

School District No. 1J, Multnomah County, Oregon
Board Committee Meeting of August 5, 2019

A meeting of the board's Policy and Governance Committee meeting came to order at 8:00 am at the call of Committee Chair Brim-Edwards in the Willamette Conference Room at the Blanchard Education Service Center, 501 N Dixon Street, Portland, Oregon, 97227.

There were present:

Board Members

Julia Brim-Edwards-Committee Chair
Amy Kohnstamm-via phone, Committee Member
Rita Moore, Committee Member
Andrew Scott

Staff and other Attendees

Guadalupe Guerrero-Superintendent
Mary Kane-Senior Legal Counsel
Liz Large-Interim General Counsel
Rosanne Powell- Senior Board Manager
Kara Lazcano-Huff-Confidential Executive Assistant to the School Board
Carol Hawkins-Senior Director of Employee and Labor Relations
Elizabeth Thiel-Vice President of Portland Association of Teachers

Professional Conduct between Staff and Students Policy discussion

Committee Chair Brim-Edwards reviewed actions that were taken since the previous committee meeting, including briefing the new Board members on the draft policy and soliciting their questions and suggestions. As a result of this and previous Committee discussion, Liz Large noted that one of the substantive changes throughout the policy is clarifying the role and obligations of volunteers within the policy, as much of the policy and behavior expectations applies to all adults working with students.

The group discussed the language around "even if the student is no longer a minor", and whether there should be clarification regarding when a student is no longer considered a student. It was decided to add language to the policy as a clarifying point from Senate Bill 155 which defines "Student" and clarifies when a student is no longer considered a student.

Social media and what constitutes approved social media platforms was discussed. It was generally agreed that restricted media platforms are ones that are designed to eliminate history, such as Snapchat. Staff can have social media accounts that are used primarily to communicate with students and parents, but they must have an account separate from their personal account. The policy should be broad, to allow the district Administrative Directive to further clarify or specify and to evolve as digital platforms and apps evolve.

Director Moore expressed that the example of personal communication with students is very specific and limiting. Elizabeth Thiel agreed that as a whole the section has a feel that personal communications is completely not okay. It was discussed that the policy should allow for teachers to provide support and build pivotal relationships with relationships. Committee Chair

Brim-Edwards suggested moving the section, making it section 4, which would bump subsequent sections, so that the positives of building supportive relationships is discussed first and followed with prohibited activities and behaviors. It was additionally decided to add back in the deleted paragraph regarding seeking guidance regarding personal communications, even if it is redundant, as the policy is so long and so some redundancy is useful.

The Committee and attendees discussed hugs, their role in education, and when and in what context they should be restricted. Liz Large stated that from a legal point of view, to fulfill the desired outcome of a policy, hugs do not need to be prohibited. It was decided to remove statements restricting hugs and change the clarification regarding appropriate touch to “legitimate educational purposes” to “legitimate purposes”.

The concern was raised that the policy is restrictive in regards to private spaces, specifically the bathroom spaces. It was decided to add a sentence in the second paragraph of the policy as an intro to physical spaces and add a second example as a way to show that the policy is more broad. Staff would work to take the suggestions and to resolve the language to make the section clearer. The Portland Association of Teacher’s representative provided useful context for staff presence in bathrooms in some circumstances.

Director Brim-Edwards was asked if there were any major issues with the remaining sections. Director Scott specifically pointed out that “duty to report” section is very important part and wanted to make sure that there was no other feedback regarding the section.

Student Conduct and Discipline Policy

The committee did not have time to discuss this policy and it was deferred to the next meeting.

Program for Disruptive Students Policy

Committee Chair Brim-Edwards asked Liz Large to confirm that there won’t be a conflict if the Program for Disruptive Students Policy is rescinded prior to the completion of the Student Conduct Discipline Policy, which is meant to replace it. Liz Large stated that there should not be any conflicts.

No Public Comment.

The next meeting for the Policy and Governance Meeting will be held in August.

Chair Brim-Edwards adjourned the committee at 9:41.

Submitted by:

Kara Lazcano-Huff
Confidential Executive Assistant to the School Board