

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

6:00 PM

Location: SAU Finch Conference Room

Minutes

Committee Members: Crista Salamy (Chair), Tom Burgess, Katherine Heck, Kevin Pobst, Doug Sutherland, Janine Lesser

Present: Crista Salamy, Tom Burgess, Doug Sutherland, Janine Lesser, Dick Dunning, Dr. Ann Forrest, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Kat Foecking, Tim Conway, Rick Simoneau, Heather McKillop, Katherine Heck (6:27 pm)

1. Call to order

Crista Salamy called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Approval of the October 18, 2022 Minutes

Doug Sutherland moved to approve the minutes of October 18, 2022. Tom Burgess seconded. Unanimous.

3. Policy Review

- JICA: Student Dress Code

Tim Conway asked specifically what should be discussed tonight. Crista Salamy asked administrators if the policy is too broad or not broad enough. Should the policy be more restrictive or less restrictive? Does it fit well with the handbooks?

Tim Conway said that the current policy connects to the handbook. Kat Foecking said that the only place where it differs between the two middle schools is with the restriction on wearing hats. Kimberly Saunders asked if principals need more in the dress code policy.

Crista Salamy asked if students dressed in furies is a distraction to learning or is it okay. How often do students dress this way?

Tim Conway said that he only needs to address dress code one or twice a month. He sees how it could be a hornet's nest.

Heather McKillop said that the policy is vague. When meeting with a student and there is a drug, weapon, or other reference on clothing, it is discussed. Dress code procedures tend to target one gender over another. There are students who are in crop tops. Clothing fits differently on different body types. Thought is needed when addressing it or not.

Students at the high school are allowed to wear hats which has been helpful on occasion to identify students.

Language that relates to the disruption to education is vague.

Doug Sutherland asked if the dress is disruptive or does the focus of who might be offended need to shift. How do students take it?

Kimberly Saunders said that dress code violations are never a matter of inappropriateness. A student is either in compliance with dress code or in violation of dress code.

Tim Conway said that he has done a lot of proactive work about dress code with students. Different clothing is appropriate to different people.

Rick Simoneau reported dealing with only a few dress code violations where the print was either drug or alcohol related. The students turned the shirt inside out.

Janine Lesser asked Heather McKillop how often dress code violations need to be dealt with.

Heather said that typically the Assistant Principals deal with the issue.

Rick Simoneau estimated three times this year.

Kat Foecking reported having two conversations. One was to review the policy with students for better understanding. If a teacher feels a student is not to dress code they have been given the language to address it.

Dick Dunning asked if policies address covering the midriff. Kat Foecking shared the handbook language relative to what must be covered.

Dick Dunning said that when he was principal the “no hat, no bandanas, no hoods rule” was a safety issue. It is a perception about what is and what isn’t acceptable. Dick said that students should remove a hat when entering a building.

Tom Burgess said that it sounds like no major changes in this area are needed and that what is in place is working.

Rick Simoneau said that dress code issues are low on the scale of what he has to deal with.

Crista Salamy said that ConVal’s dress code policy is broad compared to the NHSBA policy.

Doug Sutherland said that discussion about hats and earbuds has been discussed in the past. He recently had lunch at the high school and noticed students were wearing earbuds in. He asked the students if teachers had an issue and the students said that if the teacher wants them removed, they remove them. Is it a problem?

Rick said that students have to have one earbud removed during passing time and lunch time.

Katherine Heck said that there is a trend to adopt uniform policies to mitigate some of what is being seen to create a learning environment that does not take time away. She spoke to equity issues with hoods or hats allowed in one building and not in another.

Principals and assistant principals exited the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Crista Salamy asked the committee if change was needed to this policy.

Katherine Heck suggested reviewing other districts’ policies and incorporating them into our culture and climate.

Crista Salamy said that if we want to explore this, administration should be a part of it.

Janine Lesser said that the administration just shared that they have very few problems with dress code related issues. They are able to manage it with the information in the handbooks.

Katherine Heck said that one school allowing hats and hoods is an equity issue for her.

Dick Dunning said that consensus on midriff should be consistent. He said that the hat rule has changed over time at the high school and middle school level. Hats were not allowed formerly and then allowed at the high school and one middle school. He suggested consistency.

Crista Salamy said that our policy does not address midriffs or hats, it is in the handbooks, which were approved by the board. Do we want to change the dress code policy?

Doug Sutherland said that he is interested in seeing what other schools do but is also cognizant that administrators have set up a community that is working for them. If there was a big outcry of dress code issues he would be inclined to look at it more deeply.

Janine Lesser said that we had four administrators present who told the committee that they have a different focus and it is working for them.

Tom Burgess said that it is always informative to look at what other districts are doing and bringing the principals back in to discuss as a group.

Katherine Heck cited reasons for implementing dress code language. Students might be involved to hear what they have to say. Some students are uncomfortable. Administrators have a lot on their plates and this might be looked at a later time.

Doug Sutherland said that the high school there is a handbook expectation and a policy and there is a way to deal with it by going to administration.

It was agreed to keep all of this in mind and address further as needed.

Dick Dunning said that the Board sets policy. It is a good idea to look at what other districts are doing.

Katherine Heck agreed to forward policies on dress code from other districts to the Policy Committee.

Janine Lesser said that the second paragraph of the NHSBA policy might be considered for addition to the ConVal policy. It reads “The dress code within each school shall be administered fairly, consistently, and equally to all students. The dress code shall not be enforced in a manner that discriminates against a particular viewpoint or results in a disproportionate application of the dress code relative to students’ gender, gender identity, sexuality, race, ethnicity, household income, or body type or size”.

Further discussion was tabled.

4. 1st Read Policies

- JFAM: Education of Military Children & Military Connected Students

5. Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II (If Required)

6. Policy Status Update:

Under review/revision by Administration:

- IHBG: Home Education Instruction
- JJJ: Access to Public School by Nonpublic, Charter Schools, and Home Educated Students
- JLDDB: Suicide Prevention and Response
- KEC/IJL/(IGE): Reconsideration of Instructional Materials/Instructional and Educational Media/Library Collection Development/Library Collection Development/Parental Objections to Specific Course Material
- IKL: Academic Integrity and Honesty – Education Committee Recommendation
- BBBF: Student Board Members (Reworked from Oct. 18th meeting)
- JLCB: Immunization of Students (Reworded and Re-lettered)

Under review by Legal:

- JLCF: Wellness
- IHBAA: Evaluation Requirements for Students

Under review by Budget and Property:

- Capital Plan Policy
- DJ: Purchasing
- DJE: Bidding Requirements

Under review with Nurses:

- JLCA: Physical Examination of Students
- JLCD: Administration of Medication

Future Agenda Items:

- Fall Update Items

Janine Lesser moved to adjourn at 6:51 pm. Doug Sutherland seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok