

2014-10-02-PM-SC-PMRS-MIN Approved: 10/2/14 2:40 p.m.

Lexington School Committee's Policy Manual Subcommittee
October 2, 2014 at 1:30pm
Central Administration Building, Upper Level Conference Room
146 Maple Street

Minutes

Meeting came to order at 1:32 p.m.

Present: Judy Crocker, Jessie Steigerwald

1. Review and Discussion of Section B based on input of Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business

First, observed "B" is a typographical error in this agenda as Ms. Dunn's input is all regarding section "D".

Reviewed this morning's discussion with Dr. Ash regarding proposed edits to sections: DBD, DBJ, DD, DGA, DI, DJ, DJE. In the morning meeting, we agreed to most items. DGA will require follow-up with Normal Cohen.

Dr. Ash proposed edits to DBD and we reviewed these. We shared some concerns about trying to balance Ms. Dunn's and Dr. Ash's concerns.

We support Dr. Ash's suggestions to strike certain language – but also will recommend adding Ms. Dunn's recommended language back in – but moving it to the new section V as follows:

DBD: Section III –
strike III.b.i. (can't promise in policy to continue level services if funds not available)
strike III.b.iii {can't promise to always move technology forward in policy}
strike III.c. (can't promise to ... staffing guidelines)
strike III.d. (can't promise to ... capital assets)

Where we have proposed to add...

V. The annual budget resources are identified collaboratively through a series of Summit Meetings between the School Committee, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager for Finance, with input from both finance committees, the Appropriation Committee and the Capital Expenditures Committee.

Suggest adding below that:

“In an annual collaborative planning process between the School Committee and the Superintendent, the School Committee will identify annual budget priorities that the Superintendent will include when crafting a recommended budget.”

When resources permit, the School Committee will strive for continuous improvement and the Superintendent’s proposed budget will include:

Include sufficient operating and capital funds to

(i) continue the current level of services

(ii) move the district forward in meeting the increasing demands for technology in our different education settings

(iii) Ensure professional guidelines will met

(iv) Maintain capital assets in order to support the instructional program, protect the physical assets of the Town of Lexington, and ensure the health and safety of our students and staff.

2. Review and Discussion of Section C based on input of Superintendent
Dr. Ash said he has already prepared a new organizational chart and we will incorporate it.

Section C is all ready for Jim.

3. Review and Discussion of Section I –

Questions for Superintendent

- ID: School Day
- Add to policy: School hours will be posted prominently on web pages, and will be published in school handbooks.
- How does METCO program coordinate with School Day policy? What are expectations for arrival and dismissal?
- Please note policy says “not admitted into school building until 15 minutes prior to start of school day”
 - Consider adding: Could add “No staff supervision will be provided prior to this time. Families or guardians who deliver children to school property prior to this time must chaperone minors under age 18.”

- We don't have clarity for parent about "opening time" and "instruction time" and we need policy to clarify this. Consider adding in third paragraph between first and 2nd sentences:
Academic instruction will begin at ___ and will continue until ___.
 - Academic instruction continues until the stated close time of school.
Dismissal procedures will not begin until the stated close time of school.
 - IE: Indications for Pre-K and LABBB?
 - IGA: The School Committee requires the Superintendent to establish a long-term plan for ongoing curriculum review so that no area falls into neglect. We expect all areas, from the "Core" subjects to the Arts, PE, etc. to undergo regular and thorough curriculum review.
 - [We would like Carol Pilarski to provide a recommendation here.]
 - IGB: Under "Support Services" we need proper title ...
 - IHA BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM –
Note – does not include library & it should. What else is missing?
This relates exactly to the work we are undertaking in considering value of dedicated art and music space. We also include instrumental instruction.
 - IHAE: Phys Ed: time?
We want to add language that talks about helping students develop skills to manage unhealthy stress, executive function skills, resiliency and mental health strategies for life.
 - IHAM: We need information for health education instruction.... (Carol Pilarski)
IHAMA: Parental Notification – Please review Lexington's 1997 policy vs. MASC– we lean to state policy.
- IHB: Check with Ellen Sugita or Carol, please – see BOLD language at end
IHBAA #12 has small edit: "will also simultaneously observe"
 - We suggest moving the "NOTE" into the policy as point of clarification. Question: Do parents receive this information from LPS? If so, how? When?
- IHBF: Check title in second paragraph "Director of Pupil Services" – what is LPS equivalent?
- IHBG: Homeschooling – compare Lexington & MASC
 IHBGA: Homeschooling Health – add instruction about stress management (is Lexington only – but no date of adoption -)
- IHBH: Alternative Programs – please provide brief description for alternative programs and state committee approved goals and objections for each program.
- IHCF: Extended Day policy (approved 1994) looks out of date. Please review

IJ: Instructional Materials: How are textbooks selected? Supplemental library materials?

