

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Curtis R. Milteer Sr. Recreational Center
Conference Room
132 Robertson Street, Suffolk, VA 23438
June 24, 2024**

Present:

Members

- ✓ Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, ***School Board Member***
- ✓ Mrs. Phyllis Byrum, ***School Board Member***
- ✓ Mrs. Kimberly Slingluff, ***School Board Member***

Participants

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

Attendees

None Present

➤ Meeting called to order.

- Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Dr. Brooks-Buck explained that we are reviewing the underlined changes of the policies and not the entire policies which are usually the result in the change of the law or a recommendation to change a policy. She explained that Attorney Waller will explain any extensive policy changes.
- The minutes were approved for the meeting of March 25, 2024.

➤ Unfinished Business

- **There was no unfinished business.**

➤ New Business

• POLICY 2-2.1:1

This is a new policy requested by Board Member Riddick. It balances the day-to-day responsibilities of the school superintendent to oversee school operations with that of members of the school board to conduct site visits. The full School Board will conduct site visits for one week during the months of February, April, October, and December. The School Board will determine days and times for visits by the full School Board with the approval of the School Superintendent. All visits will also be coordinated by the School Superintendent. During the visit, Board Members are not allowed to transact any public business. This policy is permitted by Virginia Code Section 22.1-78.

Board Member Slingluff questioned the possibility of so many members being together and there could end up being a discussion that violated FOIA and would be

considered as a meeting.

Attorney Waller explained that board members could have discussions but not on anything that is on a current agenda or anticipated to be on an upcoming agenda. However, general conversations about things would be acceptable. Discussion ensued on the purpose of this policy when we already have options to visit buildings, what are we looking for and what are going to do differently.

Mrs. Byrum suggested coming up with a schedule to see certain buildings at certain times. All agree that there is a problem in being restrained enough to make sure nothing is discussed that could be a FOIA violation as a committee. The committee discussed visiting a section of the city at certain times, but we also have the flexibility to volunteer in the buildings at anytime. This policy will be submitted for first reading and adoption.

- **POLICY 2-2.7**

This additional language is being recommended for subsection (1) regarding the Policy Review Committee. This additional language formalizes the process by which the School Board can refer matters to the Policy Review Committee for its consideration and gives the School Board greater latitude to refer matters for Policy Review. The School Board cannot revise any policy or vote for the adoption of a new policy that has not come before the Policy Review Committee. However, upon vote of the School Board any member of the School Board can recommend any change, addition and/or revision to policies of the School Board be sent to Policy Review for consideration. The member must submit to the Policy Review Committee in writing a clear and concise statement explaining the change that is being recommended. This will eliminate any confusion regarding the request. This policy is permitted by Virginia Code 22.1-78. Discussion was held as to the difference in the Board voting to recommend a policy change and the actual action of the policy change being done through the policy committee. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading.

- **POLICY 2-3.2**

In light of a recent occurrence involving your electronic school board agenda, this proposed policy revision pertains to the meeting agenda once it has been published on ESB. It clarifies when the agenda can be amended and under what circumstance. Once published on ESB and released to the public, topics or line items cannot be added to the meeting agenda, unless (1) failure to do so will unduly hamper the operations of Suffolk Public Schools; (2) a majority of the School Board agrees to have it added; and (3) it is added at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. The policy also allows the clerk to make grammatical corrections and add attachments to the agenda that directly pertain to topics and/or line items listed on the published agenda. This action would be done by a poll of the committee and would not violate FOIA because you are not voting on the actual item and only if it should be on the agenda, you are not talking with all of the members at the same time.

There is also language that will allow a member of the School Board to make a motion during a public meeting to have an item added to the agenda. However, an item cannot be voted on at the same meeting if the item directly impacts students or

employees of Suffolk Public Schools, unless the School Board determines that it would be in the best interests of Suffolk Public Schools to add and vote on the item at the same meeting. Otherwise, any item added to the meeting agenda that directly impacts students or employees of Suffolk Public Schools will be for discussion or informational purposes only. Any vote regarding the added item must take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the School Board. This will allow members of the public an opportunity to receive notice of the item to be voted on and an opportunity to speak in support of or against the new agenda item at either early or late appearance. There is also included in the policy a definition for an item that directly impacts students or employees of Suffolk Public Schools. This policy is permitted by Virginia Code 22.1-78. The language “by public vote” will be added to the policy. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading with the amendments.

