

MINUTES OF THE WBOE POLICY COMMITTEE

October 8, 2019

District Office Conference Room

Beecher Road School South

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Genovese called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

IN ATTENDANCE: Maegan Genovese, Chair; Dan Cowan, Lynn Piascyk, Dr. Jeffrey Townsend, Board of Education Members; Robert F. Gilbert, Superintendent; Frank Cappiello, Police Chief; Al Pullo, Director of Business Operations/ Services; Joi Prud'homme, PTO; Kim Franklin, WEA; Lauren Esposito, Kristy Laydon, Joan Grogan, Mena McShan, community and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

Public Comment: Ms. Grogan hoped the Board would gather additional information prior to making any decisions on the SRO and parents would be informed and have an opportunity to voice their opinions.

Superintendent Gilbert provided background on the SRO and the structure presently utilized at Beecher. It was noted that these are preliminary discussions and that no decisions will be made this initial meeting. Discussion ensued for current budgetary constraints and the inclusion of the SRO in the operating budget versus the Police Department, daily responsibilities and job requirements for an SRO and what the differences might entail between an armed security guard and active duty police presence. Presently, there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Police Department and the District which specifically details performance responsibilities / limitations and costs.

Concerns were expressed that having a police presence provides an additional layer of security and safety given the daily challenges that exist for today's world. In addition, daily interaction with students and families allows the SRO to form different connections with the community. Further, confidentiality, access and transparency of information and community resources are important aspects of the functionality of this role. It was suggested that research be conducted and an outline developed that clearly delineates differences, job responsibilities, training, physical standards etc. between an armed security guard and an active duty police presence.

Police Chief Cappiello left the meeting (8:37 AM).

The Committee reviewed the following policies.

Policy 5000 Concepts and Roles in Student Policies. Concerns were expressed for inclusion of suggested language modifications regarding gender identification. It was suggested that a guest speaker, fully knowledgeable on this language be invited to attend the next meeting. While Policy 5000 is not a mandated policy, similar language appears in numerous other mandated policies. The suggested language is law which clearly defines protective classes under Title IX and as a public entity that receives state and federal funding, we are required to be compliant. It was further noted that we live in a world where genetic information is generated through a myriad of methods and we cannot parcel out and discriminate against genetic components. This language is law, will continue to appear and there is no reason to defer. It was agreed this policy would be reviewed again at the next meeting in January.

Policy 4112.5 Security Check / Fingerprinting. This policy outlines current practices and adheres to FBI standards for payroll and benefits background checks. It was agreed this policy would be referred for 30-day review at the October 21, 2019 regular meeting.

Ms. McShan noted that this was democracy in action and acknowledged the diversity that existed around the table for this discussion and encouraged further exploration of discrimination language prior to formulating a decision.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:07 AM