

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

King's Fork High School
351 King's Fork Road, Suffolk, VA 23434
Media Room, 2nd floor
April 21st, 2025

Present:

Members

- ✓ Mrs. Kimberly Slingluff, **Committee Chair**
- ✓ Mr. Sean McGee, **Committee Member (Attending via Cell Phone)**
- ✓ Mrs. Karen Jenkins, **Committee Member**

Participants

- ✓ Dr. John B. Gordon III, **Superintendent**
- ✓ Wendell M. Waller, Esquire, **School Board Attorney**
- ✓ Renée Davenport, **Legal Administrative Assistant**

Attendees

None

➤ Call to Order.

- The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM. Spelling correction to the word “wheeled” to “wield” on page 5. Correct and minutes are approved for the March 24th, 2025 meeting.

➤ Unfinished Business

• POLICY SECTION 1-6.2:1 – Transgender Policy

- Committee discussed items to be changed in the policy to mirror the VDOE policy. Committee member McGee question whether additional language should be added specific for locker room and sports activities? The VDOE model policy refers back to the Virginia High School League guidelines with regards to sports activities. With regards to locker rooms, there is a brief reference to refer to federal law and federal cases such as the “Grimm” case and in our policy in Section “J”.
- Committee Chair Slingluff addressed additional language concerns in the policy such as “students should use the locker room of their birth gender”, or use an alternate facility. Suggestion arose to create a unisex stand alone, single use, private facility to deal this situation so that everyone feels safe. Section “H” language referring to overnight facilities can be put under section “J” to refer to local locker rooms in schools. Stand alone facilities would have to be looked at design wise, etc.
- Discussion regarding “Eligible student” definition, it should be added back in the policy; and Section D language regarding concealing language from parents, “including information related to gender” language, material information about a student. Correction in paragraph “E”, reference should be changed to “F”. Add “eligible to section “F”; and section D – dressing code – change “student have a

right” to “student may”. Discussion ensued as to students identifying as animals and dressing as animals. Dr. Gordon would need more information to look into it. Committee Member McGee stated that his children and other parent’s children have confirmed students dressing as animals at their schools and identifying as animals (called furies). Is it being allowed at the schools? Mr. McGee would like to push to have a policy on this. Attorney Waller admonished that a policy is a broad statement and that should be considered when putting specifics in policy as such changes could lead to multiple changes down the line. In section J, wording states “at the request of any student alternative arrangements”, should be changed to “at the request of any parental approval or input”. Conversation ensued as to the process/procedures when a student states they would like to change their identity. The committee would like to receive/review the forms again that that are used in the transgender regulations at schools. The effective date will be July 1, 2025.

- First reading will be on the May 8th school board meeting and second reading on May 22nd, 2025 meeting.

- **POLICY SECTION 2-2.6:1 – Norms and Protocols (Slingluff/Waller Versions)**

- Committee agreed to change the word in number 7 to “approve” the budget instead of “adopts” the budget.
- Committee Chair Slingluff questioned language in Section B.1 as to “use of language that ...would be intimidating. Discussion continued that there are words that are commonly used that would be considered intimidating and the wording “common acceptance”. How is it commonly viewed in the community?
- Discussion ensued regarding items 2 & 3 of section B as to whether a disclaimer should be given when you are speaking to the public. Attorney Waller will draft language to merge these items and include language which indicates the Chair is the official spokesperson of the Board. Slingluff and McGee would like to see item 4 and 5 omitted as well regarding posting anonymously and feels that it is control of the board. Attorney Waller advised that whatever school board members say, the public are going to consider you to be the experts even if you misstate something, whether it’s deliberate or inadvertent and so you have to be able to govern that. Committee Chair Slingluff suggested language to indicate that actual minutes or links to the meeting could be added in bullet number 6. Dr. Gordon questioned the point that if the public makes a decision on disciplining board members, that can only occur every four years. It was his understanding that the present way the board policies its members gives the public incite, evidence, or reasoning. If a board member has violated norms and protocols, then that lets the public know this person is not doing their duty as a board member or that board member has a different agenda. It was shared that this is the only way that the public is aware that something is not right and that the school board itself is not approving of their behavior. Committee McGee agreed but thinks that it should be held before the public when a board member is being disciplined, so they can see and hear everything and why they are being disciplined. Attorney Waller will tweak the language of bullet number 6. Item 7 & 8 were okay. After discussion regarding item 9, Committee Chair Slingluff requested that the minutes from the Policy Review Committee meeting be added as an information item at the school board meeting.
- Committee Chair Slingluff expressed concern regarding section C1 light on the

whole board? Okay

- Discussion continued with item number 2, and expressed concern with receiving items in Confidential mode. The goal is to prevent it to be shared. Recommendation was given by Committee member McGee to have a shared drive. Attorney Waller admonished the committee that not only is there a concern to prevent documents from being shared to a third party but there is also a concern about liability for the board. If the attorney renders an opinion that the board should not do something and then the board decides that they are going to do it anyway. If my opinion gets out there and it get to the public that the board took an action contrary to my opinion, your action will be deemed to be willful which could open you up to a certain level of liability that you would not ordinarily be exposed to. So, it's not just about sharing information with third parties, it's also about avoiding potential liability going down the road. The committee agreed that item 2 should remain as is.
- Dr. Gordon requested that the committee address the Education Equity Section 1-5.1:2 since the committee meeting is close to an end.
- Committee Slingluff added her remaining concerns regarding the Norms and Protocols policy. She added that testing schedules should be posted on line and the superintendent should be notified when school board members are going to visit the schools. Slingluff has concerns with the language of "the board must consult with the superintendent regarding school visits" and would prefer the language of "notifying the superintendent". Dr. Gordon advised that the testing schedule is online for all of our state mandated testing. There may be other **random** testing going on such ASVAB **(military)** testing that he's not sure how that can be accomplished for your request. Due to time constraints, this policy will be review will be continued at the next meeting.
- **POLICY SECTION 1-5.1:2 – Education Equity Defined.**
 - Committee Chair Slingluff asked committee members is the were in agreement with suspending this policy so that Dr. Gordon can sign the Equity Compliance? All members were in agreement that Dr. Gordon do what is necessary so that Suffolk Public Schools will be in compliance by the deadline. There was nothing in regulations that need to be suspended. Dr. Gordon asked the committee if Chair Howell can be notified that the call meeting on Wednesday, April 23 be cancelled because it is not necessary. The committee agreed and Committee Chair Slingluff stated that she would send something to Chair Howell. Policies not considered or finalized on the agenda will be moved to the next meeting, with the exception of the Education Equity Policy. The committee with be getting more policies updates possibly by the next meeting.

➤ **New Business**

- All items will be moved for consideration at the next PRC meeting.

➤ **Business by Committee Members**

- Next meeting will be Monday, May 12th, 2025 at 3:30 at King's Fork High School (Media Center).

➤ **Adjournment at 5:40?.**