

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Curtis R. Miltner Sr. Recreational Center
Conference Room
132 Robertson Street, Suffolk, VA 23438
October 23, 2023

Present:

Members

- ✓ Mrs. Heather Howell, **School Board Vice-Chair**
- ✓ Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, **School Board Member**
- ✓ Mrs. Phyllis Byrum, **School Board Member**

Participants

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

Attendees

- ✓ Members of the public

➤ Meeting called to order.

- Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck called the meeting to order and reviewed how the changes are indicated on each policy.
- Minutes were accepted with corrections noted.

➤ Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business.

➤ New Business

Section 2-2.7:3 Committee authority.

- Attorney Waller shared with the committee information contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised and asked if the committee would allow him to develop some informal rules/guidelines to govern the school board and/or other committee meetings that would not be as formal as "Robert's Rules". In that there are less than 12 members serving on the School Board, Attorney Waller stated that there can be some laxing of Robert's Rules. Following some discussion, the committee agreed that Attorney Waller should formulate rules/guidelines for the orderly conduct of School Board meetings for the committee to consider.

Section 2-9.5 Definitions; etc.

- Dr. Brooks-Buck reviewed the changes. Attorney Waller noted that the policy amends subsection C.2. by adding the words that School Board members and employees of the School Board can receive a gift from a foreign dignitary with a value that exceeds \$100 provided the foreign dignitary is not a representative of a foreign country of concern. A "foreign country of concern" is a country designated by the Secretary of State who has provided support for acts of international terrorism. This

revision in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3103.1. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 3-1.2 Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent

- This policy revision amends the duties of the superintendent at subsection C.4(d) by requiring the superintendent to at least annually survey critical shortages of teachers and administrative personnel by subject matter, and specialized student support positions. Specialized student support positions include school social workers, psychologists, nurses, licensed assistant behavior analysts, and other licensed health and behavioral positions. In subsection C.4(g) the superintendent is required to designate a division employee as the division safety official. This revision in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-70.3. Dr. Gordon stated that this is already done by the division. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 4-2.2 Annual budget preparation.

- The only change is in section “C and is required by law. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 4-6.3 Certification; etc.

- This policy revision provides that Suffolk Public Schools will not award a contract for services, when the contractor or employees of the contractor will have direct contact with students and the contractor or employees of the contractor have been convicted of a crime regarding the solicitation of any child for an act of sexual molestation or physical or sexual abuse or rape. This revisions in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-296.1(E) and (F). The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 5-2.1 Written school crises and emergency plan.

- This policy revision adds language to subsection A, which designates the Chief of Administrative Services as the emergency manager. In subsection C, the added language provides that when school safety audit reports are submitted to the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, the school superintendent will designate the division safety official and provide the official’s current mailing address, daytime phone number, email address and fax number. This revision to policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-279.8. F. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first ready.

Section 5-2.2:3 Threat Assessment Team Required; etc.

- This policy revision adds language to subsection B, which reads, “new threat assessment team members must complete an initial threat assessment training and all threat assessment team members must complete refresher threat assessment training every three years”. This change in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 22.1-79.4. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 5-5.2 Adequate nutrition program required; etc.

- Revisions are being recommended to align with the free breakfast and lunch program of Suffolk Public Schools. Language is being recommended for deletion that refers

to an application process. All students enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools receive free breakfast and lunches under Virginia Code Section 22.1-207.4:1. Dr. Gordon informed the committee that information is submitted every year around June and July and as long as the free/reduced lunch is around 40% all students enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools should remain eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch for the foreseeable future. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 5-5.6 When no money on account; etc.

- This policy is recommended for deletion because all students in SPS receive free breakfast and lunches. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 5-6.3 Computer system provided; etc.

- This policy revision adds language to subsection F. It prohibits any employee or agent of the School Board or person contracting with the School Board while using any electronic device capable of connecting to the Internet and provided by the School Board from downloading or using any software application of TikTok, WeChat, or accessing any website developed by ByteDance Ltd. or Tencent Holdings Ltd. This revision is required by Virginia Code Section 2.2-5514.1. Dr. Gordon informed the committee that there is already a filter that prevents the students from getting to these sites. Dr. Gordon also stated that ~~we are just following~~ Suffolk Public Schools follows the federal and state guidelines ~~on this~~ as it relates to these particular software applications. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 7-4.1 Certification free of tuberculosis, etc.

- As a condition of employment, this policy revision will allow a new employee to provide a certification from an advanced practice registered nurse that the employee is free of tuberculosis. A certificate from a nurse practitioner is also being deleted. This change in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 54.1-2957.02. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

Section 7-4.2 Requirements to be employed as a bus driver; etc.

- This policy revision also allows for a new employee to submit a signed certificate from an advanced practice registered nurse stating that the employee is free of communicable tuberculosis. This change in policy is required by Virginia Code Section 54.1-2957.02. The committee agreed to bring this policy to the full Board for the first reading.

➤ **Business by Committee Members**

- Committee agreed to look into adding more policies to be reviewed at the next meeting of the Policy Review Committee.

➤ **Adjournment**

- Meeting was adjourned.