

**CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
HELD VIRTUALLY ON APRIL 13, 2026**

Committee Members Present: Mark Ecke, Chair; Dr. Anne Harrigan; Matthew Colehour

Administrators Present: Dr. Jeffrey F. Solan, Superintendent of Schools

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 P.M.

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

2. Audience.

Mr. Ecke read the following statement from Board chair, Samantha Rosenberg.

Over the past week, our school community has experienced a situation that has underscored just how important clarity, reassurance, and consistency are for our students and families. While our district has followed state guidance and our administrators and staff are aware of appropriate protocols, the absence of a formally adopted Board policy leaves a gap, not necessarily in practice, but in assurance.

A codified policy serves a different purpose than internal guidance. It communicates, clearly and publicly, that we are committed to protecting the physical safety, emotional well-being, and educational access of all students, regardless of circumstance. In moments like this, that reassurance matters deeply, especially for students and families who may already feel vulnerable.

I understand and respect the perspective that we already do what is right. I agree that our actions have reflected that. However, policy is not only about guiding present behavior, but it also establishes a foundation for future boards, ensuring continuity in values, decision-making, and the preservation of a safe and supportive school environment.

Given the current context, I strongly encourage the committee to consider the development of a formal policy regarding the protection of undocumented students and to move that work forward to the full Board for review. At minimum, taking this step signals to our community that we have done the work to ensure that every student feels safe, supported, and protected—not just in practice, but in principle.

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership on this important matter.

3. Review Policies for a Second Reading

5111.3 Protection of Undocumented Students

Mr. Ecke said that is the only policy that is on the agenda for review this evening. Mr. Ecke said his policy has been under consideration since the previous spring, noting that there had been ongoing back-and-forth regarding whether to formally adopt it. The policy, derived from CAFE guidance, is not legally required but is intended to direct the district to follow existing

law. It was explained that recent legal guidance has encouraged districts to limit adoption to required policies, as doing so allows greater flexibility when laws change. The proposed policy outlines how school personnel should respond to immigration enforcement situations during the school day and clarifies that the district has no authority in the broader community. One element of the original draft was removed as irrelevant, and the remaining policy was described as a straightforward overview of procedures aligned with current law.

Committee members expressed differing perspectives. Dr. Harrigan stated consistent support for the policy, emphasizing its value in reassuring families and addressing concerns. Mr. Colehour acknowledged the intent of the policy but raised concerns about potential liability and the risks of adopting non-required policies, particularly if laws change and policies are not updated promptly. It was suggested that the goals of transparency and reassurance could be achieved through direct communication from district leadership rather than formal policy adoption, noting that policies are often difficult for the public to access. Mr. Ecke expressed that recent events had shifted his view in favor of adoption, highlighting the importance of clearly documented procedures and protections, particularly for undocumented students, and the value of having guidance in place for future administrators.

MOTION by Dr. Harrigan, seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED *that the Policy Committee bring forward Policy #5111.3 Protection of Undocumented Students for a third reading.*

VOTE: The Motion passed 3-0.

4. **Adjournment.**

The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Ecke, Policy Committee Chair

Attest: _____
Carol Jesensky, Board Clerk

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