

POLICY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
OCTOBER 27, 2009  
WARREN COUNTY CAREER CENTER  
347 EAST FIFTH AVENUE, WARREN, PA

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Kimberly Angove  
Mr. Thomas Knapp  
Mr. Jeff Lockett  
Dr. Jack Martin

Mrs. Katherine Oudinot  
Mr. Arthur Stewart  
Mrs. Kirsten Turfitt

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. John Grant

Mrs. Donna Zariczny

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Robert Terrill  
Mrs. Amanda Hetrick  
Mrs. Amy Stewart  
Mr. Brian Collopy  
Mrs. Rosemarie Green  
Ms. Colin Kyler, WTO

Dr. Karen Pascale  
Mr. Petter Turnquist  
Mr. Chris Byham  
Mrs. Diane Martin  
Mrs. Ruth Huck

1.0 Opening Activities

1.1 Call to Order

The Policy Committee 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.

1.2 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2.0 Old Business

2.1 Policy Number 7610, titled – Personnel Records

**Discussion:** This policy was approved on first reading at the October 12, 2009, board meeting. There are two additional proposed changes to the policy: the first change is in line 20 with the words “health record” being deleted at Mr. Wassell’s recommendation, and the legal reference was added at line 39. Dr. Martin wanted to make sure that this policy did not restrict the district in keeping either paper or electronic copies. Mr. Byham was certain that nothing in policy or code would preclude the district from storing the information electronically.

**Action:** The committee sent the policy for second reading with the recommended changes.

**Motion:** That the Board of School Directors approves on second reading Policy Number 7610, titled – Personnel Records.

2.2 Policy Number 3140, titled – Disciplinary Suspension

**Discussion:** Mrs. Angove stated that Mr. Wassell did review this policy and made some changes. The last paragraph was deleted and wording was changed to the “superintendent will inform the board as soon as practicable” instead of “within a 24 hour period.” The labor attorney suggested that there may be reasons why the superintendent could not make the announcement within 24 hours. It should also be understood that there may be times when the board members cannot be informed of the details of the suspension because of the grievance process. The superintendent and board president will determine if it is appropriate for the board to hear the details of the suspension.

Mr. Stewart asked that the entire board be informed unless the grievance issue poses itself as a problem. The wording in the last line will state, “the superintendent will apprise the entire board.” It was suggested that Mr. Wassell insert language with the specifics of why or why not a report of the details of a suspension should be given. It was requested that the superintendent will at the next regular meeting inform the board of the suspension.

Dr. Martin suggested that the wording appear as follows, “At the next regular board meeting following the suspension, the superintendent shall inform the board of his/her action.”

Mrs. Turfitt asked if the superintendent was still going to inform the board president as soon as was practicable, and then inform the entire board at the next regular meeting. The members agreed that was the intent.

Mr. Lockett asked if the word “employees” should be added to the title of the policy for clarification. Mr. Stewart and Dr. Martin pointed out that this policy is included in the employee section of the policy manual.

**Action:** This policy will move to the November board meeting for first reading.

**Motion:** That the Board of School Directors approves on first reading proposed changes to Policy Number 3140, titled – Disciplinary Suspension.

2.3 Policy Number 7115, titled - Employment

**Discussion:** Mrs. Angove reminded the members this policy came before the committee at its September meeting. There was a considerable amount of language from Pa Code contained in the policy, and Mr. Byham was asked to review the policy, look at the corresponding PSBA policy addressing employment, and come back with recommended revisions to this policy.

Dr. Martin was concerned about situations where the recommended candidate does not fall within the confines of one of the labor agreements. The policy infers that the administration will make a recommendation to the candidate on salary and benefits based on the labor agreements. There are a handful of instances where the district does not have a labor agreement to cover the position. This poses a potential problem when the offer is made and when the board meets to determine what it is willing to pay. He asked if this needs to be addressed in policy, and if so, how. Mrs. Turfitt responded that there is flexibility within the agreements to determine the salary and benefits for just such a situation.

Dr. Terrill suggested adding wording to line 39 such as, “the administration will apprise the candidate that the Board has the final decision on all salaries and compensation packages.”

Mr. Stewart stated he would prefer not having such a statement in policy for the reason that it would become cumbersome with regard to supplemental salaries.

Dr. Pascale noted in line 16 "a qualified applicant" should be changed to "all qualified applicants."

Mr. Stewart was confused by the use of the words "inside," "without" and "within" in line 16 and suggested they be changed to a "qualified candidate employed by the district," and at the end of the line drop the word "inside". He then questioned what the sentence really added to the policy.

Mrs. Oudinot suggested taking the "s" off of "applicants" so the line reads "a qualified applicant" and included the additional change of "and for which he or she" in the same line.

Mr. Stewart questioned if the district wasn't already giving the same consideration to all applicants and if the statement was needed. As it reads it really does not tell anyone anything. If the reason for lines 16-17 is to open a position up to the widest pool of candidates as possible, the statement has already been made previously.

Dr. Martin suggested the line should read, "All qualified applicants will be given consideration."

Mr. Stewart had concerns with the last sentence of the interview paragraph where it says, "the Board will exercise oversight to ensure that this policy is being adhered to," stating this is poor language to insert in any policy, because it singles this policy out for Board insurance which can be a two edged problem. First it creates an affirmative duty which can expose the Board to liability, but more importantly, the Board has an obligation to oversee the entire policy and to single out this section suggests somehow the Board does not have the obligation or there is some super-obligation in this particular policy. His preference is to eliminate the last sentence.

Dr. Terrill agreed lines should be eliminated

It was pointed out that line 41 contains some grammatical problems in that the meaning can be misconstrued to imply that the team must select who the superintendent recommends or vice versa. The second sentence on the next page states "a Board member must abstain." Mr. Stewart contends that the Board cannot tell a member when he/she must abstain. It would be better to change "must" to "should" or take the sentence out.

The paragraph that begins with "applicant's misstatements," the word "shall" should be changed to "may."

On line 27 there is a grammatical difficulty. It should state that the "superintendent is authorized."

Under "supplemental requirements" subsection B - line 41, "contractual requirements should be followed without exception," one should assume contractual requirements should be followed everywhere and to state it here sets it out unequally. Mr. Stewart suggested that it be eliminated.

Mr. Lockett called attention to line 12 on page 2, pointing out there are two spaces between "the" and "recommended." It was also mentioned that there are other spacing problems on page 3 that need cleaned up.

Dr. Terrill recommended that line 37 should be clarified and state that the Human Resource Office is responsible for the discussion of the position, contracts, and benefits, emphasizing the Board makes the final decision.

Line 41-42 states it is the superintendent's responsibility to make the final decision, and rarely does the superintendent overrule the committees' recommendations; but if there is indication and the superintendent has doubts about the candidate's morals, ability to do the job, or qualifications, the superintendent should not be forced to bring only one candidate to the Board. Recommendations should be presented once all references and other pertinent information is verified for qualification.

**Action:** This policy will come back to the Policy Committee November 24 to review the recommended changes.

**Motion:** None

3.0 New Business

3.1 Policy 4130, titled - Local Purchasing

**Discussion:** Mr. Lockett stated that this policy does not necessarily apply to contracts that are bid, and wondered if the board should consider adding a line that this does not apply to work that is bid? Mr. Byham gave his opinion that it will apply if the bids are truly equal. No other board members offered comment regarding the need for a change.

**Action:** There will be no further action.

**Motion:** None

6.0 Closing Activities

6.1 Next Meeting Date - November 24, 2009, 5:30 p.m. - Warren County Career Center

6.2 Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth A. Huck  
Board Secretary