave the policy as is with numbers 1, 2, and 4 removed and delete the first paragraph. Mr. Hatfield questioned the last line saying the athletic director will make the decision to postpone athletic activities. Mrs. Syriac explained that this decision is made by the principal and the athletic director in conjunction and the last line should remain part of this policy.

2. 6145.211 - Students – Interscholastic/Intramural Athletics

Mrs. Syriac explained that this policy is in need of a review and that it should include athletic practices. She said when school is in session as in the case of Veterans Day, athletic contests and practices are allowed. She said she felt there needed to be a better understanding that scrimmages are games. Mr. Hatfield questioned the need for this policy. Mrs. Syriac explained that there have been past circumstances where a game was scheduled on a holiday by the former athletic director. In the past NVL league honored Seymour's request to schedule our games on a non holiday due to our policy. Ms. Magri said the only required holidays were Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Martin Luther King Day. Mr. Hatfield said that Labor Day is a big day for scrimmages. Mr. Hatfield made a motion to recommend to the full board that policy #6145.21 be stricken from the policy manual. No one seconded this motion.

Mrs. Syriac said that our Athletic Director, Ms. Yusko would like the policy to read that no play occurs on holidays. Mrs. Syriac said another concern for some people is respect for the holiday (such as Memorial Day) is lost when sports are scheduled and their child must participate. Mrs. Syriac said she would also like some clarity on scrimmages and if they are in fact a game. Mr. Hatfield said we are putting our kids at a disadvantage if they are not allowed to play on holidays. They would be forced to forfeit games because of this and it could affect their ability to get to the championship games. Ms. Magri disagreed because of the number of games they would be playing. Mr. Garofolo asked who is driving the train and said this policy makes sense. He feels the policy with amendments should go to the full Board and let them decide. Ms. Magri suggested we move on to the next policy.

3. 3250 - Materials/Services Fees, Charges

Mrs. Syriac said she would like to make changes to the regulation. She reminded the committee members that the Board develops policy and the Superintendent develops regulations. She would like to remove the line regarding admission fees to school functions because for many years the practice has been to charge for these events. Mr. Hatfield said he has heard a lot of chatter on Facebook from parents about being obligated to buy supplies for the classrooms. Mrs. Syriac said we provide all instructional supplies. Some teachers send home recommended classroom supplies guidelines but buying these supplies is optional. Mr. Hatfield said he would like to add a line that states the Superintendent will periodically review fees and charges. He said it is important to review; that he likes a series of checks and balances. Mrs. Syriac said she does this and is not sure why it needs to be in the policy. Mr. Hatfield brought up the parking fees at the high school and asked when the last time they were reviewed. Mrs. Syriac said the Board of Education reviews the parking fees. Mr. Putorti said we do not want to micro manage. Mr. Hatfield said he felt Mrs. Syriac has a good grasp on policy and is good about bringing policies to this committee. Mrs. Syriac said she would bring the revised regulation to the full board for review and Mr. Hatfield requested that the policy go to the full board also.

4. 6173 Homebound Instruction – Draft Regulations

Mrs. Syriac explained that she is not suggesting change to the policy but would like to add regulations to clarify procedures. She said Mrs. Tencza worked on developing the regulations. Mr. Putorti said he did not like the term "homebound" since we ask the students to go to a specific place other than the home to receive the instruction. Mrs. Syriac said this term is what is used in the state statute. Mr. Hatfield said he also had problems with the term and said in his district this type of instruction is called an Alternative Education Plan. Mr. Hatfield suggested we should use another term. Mr. Garofolo asked about item #2 "homebound tutoring shall be provided for no more than ten hours per week regardless of the amount of subjects being tutored." He felt the regulation was "wordy" and made some suggested changes in wording.

5. 9132 Permanent Board Committees

Mrs. Syriac is bringing this bylaw back to the Policy Committee at the request of several Board members. There were changes made in the past but the full Board did not pass the motion on the amended bylaw. Mr. Garofolo asked what the advantage of changing the committees was. Ms. Magri said she thought it had to do with certain committees were doing the "lion's share" of work and that it also had to do with contract negotiations. Mr. Garofolo said if the system is not broke, why change it? Ms. Magri said she thought there were compromises made the last time this went to the full Board. Mr. Hatfield said he was a big proponent of the changes because there are some committees that meet very infrequently or never. He said he felt a smaller number of committees allows for more member input. Mr. Putorti said we would have to stay with three member committees because four could result in tie votes and five Board members would be a quorum. Ms. Magri said she felt that the number of committees was not the real issue but more than likely it's about the committees that some members want to serve on. Mrs. Syriac said there is another bylaw that deals with how committees are formed.

Ms. Magri suggested we schedule a review of the bylaws that are related to committees at the next Policy Committee meeting. The following policies will be placed on the March 7, 2016 BOE agenda for recommendation by the full Board: policy #6145.21, policy #6145.211, regulation #3250, and regulation #6173. Mrs. Syriac informed the committee that the March 7, 2016 BOE agenda was already quite full and she would not be in attendance at the April 4, 2016 meeting. She would like to be attendance for the discussion on the bylaws and asked that it either be discussed at the March 7 meeting or the May 2 meeting. Mr. Garofolo suggested it may be possible to set up a special meeting just to discuss this on March 21. Currently, there is an Athletic Committee meeting and a Policy Committee meeting scheduled for this date.

V. **INFORMATION**

B. Reports

1. Chairman's Report
None
2. Superintendent's Report
None

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Putorti) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk