

Trumbull Public Schools
Trumbull, Connecticut
Trumbull Board of Education Policy Committee
Regular Meeting – October 14, 2015
Long Hill Administration Building

The Trumbull Board of Education convened in the Long Hill Administration Building for a Regular Meeting.

Members present:

Rosemary Seaman, Chair, BOE member
Loretta Chory, BOE member
Susan LaFrance, BOE member
Dr. Jonathan Budd, Central Office Admin.
Patricia Frillici, TAA Rep.
Laura McNaughton, TEA Rep.
Kristine Kely Murano, Parent Rep.
Bryan Woodward, Parent Rep.
Cindy Katske, Community Rep.
Mary Pierson, Community Rep.

Members absent:

Jennifer Mottolese, Parent Rep.

Rita Ciarmella, Admin. Assistant

Agenda Item I – Preliminary Business

- A. Introduction – The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.
- B. Correspondence – There was no correspondence.
- C. Public Participation – There were no public comments.

Agenda Item II – Reports / Action Items

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, September 17, 2015 – The minutes were approved as presented. Ms. Chory and Mr. Woodward abstained.
- B. Board of Education Meeting Updates
 - a. Sept. 21, 2015 CABE Presentation – Mrs. Seaman reviewed the presentation by Mr. Mustaro at the Sept. 21, 2015, Special Board meeting, highlighting the Audit service that the Board commissioned of CABE at that meeting.
 - b. Oct. 6, 2015 Second Readings – Mrs. Seaman noted that the Board approved the following four policies as presented at its Oct. 6, 2015, meeting. Mrs. LaFrance noted that she had voted against Policy 5131.911 at the Board meeting.
 - i. Special Education, Policy Code 6171
 - ii. Individualized Education Program / Special Education Program, Policy Code 6159
 - iii. Pre-School Special Education, Policy Code 6171.2

- iv. Bullying and Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention, Policy Code 5131.911
- c. Oct. 6, 2015 First Readings – Mrs. Seaman noted that the Board heard First Readings of the following two policies as presented at its Oct. 6, 2015, meeting, and suggested no revisions, so these policies will be returned to the Board for Second Readings on November 10, 2015.
 - i. Attendance Grades K-8, Policy Code 5113.1
 - ii. Pay to Participate, Policy Code 5138

Agenda Item III – Policy Review/Discussion

- A. Budget Transfer, Policy Code 3160 – Mrs. Chory presented the proposed revisions in this evening’s packet. Additional revisions were suggested. The Committee unanimously agreed to bring the policy, with the revisions, to the Board for a second reading on October 20, 2015.
- B. Civility and Decorum, Policy Code 1401 – Ms. McNaughton distributed information from TAA members; the information is attached as the final two pages of these minutes. The Committee unanimously agreed to table discussion of the policy until the December 2015 meeting of the Policy Committee.
- C. Non-Discrimination in Instruction/Classroom, Policy Code 6121.4 (new policy) – Dr. Budd presented the proposed policy in this evening’s packet. Additional revisions were suggested. The Committee unanimously agreed to bring the policy, with the revisions, to the Board for a first reading on October 20, 2015.
- D. Concussions and Head Injuries, Policy Code 5141.7 – Dr. Budd presented the proposed revisions in this evening’s packet. Additional revisions were suggested, and additional questions raised. The Committee unanimously agreed to have Dr. Budd seek answers to the questions and bring the policy, with revisions, back to the Policy Committee for its November 2015 meeting.
- E. Health Assessments and Immunizations, Policy Code 5141.3 – Dr. Budd presented the proposed revisions in this evening’s packet. Additional revisions were suggested. The Committee unanimously agreed to bring the policy, with the revisions, to the Board for a first reading on October 20, 2015.

Adjournment

Mrs. Seaman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m.; it was seconded by Mrs. Chory, and unanimously agreed to. The next meeting of the Policy Committee will take place on November 18, 2015, at 5:30 p.m.

TEA Feedback regarding the new Civility and Decorum Policy

Response #1

What a wonderful idea...I have been trying to implement CIVILITY for years with varied levels of success...to me it starts and ends with cell phones and language

CIVILITY: (politeness, respect and courtesy in body language, behavior and speech; good manners and consideration for others)

"Civility costs nothing and buys everything"

"Civility is claiming and caring for one's identity, needs and beliefs without degrading someone else's in the process."

My policy...2015-16 CELL PHONE USAGE:

ANY CELLPHONE OR ELECTRONIC DEVICE VISIBLE BY THE INSTRUCTOR (ME) WHILE IN A6, WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION, WILL BE CONFISCATED AND TURNED INTO YOUR HOUSE OFFICE...NO EXCUSES, NO BEGGING, CRYING, WHINING, GROVELING OR PLEADING WILL CHANGE THIS. THIS IS YOUR ONE AND ONLY WARNING.

I take at least one a day...

Response #2

In reviewing this I have a few thoughts and questions.

My thoughts:

- The policy seems modeled after a policy designed (by Weston) to protect teachers from attack by overzealous and aggressive parents. That's great and I wholeheartedly support that.
- It also seems to extend to teachers, students, parents, and community members being treated with civility at Board of Education meetings (and BOE members treating each other civilly as well, which I think will yield much more productive BOE meetings). Also good.
- Additionally, it seems to strive to ensure that employees will be guaranteed a safe work environment that is free from harassment.

Are these three impressions correct? Are these the aims of the policy?

My questions and concerns come at the next step in the policy. They include:

- What happens when someone feels that they have a complaint?
- How is the complaint filed?
- To whom and what needs to be done?
- Who determines what constitutes "civility" and "decorum"?
- Will there be a disciplinary panel who will judge individual cases to decide if they are, indeed, violations of the policy? If so, who will be represented on this panel?
- If they will decide the validity of complaints, what is the next step for complaints that are deemed valid?
- Will there also be a disciplinary panel who will determine disciplinary measures?
- And while disciplinary measures against a BOE employee might seem clear, what measures can be taken against an uncivil parent, community member, and/or BOE member?

I know answers to most of these questions probably don't exist now; but I feel strongly that they are questions that should be broached and planned for as the policy takes shape and is adopted.

Response #3

The policy looks good as far as it goes, however the policy neglected one important factor in the equation: student civility and decorum, especially at the high school level where students should be preparing for the responsibilities of adulthood and should know the consequences of the actions they are taking at all times. In fact, civility and decorum must start way before elementary school with plain manners and a show of respect for adults in general. The elementary schools have their pillars of character that they are encouraged to demonstrate on a daily basis, but parents must be involved in the carrying out of these qualities so important to the culture of a country. Can't say enough of how this policy and its enforcement could change the character of our nation which is certainly in a bad state of affairs.