

**CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
HELD ON DECEMBER 2, 2024 IN THE HUMISTON BOARD ROOM**

Committee Members Present: Mark Ecke, Chair; Dr. Anne Harrigan, Adam Grippo

Administrators Present: Dr. Jeffrey F. Solan, Superintendent of Schools

A video of this meeting is available on the Cheshire Public School's YouTube Channel at
www.youtube.com/cheshirepublicschools.

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 P.M.

Mr. Ecke called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Audience.

None.

3. Presentation by Director of Technology

Superintendent Solan introduced Michael Papa, the Director of Technology for Cheshire Public Schools. Mr. Papa said he is very proud of what we provide in Cheshire Public Schools. He explained the safety management program, Gaggle, that monitors all student drives. If there are keywords that are considered objectionable, an alert goes to a live human being. All student email and google accounts are monitored. Another product of Gaggle program that we use is called "SpeakUp", which is a safe and anonymous reporting system. SpeakUp is a digital tipline that encourages K-12 students to share their concerns anonymously. Dr. Solan showed committee members where they could see our information on data privacy, digital citizenship, and safety and security. Mr. Grippo asked if students could sign into the Wi-Fi on a personal device. Mr. Papa answered, yes, but there are even more filters for guests on our Wi-Fi.

4. Review Policies for a Possible First Reading:

0521 Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice

Dr. Solan said this policy was scheduled for a third reading but we are bumping it back to a first reading. We had our attorney at Berchem Moses review the policy. She recommends dovetailing this policy with the Sexual Harassment and Title IX policy. He reminded the committee that when we reviewed the CAFE recommended version, it was disjointed. He said after reviewing the policies with our attorney, he would recommend adopting the Berchem Moses version of #0251, as well as, 4000.1/4200.1/5145.44 Sexual Harassment/Title IX Policy & Regulation. This policy is dictated by law.

4000.1/4200.1/5145.44 Sexual Harassment/Title IX & Regulation

Dr. Solan recommends bringing forward this newly revised Berchem Moses version of the policy and Regulation for a first reading. This is a completely revised policy and regulation due to the US Department of Education's 2024 amendments to its Title IX Rule. This policy is dictated by law.

MOTION by Ms. Harrigan, seconded by Mr. Grippo.

MOVED that the Policy Committee bring forward revised Policies #0521 Nondiscrimination and 4000.1/4200.1/5145.44 Sexual Harassment/Title IX for a first reading.

VOTE: The Motion passed 3-0.

5. Review Policies for a Second Reading:

4112.5/4212.5 Security Check/Fingerprinting/Criminal Justice

All individuals hired for a position with a board of education must submit to state and national criminal history records checks within thirty days from the date they begin employment. In addition, there had been questions about information in the Appendix. That information was from the old regulation and is stricken from this new version.

4118.51 Rights, Responsibilities, Duties – Social Networking

Dr. Solan said this policy was reviewed by Attorney Dugas who shared some suggested revisions to the language in our existing policy. The shared revisions include, “Employees may not use their school district title **or affiliation** ...”, “... may not **access** social media or update their status on any social networking sites during normal working hours . . .” “*shall not post or publish any information the Superintendent **in his/her reasonable discretion** would deem to be inappropriate*”. Dr. Solan said there are protections for Freedom of Speech.

6148 FAFSA Completion Program

This replacement policy is recommended by CAFE and required by law. The policy mandates that “*Beginning with classes graduating in 2025–2027, graduating students must have completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), completed and submitted to a public institution of higher education an application for institutional financial aid for students without legal immigration status, or completed a waiver, on a form prescribed by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) signed by the student’s parent/legal guardian or by the student if 18 years of age or older.*”

6172 Alternative Education Program

This policy and regulation are to ensure that students who are in an alternative program have access to the same educational opportunities as the standard high school. It also adds language regarding a credit recovery program. While we do not have a program through Humiston, we do through an agreement with Wallingford Board of Education.

MOTION by Mr. Grippo, seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED that the Policy Committee bring forward Policies #4112.5/4212.5 Security Check/Fingerprinting/Criminal Justice; #4118.51 Social Networking; #6148 FAFSA Completion Process and #6172 Alternative Education Program, to the full Board for a second reading.

VOTE: The Motion passed 3-0.

6. Review Policies for a Third Reading:

5114 Suspension & Expulsion Due Process

Dr. Solan again reviewed this revised policy and regulation containing statutory changes. CABE said they combined two other policies - #5144 and #5131 for easier reference. The policy contains language that reduces the maximum number of consecutive days for in-school suspensions for preschool to grade two and shortens the maximum out-of-school suspension for these grades from ten to five days.

0523 Equity and Diversity

Dr. Solan reported that Attorney Goldberg reviewed our draft policy and made changes to update the language in this policy. She deleted many definitions that are social constructs and not legal definitions. She also updated the protected classes to align with the law. Another change that she made was to replace “children” with “members of the Cheshire Public Schools Community. The Committee took time to review this revised policy and suggested more revisions. Mr. Grippo stated that this is more an equality or non-discrimination policy than an equity policy.

MOTION by Ms. Harrigan. and seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED that the Policy Committee bring forward Policy #0523 Equity and Diversity to the full Board for a third reading.

VOTE: The Motion passed 2-0. (Mr. Grippo opposed.)

MOTION by Ms. Harrigan. and seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED that the Policy Committee bring forward Policy #5114 Suspension & Expulsion Due Process to the full Board for a third reading.

VOTE: The Motion passed 3-0.

7. Policies for Discussion

5131.81 Electronic Devices

Dr. Solan said as they discussed at the last meeting, that before any changes to this policy are made, he wants to conduct surveys to get feedback from parents, students and staff. He shared the surveys with the Committee by grade level. The Committee agreed with the surveys and said they look forward to the hearing the results.

8. **Adjournment.**

On a Motion by Mr. Grippo and seconded by Ecke, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Ecke, Policy Committee Chair

Attest: _____
Carol Jesensky, Board Clerk

Filed with the Cheshire Town Clerk's Office on 12/18/2024.