



Minutes
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Avon Board of Education
34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001
Via Zoom
Tuesday, September 12, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

Members Present: Ms. Laura Young, Chair; Ms. Nicole Russo; Ms. Thej Singh; Ms. Sarah Thompson

Member(s) Absent: None

Administration Present: Dr. Bridget Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Jess Giannini, Assistant Superintendent;

Others Present: Ms. Deb Chute, Board Chair; Ms. Christine Sardinkas, Recording Secretary;

- I. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Committee Chair, Ms. Laura Young.

- II. Approval of February 13, 2023 Minutes
Ms. Thej Singh motioned to approve the minutes of May 2, 2023 Policy meeting, Ms. Nicole Russo seconded
The motion passed 4-0-0
Ms. Thej Singh motioned to approve the corrected minutes of March 14, 2023 Policy meeting. Ms. Nicole Russo seconded
The motion passed 4-0-0

- III. Communication from Public
There was no communication from the public.

- IV. New Business-Items for Review and Discussion
 - A. Policy 4112.5- Security/Credit Check
Dr. Carnemolla stated that the district is looking to replace the existing Avon Security/Credit Check policy with the Shipman & Goodwin Employment and Student Teacher Checks model policy. The recommendation is being made, as the more comprehensive model policy language meets current statutory requirements regarding any disclosure of past arrest history. The model policy reflects a new state law that prohibits employers from asking employees about any previous ‘erased’ criminal history.
Ms. Young motioned to replace existing policy 4112.5, Security/Credit Check with Shipman & Goodwin policy Employment and Student Teacher Checks as presented, and bring it to the full board for approval. Ms. Thompson seconded.
Motion passed 4-0-0

 - B. Policy 5144 - Discipline
Dr. Carnemolla stated that this policy has been revised to add a definition of “Protected Class Harassment” and to clarify that Protected Class Harassment is an offense which may lead to disciplinary action. Ms. Russo posed a question

regarding possible disciplinary consequences of harassing someone who is identified as being in a protected class, as opposed to not being in a protected class. Dr. Carnemolla answered that this definition encompasses everyone and it is comprehensive enough to **not** be excluding anyone, so the consequences could be the same.

An additional update was discussed that is pursuant to changes in Connecticut law regarding the legalization of cannabis under certain circumstances. The proposed revisions clarify that the sale or distribution of less than one kilogram of cannabis would not be subject to mandatory expulsion pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-233d. There was a brief discussion about Mandatory Expulsion and which offenses carry ‘what’ discipline. Dr. Carnemolla explained that based on the severity and level of disruption to the educational process, suspension and expulsion are always an option, but restorative practices are always a first choice, especially with younger students.

***Ms. Young made a motion to bring revised policy 5144, Discipline, to the full board as presented for approval. Ms. Singh seconded.
Motion passed 4-0-0***

C. Policy 5131.911- Bullying

Dr. Carnemolla stated that this policy was revised to include expanded definitions of Discrimination and Harassment. A discussion ensued regarding a question about any specific definition of Teen Dating. Dr. Carnemolla explained that there is no actual definition of Teen Dating, as defined by the state. That being said, if there is a potential occurrence of Discrimination and Harassment pertaining to Teen Dating, multiple factors would be considered including what has been stated by a victim, as well as what may be learned from any others involved, etc. Dr. Carnemolla also stated that the policy is comprehensive and there is no technicality where any students would **not** be covered. Further discussion ensued regarding Cyberbullying and group texting. There was a question raised as to who gets disciplined when there is a group text if there is bullying involved. Dr. Carnemolla answered that this would be handled on a case-by-case scenario and situationally dependent.

***Ms. Young made a motion to bring revised policy 5131.911, Bullying Prevention and Intervention as presented, to the full board for approval. Ms. Singh seconded.
Motion passed 4-0-0***

D. Policy 6146.1- Basis for Grading, Weighted Grading and Calculation of Grade Point Averages

Dr. Carnemolla reminded the committee that this policy was recently updated. Since it is already a comprehensive policy that has been working well for the High School, she is recommending that the district maintain the language of this policy. Shipman & Goodwin has suggested adding verbiage to the existing policy regarding the CAAP - CT Automatic Acceptance Program which calculates a GPA on a different rubric, to identify students who would be automatically accepted into State Colleges. The revisions presented regarding the CAAP will allow this existing policy to remain compliant with the law, as well as the CAAP program.

***Ms. Young made a motion to bring revised policy, 6146.1 Basis for Grading, Weighted Grading and Calculation of Grade Point Average, to the full board as presented for approval. Ms. Singh seconded.
Motion passed 4-0-0***

E. Policy 6146 - Graduation Requirements

Dr. Carnemolla stated that this policy has to be revised to reflect the state minimum of 25 credits to graduate. Since the minimum to graduate is 25 credits, the minimum number to be taken each year has to be changed to equal the 25 credits. Ms. Young questioned if this would be updated in the student handbooks, given to counselors and pushed out to parents. Dr. Carnemolla assured the committee that updates are reflected in the student handbooks, the High School Course of Studies and also online in the policy.

***Ms. Young made a motion to bring revised policy 6146 Graduation Requirements, to the full board as presented for approval. Ms. Singh seconded.
Motion passed 4-0-0***

VI. Future Items for Review

Ms. Young stated that there are no items for review at this time.

VI. Adjournment

***Ms. Thej Singh motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm, Ms. Russo seconded
Motion passed 4-0-0***

Minutes prepared by Christine Sardinskas, Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Young, Policy Committee Chair

September 21, 2023

Minutes approved by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary

Minutes are approved at the next Policy meeting, and any corrections to the minutes, if needed, will be made at that time.