Note: This MASC policy squarely places responsibility on SC for furnishing the materials appropriate to the needs of the school program (vs. donations from PTA/PTO).

IJJ: Note – best practice encourages involvement by students and parents. How are they now included? (Curriculum review groups? Have had some representation by parents in the past – what is current status?)

IJND – Please review with Carol Pilarski and Tom Plati.

IJNDB(+) – Please compare ACCEPTABLE USE from Lexington and MASC. Does Lex. Have K-5 permission slip? Not in the packet.

IJNDD – 2010 policy needs updates - add Twitter. (Adam Goldberg initiative at LHS...)

IJOA – Field trip policy needs to be updated – see MASC versions.

Note: Brookline has information to address concerns about swimming pools in hotels – whether children can swim – or are allowed to be in a pool / chaperoned or not. Seat belts should be required for every student in any means of transportation where seat belts are available.

IJOB – We should be clear to not permit speakers who promote commercial purposes or self-marketing.

IJOC – Add:

“While volunteering adds to our schools, it is a privilege to serve our students – not a right. Volunteers shall agree to abide by confidentiality principles and will not repeat information about students when they leave the school building. Volunteers are present to serve all students, not specifically their own children. Volunteers work under the supervision and authority of staff members. Staff members alone are responsible for managing the class and students. At no time will volunteers engage in any form of discipline. Volunteers who observe, hear, or learn anything that concerns them about a student or school-matter will first, and in a timely fashion, bring these concerns to the attention of the classroom teacher or principal in the school.”

Add: “Volunteers serve as role models when they serve in a school building and are required to comply with any and all safety procedures, including fire drills, evacuation drills, lockdown procedures, school building sign-in procedures, CORI or other required procedures.”

IK & IKB - Needs work. We need to talk about this with Dr. Ash. To promote student learning, we need to establish a time limit so students

receive meaningful feedback on homework, tests, quizzes, projects, and other academic work. Example: 10 days from date homework was turned in to teacher.

Parents and students have expressed ongoing concerns that reports are crucial to student success but timely notification is critical. Without timely notice, students do not have sufficient time to succeed – and families are not able to support their children. Mr. Benghiat and student representative Abby Schwarz both drew attention to this concern at recent School Committee meeting. Ms. Schwarz reported (in fall 2014) that she had not yet received return of some schoolwork from spring 2014.

IKEB: Do we award high school credit to eighth grade students?
1988 Lexington policy.... Is it out of date? What is Carnegie Credit?

IKF: Needs work – graduation requirements. We would like input from Carol Pilarski and Laura Lasa. Request conversation with them. Also need to tie in requirements for Community Service.

IL: Evaluation of Instructional Programs: How is this done now? Would like information about study of high school / drop-out records. Also #5 – how is teacher and parent evaluation collected now? Or would this be new here?

ILD: Educational Research – needs work but we do want this policy. To discuss with Dr. Ash. There have been research projects in LPS in recent years and families should be notified. There also should be approval policy but this version feels a little out of date.

IMA: Add:

“The School Committee is proud of our diverse community and all educators will participate in professional development to help promote better understanding, and a wide range of strategies to be culturally aware, sensitive to differing viewpoints and backgrounds, and attentive to the need to be aware of bias.”

(can improve upon this)

IMD: Needs work – School Ceremonies and Observances - needs larger discussion around holidays, holiday recognition...

IMG: Connect language with the language in the School Traffic Safety & Mitigation policy.

Add “Domesticated animals on school property under town by-law Sect. 187-96 during arrival and dismissal and no unrestrained animal at any time on

school property. All owners are responsible for cleaning up after their animals if they are brought on school property.”

Legal references:

Animals on School Grounds: Town By-Laws Sect. 187-96 Prohibited activities, Clause L.

Restraint of dogs required; licenses: Town By-Laws: Sect. 9-2.

Question about conservation / recreation facilities.

Dr. Ash – will you connect with Carl Valente for coordination with Recreation Dept. & Conservation Dept. ?

4. Individual Policies including Chapter 222 and Non-Residency
5. Review of minutes from July 22, Aug 5, Sept 2. Added names of those present to 9/2/14 minutes. Approved all unanimously.

Also reviewed minutes for both of today’s meetings:

October 2nd 8:45 a.m. meeting and October 2nd 1:30 p.m.

Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 3:20 p.m.

Upcoming next meeting: Minutes from Sept 23, Sept 29)

Policy Manual Review – Process Information

The Policy Subcommittee is actively engaged in reviewing all School Committee policies in consultation with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. Each section of the manual will pass through three stages:

- Review by the Policy Subcommittee
- Presentation to, and review by the full School Committee
- Approval in form by the School Committee

The School Committee intends to complete this policy manual review process by June, at which time all sections will be formally adopted by a vote of the full School Committee.

Thereafter, one third of the manual will be reviewed each year to keep the manual updated.