- **POLICY 3-1.6**

The policy places a limit on the number of remote learning days to 10, unless the Superintendent of Public Instruction grants an extension. This policy change is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-98, subsection C.4. The language “by public vote” will be added to the policy. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading and adoptions since the policy is required.

- **POLICY 5-2.2**

This is only a change in legal authority and does not impact language found in the policy. This change can be done without being submitted to the board.

- **POLICY 5-2.3**

This change in policy will allow an employee of SPS to report any perceived hazard to the superintendent or to the employee’s supervisor. This policy change is recommended by VSBA. The language “by public vote” will be added to the policy. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading and adoption.

- **POLICY 5-2.6**

Under this policy, when any or all schools are ordered to be closed for in person instruction, the superintendent or superintendent’s designee can declare an unscheduled remote learning day. The superintendent may also establish regulations regarding employee work schedules during school closings. Unless notified of a change in their work schedules, employees are expected to work based on terms found in their employment contract and division policy. This policy change recommended by VSBA and is consistent with the day-to-day duties of the school superintendent. The language “by public vote” will be added to the policy. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading and adoption.

- **POLICY 5-2.9**

As required by this policy, if one or more students in a school are diagnosed as having diabetes, there must be at least two employees who have been trained in the administration of insulin and glucagon. Also, in school buildings with an instructional and administrative staff of fewer than ten, there must be at least two employees who

have a current certification or training in emergency first aid, CPR and the use of an AED. This policy also inserts the assistance of an advanced practice registered nurse in place of a nurse practitioner. An advanced practice registered nurse is someone who has met advanced educational and clinical practice requirements. They can diagnose and treat illnesses, manage chronic disease, and provide primary, acute, and specialty health care. This change in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-274. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading and adoption. The committee also requested and agreed to have policies that have been approved to be on the agenda to be sent to the board before they are posted on the agenda but after the agenda has been approved, to give board members extra time to review the policies.

- **POLICY 5-6.2**

This policy will allow the School Board to establish public school foundations for the express purpose of implementing a public/private partnership for school improvement projects. Such foundations may be established directly by the School Board or by the School Board and other organizations or persons. The foundations may also be established as a cooperative regional effort with other school boards. This change in policy is permitted by Virginia Code Section 22.1-212.2:2. Board member Slingluff asked to explain what this policy is about. Attorney Waller explained that it is a policy is something that the General Assembly put in place to allow local school boards to enter into these partnership arrangements with foundations and other private entities to help with public education, public/private partnerships and give other school divisions the opportunity to be involved in that. Discussion ensued on funding oversight as well as monies for too many causes to contribute to and how will it take away from the foundations we already have set up. Dr. Gordon admonished that the difference in this policy is that the Board would have control of where the monies would be spent, but in other foundations we do not have a vote. A lot of school systems are creating their own foundations that they are actually in control of. It gives opportunities for projects that we don't get State funding for or local funding or grant funding but could be a fundraiser that the school board could be in control of. Board member Slingluff asked Dr. Gordon what would he envision as something the board could do. He said that he would like to see tuition reimbursement for staff for professional learning. The board would come up with the process of how that is done. The committee agreed to move this on to first reading.

- **POLICY 6-3.3**

This change in policy will allow the principal to designate someone to inspect property installed on school property on a regular basis and to remove equipment considered unsafe. This change in policy is recommended by VSBA and permitted by Virginia Code Section 22.1-78. The committee agreed to move this policy on for first reading and adoption.

- **POLICY 6-4.2**

This change in Policy was recommended by Board Member Riddick regarding Board involvement in developing plans for new or remodeled facilities of SPS. Any committee appointed by the school superintendent to develop educational

specifications will include at least one Board Member to offer input and/or suggestions to the committee. This change in policy is permitted by Virginia Code Section 22.1-78. The committee discussed what this policy would entail also how it could be a conflict of interest possibly while voting on the RFP for a project. The committee voted to not to move this policy forward for the first reading.

- **POLICY 8-27.2**

Under this policy SPS can offer a voluntary training program to the parents of children in kindergarten through third grade to assist them in developing the skills necessary to provide effective instructional assistance to their children beyond the school day. This policy is allowed under Virginia Code Section 22.1-253.13:7.C.5. The committee asked Dr. Gordon, how would this program look if it was set up? Dr. Gordon identified what Suffolk Public Schools is presently doing for parents such as the Parent Center as well as resources offered by Community Engagement. We are probably ahead of what some of the other school divisions are doing before this was offered by the General Assembly. The committee voted to move this policy forward for the first reading.

- **POLICY 8-40.1**

This policy is allowed by Virginia Code Section 22.1-202.1 which allows for a comparative religion class in grades nine through 12 that focuses on the basic tenets, history, and religious observances and rites of world religions. Language proposed by VSBA emphasizes that SPS will approach religion from an objective, curriculum perspective, encouraging all students and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other's religious and/or non-religious views. Dr. Gordon stated that it gives us the flexibility to add a course as a new elective for world religion. It is now part of your geography class and world history class. The committee voted to move this policy forward for the first reading.

- **POLICY 9-12.2**

This policy pertains to disciplining students with a disability for violating SPS weapons policy. Students with a disability can to disciplined to the same extent as a student without a disability, if the violation was not a manifestation of the student's disability. The weapon must be one that could inflict serious bodily injury. The meaning of the term serious bodily injury incorporates language found in 18 U.S.C. Section 1365(h)(3), which is injury that involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. This change in policy is allowed by federal law, 34 C.F.R. Section 300.530g. This policy will be moved forward to first reading and adoption.

- **POLICY 9-14.2**

The policy restricts the sale of imitation controlled substance, or marijuana on school property, on any school bus, or 1,000 feet of any school bus stop when children are waiting to be picked up and transported to and from school. Also, any student who violates the controlled substance policy, can be required to undergo evaluation for drug or alcohol and with the consent of the parent participate in a treatment program.

This policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-277.08; however, language regarding evaluation and treatment is recommended by VSBA. This policy will work with our recovery school piece. The committee agreed to move forward to the first reading and adoption.

- **POLICY 9-20.15**

In subsection B, the word “he” is removed and replaced with “student-athlete” to make the policy gender inclusive and for clarity. This policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-271.8. The committee agreed to allow the legal department to correct the grammar without sending to the board.

- **POLICY 10-1.1:1**

This is a new policy requested by Board Member Riddick. It establishes procedures for ceremonies involving groundbreaking, opening, re-opening, or renaming any buildings of SPS. Terms are defined. School superintendent required to contact Board Members before confirming date and time for the event and will only schedule a ceremonial activity on a date and time when a majority of Board members can be in attendance. The school board will appoint one member of the School Board to serve on the superintendent’s steering committee for planning the ceremonial event. Decisions regarding planning and organizing any ceremonial event will be determined by majority vote of the steering committee. This policy is allowed by Virginia Code Section 22.1-78. After much discussion of what’s involved in these events, the committee decided not to move this policy on to the board for review.

- **POLICY 10-18.1**

The policy encourages the establishment of parent-teacher organizations and that parent teacher organizations maintain a close relationship with the School Board, administration and staff, and when planning activities, they consider school board policies. This policy is allowed by Virginia Code Section 22.1-253.13:7. Language is being proposed by VSBA. The committee discussed and agreed to leave the original language to be corporative with other agencies as well as add the additional suggested language. The policy will be moved on for first reading.

5. Business by Committee Members

- **None**

6. Adjournment

- **Meeting was adjourned.**