

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2022

Present: Kate Bowen, Committee Chair
Mike Crowley
Meg Moriarty
John P. Phelan, Superintendent

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: February 8, 2022
TIME: 9:31 AM

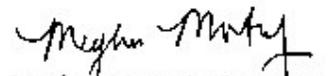
1. Call to order at 12:01 pm
2. Vaccination Policy - Planning
 - Kate looked for examples of COVID specific vaccination policies for school districts finding LA and Amherst Pelham, MA. She is waiting to hear from AP.
 - Mike suggested looking at the language in the BOH recommendation from fall 2021.
 - Superintendent Phelan agrees that we need a vaccination policy with explicit language if we do not already
 - Kate proposed that the Policy subcommittee seek to strengthen the language in the current vaccination policy starting with the MASC boilerplate language (JLCB, JLCL, ref MGL Ch. 76 Sec15). She will share these examples in the folder for future discussion
 - Superintendent Phelan will set up a meeting and/or request written explanation from legal counsel to provide guidance on vaccination mandates at the next Policy meeting.
 - The subcommittee will get the recommendation the BOH made in the fall in written form.
3. Religious holidays with Homework Policy - Discuss
 - Background: students get relief from homework and tests if a child is unable to attend school due to religious commitments. The concern is that not all of these commitments (i.e. cultural) require a student to be absent. Without the absence, and despite being committed to out of school time religious/cultural activities, a child is not excused from homework or tests.
 - Current Homework Policy 6014 language hinges on the excused absence.
 - The current language went through JLM and got approval from teachers.
 - Kate suggested we look at the language/references to this policy at all levels (HS, MS, Elementary) for consistency.
 - Superintendent Phelan will review the current language and invite Meryl who voiced this concern to a meeting.
4. Updates
 - a. Naming Policy
 - Meg will look for examples that may address equity and provide them at the next meeting.

- Superintendent Phelan feels comfortable with the current language of the policy.
- b. Transportation Policy - active (wellness); student parking comparisons
- Kate presented MassDOT language and proposed adding an “active transportation” clause in Policy 5005 to align with recommendations by Safe Routes as well as National guidance. However, looking at what Mass DOT recommends via their safe routes program, Kate proposed the language (from MADOT) makes more sense to include in the transportation section of Policy 7006. She will add the document with the language she presented to the shared folder and represent the language for any changes at the next meeting.
 - Superintendent Phelan agreed stating that this is an important issue in the community.
 - Kate will make revisions and present at the next meeting.
- c. Norms/Protocols - meeting length, agenda setting, complaints, info requests
- Mike, Meg and Kate were tasked with searching for example language/policies that specifically address length of meetings, agendas, complaints, district communication, and information requests. These all relate directly to the functioning of school committee members and had been identified by the subcommittee as lacking in our policy/procedure manual.
 - Mike looked at a variety of districts and did not find anything explicit about length of meetings with the exception of a news article from Pittsfield that made mention of a 3 hour limit. The committee agreed this may be something to include in an updated procedure document for current school committee members.
 - Kate was looking at communication norms and procedures across districts. She will put a document that she created with a communication norms chart in the shared folder.
 - Policy Hosting with MASC - At the last meeting Kate introduced the idea of Policy Hosting. After following up with the Superintendent prior to this meeting, Kate explained that the MASC membership allows for MASC to host our policy manual, make updates upon request, and re-categorize the policies to align with the National School Board system. One benefit is making it easy to compare policies with other committee’s policies. Mike asked Kate to confirm there is no fee for these services.
 - Everyone will continue to seek out examples for norms/protocols to make suggestions on these items at future meetings. Any examples can be shared in the google folder.

5. Next Policy meeting Monday February 7, 2022, noon - 1 pm

6. Meeting adjourned on a motion by Kate Bowen and, seconded by Meg Moriarty at 1:04 pm

Respectfully Submitted by:


Meghan Moriarty, Secretary