

**CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE HUMISTON BOARD ROOM ON MARCH 30, 2023**

REVISED

Committee Members Present: Adam Grippo, Chair; Tim White
Committee Members Absent: Samantha Rosenberg
Others Present: Luther Miller, Transportation Coordinator
Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER – 6:30 P.M.

Mr. Grippo called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Public Comment.

Karey Stingo and Steve Alexandrou, 240 Burrage Court, Cheshire.

Ms. Stingo and Mr. Alexandrou have twin second graders who are assigned walkers as they live exactly one mile from Doolittle School. They are assigned school bus seats through an Available Seats petition but would like to be permanently assigned to a bus so they do not have to petition the Transportation Department each year. They do not feel it is a safe walk for two 7 year olds to walk to school in the winter months. Mr. Miller said the state recommends one mile for kindergarten through grade 3, 1.5 miles for grades 4-6 students, and two miles for grades 7 through 12. Dr. Solan said the Board has the authority to establish walking distances. Currently our kindergarten walking distance is a half mile. In order to reduce the walking distance, the Policy Committee would need to change the current policy. Regarding unsafe walking conditions, the requests received are reviewed the police department. Mr. Masciana said that he understands it is inconvenient not having an answer earlier, but they do not have enrollment numbers or routes determined for next year. He assured Ms. Stingo and Mr. Alexandrou that their request would be prioritized. Mr. Miller said the request forms on the website are being updated, but once complete, he will forward it to them to complete for next year. Chairman Grippo said that Policy #3541 Transportation will be placed on an upcoming meeting agenda for review.

3. Policies for Discussion

5117 School Attendance Areas

Dr. Solan explained the process of area waivers to the Committee, where a family can petition to attend school in an area other than where their address is districted. The approval is at the Superintendent's discretion and have always been accommodated in the past. He said the number of requests mostly equal out between the schools, but because Highland's enrollment is so high right now, I may not be able to approve any new requests for students. We will be reviewing new requests on a case-by-case basis.

4. **Review Policies for a First Reading**

4222 Teacher Aides/Paraprofessionals

Dr. Solan said this is a new policy driven by Title I. If a person is a Title I Paraprofessional, they will have to meet certain credentialing requirements, which our personnel already meet.

6159.1 Instructional Arrangements-Teacher Aides

Dr. Solan explained that changes to this policy are required due to changes in legislation. He reviewed the changes noting that the State is going through legislation now that may cause us to update this policy again in the next few months. Required changes in language include the addition of:

“...the Board shall require all teacher aides/paraprofessionals with instructional duties that are newly hired in a Title I school program to have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and to have: 1. Completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education; 2. Obtained an Associate's or higher degree; or 3. Met a rigorous standard of quality through a formal state or local academic assessment.” It also states that “... the district will not hire Title I paraprofessionals who do not meet these standards. Exceptions to these requirements may be made with regard to paraprofessionals who act as translators or who coordinate parent involvement activities.”

Other changes include adding an annual program of professional development that must be at least eighteen hours in length and cannot be part of our already mandated online trainings.

Mr. Grippo asked about the titles, Teacher Aide and Paraprofessional, and questioned if this policy should be edited to differentiate between the two positions.

The Committee will continue their review of this policy before moving it forward for a first reading.

6172.3 Educational Instruction under Parental Direction (Home Schooling)

Dr. Solan said he is recommending that we revise our current policy to state that homeschooled students cannot to attend school classes on part-time basis and are not allowed to participate in after-school activities. Dr. Solan said we do not allow either, and for clarity purposes, the policy should follow our practice.

MOTION by Mr. Grippo and seconded by Mr. White

MOVED that the Policy Committee forward Policies #4222 Teacher Aides/Paraprofessionals and #6172.3 Educational Instruction under Parental Direction (Home Schooling) to the full Board for a first reading.

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. **Review Policies for a Second Reading**

There have been no changes to these policies since the first reading.

#6140 Curriculum

Superintendent Solan reviewed that the revisions include statutory requirements to teach Native American Studies effective in the 2023-2024 school year. The revised policy also includes required subject matter that is already in our curriculum, but not currently listed in our policy.

#6145 Basic Instruction

This policy is being revised to include subject matter required by law. Additional language to be included, *“Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) studies and African-American and black studies; Puerto Rican and Latino studies beginning with the school year commencing July 1, 2021; Native American Studies beginning with the school year commencing July 1, 2023; computer science, including, but not limited to, computer programming instruction, and in addition, on at least the secondary level, one or more world languages; vocational education; and the black and Latino studies high school course in accordance with P.A. 19-12.”*

Dr. Solan clarified that Asian American and Pacific Island studies will not take effect until the 2025/2026 school year. The Committee discussed the new classes that are mandated to be offered to students but are not required courses.

MOTION by Mr. Grippo and seconded by Mr. White

MOVED that the Policy Committee forward Policies #6140 Curriculum and #6145 Basic Instruction to the full Board for a second reading.

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously by those present

6. **Other:**

None

7. **Adjournment.**

The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Grippo, Policy Committee Chair

Attest: _____
Carol Jesensky, Board Clerk

Filed with the Cheshire Town Clerk's Office on 4/26/2023.