

Lexington School Committee Policy Manual Subcommittee
School Administration Building
Lower Level Conference Room 2A
146 Maple Street

Approved Minutes July 22, 2014 (Approved 8.2.14)

Meeting began at 12:00 Noon

Attending:

Judy Crocker (Lexington School Committee)

Jessie Steigerwald (Lexington School Committee)

Jim Hardy (Massachusetts Association of School Committees, "MASC")

Minutes were taken by Jessie Steigerwald

1. Plan for assembling Lexington's updated Policy Manual

a. Subcommittee's role

The School Committee approved a charge for this Policy Manual Subcommittee at the June 17, 2014 public meeting and appointed Judy Crocker and Jessie Steigerwald as representatives for the School Committee. The purpose of the subcommittee is outlined in the official Charge, and is to compile a complete and updated set of policies to govern the Lexington Public Schools in one official manual.

To this end, the Subcommittee will review existing policies, new policies proposed by MASC, and other policies that may be recommended for Lexington's updated Policy Manual. The Subcommittee will work with the Superintendent and appropriate staff people when reviewing policies that benefit from expertise in a specific area.

After the review of each section of the proposed Manual, the Subcommittee will forward recommendations to the full School Committee. The full School Committee's approval will be required to adopt any individual policy, as well as to approve the adoption of the complete and updated Manual at such a time as all policies have been reviewed.

b. Role of Massachusetts Association of School Committees (Consulting)

MASC has been hired as a consultant to advise and assist the Lexington School Committee as we establish a complete policy manual. The project began in 2010 with initial outreach to MASC, several conversations, and the execution of a contract to complete the work in a three year time period. The work was paused by the School Committee from 2012 until June 2014. MASC has formally agreed to extend the period of the contract for their services, to enable Lexington to move forward with MASC's assistance without any additional charge.

Mr. Hardy will serve as the liaison from MASC and will meet with the Policy Manual Subcommittee on a regular basis. To manage the project, MASC will provide 2 sections (out of 12 sections) at each meeting. Subcommittee members will review the assigned sections and then reconvene with Mr. Hardy to discuss any edits, questions or concerns. Mr. Hardy will update the documents, and the Subcommittee will then bring them to the attention of the full School Committee.

c. Draft project schedule

Discussion centered around a schedule that will move forward at a pace that permits careful review of every policy, input as needed from staff, but also a desire to make up for time lost over the last two years. The suggestion was to share two sections per month, beginning in September.

d. Superintendent's recommendations for policies in need of review in the 2014 - 2015 academic year

Ms. Crocker and Ms. Steigerwald met with Dr. Ash earlier in the day on July 22nd to ascertain his list of policies in need of attention. These included:

- Fingerprinting policy & CORI
- Non-Residency Policy
- Student Guidelines for Internet Use
- Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology in Schools
- Committing Funds Policy
- Fundraising and Gift Acceptance Policies
- Policies impacted by Ch. 222 change
- Mission Statement
- Impact of new Marijuana regulations on existing Policies

2. Review of Proposed Section A of Policy Manual: Foundations and Basic Commitments

We reviewed all policies provided by Jim Hardy in Section A and shared questions, edits and preferences.

We proposed, as a general preference, moving to MASC's formatting (organizing sections, headings, as well as style) where the MASC and Lexington versions are so similar that there is no difference in the substance of the policy. This will make it easier for this and future School Committees to keep the future Policy Manual updated when MASC sends their updates and notifications as state or federal laws change and impact specific parts of school policy sub-sections.

- AA will need some additional language to reflect history.
- We identified ACAB as in need of new personnel names.
- ACA is missing from Lexington and is required.
- AD will need updated Mission Statement when School Committee completes the work.

3. Review of Proposed Section B of Policy Manual: Board Governance and Operations

We reviewed all policies provided by Jim Hardy under Section B and shared questions, edits and preferences. Jim Hardy will return a mark-up of all changes for Section B and A for review.

4. MASC's recommendations regarding next sections

Jim Hardy distributed sections C “General School Administration” and D “Fiscal Management” for review, noting that there were many policies, especially in section D which Lexington did not have in place so there will be fewer instances for comparing two policies when reviewing these two sections. MASC provided a third copy for input from the administration on these two sections, which will be given to the Superintendent who will be able to arrange for input from appropriate staff members. Section C includes policies regarding the Superintendent. Section D includes policies regarding Finances.

Judy Crocker will deliver a copy of sections C and D to Dr. Ash at tonight’s School Committee meeting for staff input.

Next meeting will take place August 5th at 11:00 a.m. at Central Office.