

POLICY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 2009, 5:30 P.M.
WARREN COUNTY CAREER CENTER

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Kimberly Angove
Mr. Thomas Knapp
Mr. Jeff Lockett

Dr. Jack Martin
Mrs. Katherine Oudinot
Mr. Arthur Stewart

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mrs. Kirsten Turfitt
Mr. David Wortman

Mrs. Donna Zariczny

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Robert Terrill
Mrs. Rosemarie Green
Dr. Karen Pascale
Mr. Petter Turnquist
Mr. Gary Weber
Ms. Lauren Vokish, WTO

Mrs. Amanda Hetrick
Mrs. Amy Stewart
Mr. Brian Collopy
Mr. Jack Werner
Mrs. Ruth Huck

1. Opening Activities

1.01 Call to Order

The Policy Committee meeting of the Warren County School District Board of School Directors was called to order by Mrs. Angove, President, at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Warren County Career Center, 347 East Fifth Avenue, Warren, Pennsylvania.

1.02 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

3. New Business

3.01 Policy Number 10465, titled – Student Participation & Coaches Needed

Discussion: Athletic directors have requested changes to the Student Participation & Coaches Needed policy. The changes would allow for additional assistant coaches to programs that qualify.

Action: The committee moves this policy forward to the full board.

Motion: That the Board of School Directors approves on first reading Policy Number 10465, titled – Student Participation & Coaches Needed.

Attachments: Policy Number 10465, titled – Student Participation & Coaches Needed with draft revisions.

3.02 Options for Updating Policy

Discussion: Dr. Terrill reported that he spoke to PSBA regarding its policy services since the last meeting. There are a number of options available, but the one that best seemed to fit the district's needs is the policy manual development service which costs \$7800 and the maintenance program that accompanies it. The first year the maintenance program would be free and each year there after would cost \$950. The service includes analyzing the board minutes for the last 6 years, reviewing district documents, contracts, etc. PSBA writes a customized first draft for review by the Board. After adoption of the policy, the district participates in a maintenance program that consists of monthly policy updates, reviewing board minutes each month, reviewing policy adoptions each month, sending a newsletter each month with recommendations for new policies to comply with federal and state laws. Advantages include that PSBA has the wherewithal, expertise as well as servicing a large number of districts in Pennsylvania.

The second option is to have in-house policy development similar to what is taking place now. An administrator would need to be designated to oversee the development and compilation of new policies, monthly policy updates to comply with federal and state regulations, plan for the monthly policy committee meetings, coordinate with the board attorneys, type, collate and disseminate updated policies. Costs are undetermined at this time, but would include attorneys' fees at the current rates. Advantages include being less expensive and the downside is that the district does not have the third party review capability.

Mr. Stewart stated that when he was hired, the job description included that the solicitor was to stay abreast of all the current Pennsylvania laws and keep the policy manual updated and apprise the Board of other items for which they should be aware. Through enrollment in a variety of services, he was able to stay abreast of the current changes to law. As a member of the National School Board Association, he was able to get the information he needed and Chris Byham is a member of NSBA. The same types of items were available to him through his membership in PSBA. He also received copies of school law cases two or three times a month and would attend seminars. As a result his law firm kept the policy manual updated. Approximately seven or eight years ago the policy manual was reviewed page by page with administration to weed out unnecessary policies and update others.

Mr. Lockett questioned what other districts Chris Byham serves besides Warren County.

Mr. Stewart stated that he handles Kane School District and believes he does work for Forest Area School District.

Mrs. Angove thought the board was going to get advice from Chris on how he handles policy for other districts.

Dr. Terrill offered to talk to Chris regarding the other districts.

Mrs. Oudinot requested to know who at PSBA is responsible, or is there an attorney at PSBA involved with the service?

Mr. Stewart offered that he thought there was a disconnection between the policy department and the legal department. There are three attorneys at PSBA, and he declined to finish his thoughts.

Mr. Lockett wanted to know if the board came up with a new policy, does PSBA handle the writing, construction and all for the new policy or does the district do that itself and does PSBA review it.

Dr. Terrill stated that the Board could decide what it wants for the policy language, have the district solicitor review it, and send it to PSBA for review and recommendations.

It was Mr. Stewart's opinion that if a policy was sent by PSBA it will not be customized to look anything like our policy manual. It repeats state statutes, federal statutes, Dept. of Ed regulations, and it is a big document.

Mrs. Angove stated that there is not rush to make a decision and requested that Dr. Terrill talk to Chris Byham to get his input regarding policy development.

3.03 Disciplinary Policy Update

Mrs. Hetrick informed the Board that a meeting is scheduled for Thursday to review the proposed changes to the policy with the district Solicitor, Chris Byham, and Mrs. Martin is conferring with Special Education Counsel, Mr. Joseph. The changes will be presented to the Board at the February Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Lockett made a comment that principals are confusing policy and procedure when they state that they have new policy. They need to understand that it is the Board who is making the decisions regarding policy.

4. Informational Items

4.01 Policy Discussion

Dr. Martin requested that Policy 4601 be corrected on the website. The policy and the title do not match.

Dr. Martin would like to finalize the budget policy with the long-range budget planning and capital piece for Policy 4020.

Mr. Lockett stated that the Finance Committee will be looking at Policies 4505 and 4601 and may make recommendations for the policy committee.

5. Closing Activities

5.01 Next Meeting Date – February 24, 2009, 5:30 p.m. – Warren County Career Center

5.02 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth A. Huck, Board Secretary