



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO: Members, Board of Education  
Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent**

**FROM: District 97 Policy Review Team**

**RE: Policy Review and Discussion**

**DATE: April 11, 2017**

The district's policy review team (Amy Felton, Rupa Datta and Chris Jasculca) is presenting the following information to the Board of Education tonight for review/discussion:

- Proposed changes/updates to additional policies and exhibits\* that were provided by the Policy Reference Education Subscription Service (PRESS) in its October 2016 Update Memo
- Proposed changes/updates to policies from section four of the district's manual that were identified during our tri-annual review process

\*The board reviewed revisions to several of the policies and exhibits from this update on February 28, 2017, and approved/adopted them on March 14, 2017

A second reading and approval/adoption of the revisions to these policies and exhibits are scheduled for the board meeting on April 26, 2017.

## **Proposed Changes to Policies and Exhibits from PRESS**

The policy review team reviewed/discussed the proposed changes to the policies and exhibits that were featured in the October 2016 Update Memo provided by PRESS. While the board does not normally review administrative procedures or exhibits, there are several exhibits dealing with school board procedures that PRESS recommends be included in the Board of Education section of the district's policy manual. In order to be included in the manual, these exhibits, along with any changes to them, must be reviewed and approved by the board.

In addition, several of the revisions outlined in the memo from PRESS were limited to the footnotes that correspond with the policies. Since changes to the footnotes do not require board action, the team did not include them in this document.

Below is a summary of the changes from PRESS' October 2016 update, as well as the team's recommendations.

- **Policy 2:125 (Board Member Compensation; Expenses) and three corresponding exhibits** – PRESS recommends that the following actions be taken in conjunction with the implementation of the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act, which is a “new law that prohibits reimbursements for entertainment expenses, and requires school districts to regulate expenses and pass a resolution regulating how travel, meal, and lodging expenses are reimbursed for officers and employees.”
  - Rename and revise the policy.
  - Rename and revise the first two corresponding exhibits.
  - Add a third exhibit.

PRESS recommended that districts contact their board attorneys for advice/guidance about how to proceed with several of the proposed revisions that were not required by law. With this recommendation in mind, the administration worked with representatives from Robbins Schwartz to strengthen the language featured in the policy and exhibits, and align the documents more closely with standard best practices.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the versions of the policy and exhibits that were drafted with the help of the board attorney. Once approved/adopted, we will work with PRESS to assign the appropriate numbers to the documents in accordance with the process it has in place for policies, procedures and exhibits that districts change in a substantive manner or write from scratch.

- **Policy 4:110 (Types of School Board Meetings)** – PRESS recommends making several revisions to the policy, legal references and cross references, most of which are based upon “the new foster care student transportation requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by ESSA, for all districts receiving Title I funds.” Other revisions include:
  - Adding a citation for ESEA to the legal references.
  - Changing the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in the legal references.
  - Changing the name of policy 5:100 from Staff Development to Staff Development Program in the cross references.
  - Adding policy 6:170 (Title I Programs) to the cross references.

In addition, since the district “does not seek state reimbursement for transportation to and from locations other than students’ residences,” the team and administration recommend the removal of the paragraph on page two of the policy that starts with “If a student is at a location...”

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the revisions to the policy as stated above.

- **Policy 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and cross references be updated to:
  - Align them with policy 5:260 (Student Teachers), which was updated in response to changes in the law.
  - Clarify School Code requirements for student teacher fingerprint-based criminal history records checks.
  - Address feedback from subscribers that “students doing field or clinical experience other than student teaching” not be in the sample default policy language since state law does not require them to have fingerprint-based criminal history records checks.

The main revisions being proposed by PRESS include:

- Changing the name of the policy from Convicted Child Sex Offender; Criminal Background Check and/or Screen; Notifications to Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications.
- Changing the title of the second subsection for the policy from “Criminal Background Check

and/or Screen” to “Screening.”

- Changing the first sentence of the subsection titled “Screening” from:

**The Superintendent or designee shall perform the criminal background check and/or screen required by State law or Board policy for employees; student teachers; students doing field or clinical experience other than student teaching; and contractors' employees who have direct, daily contact with one or more children.**

to:

**The Superintendent or designee shall perform fingerprint-based criminal history records information checks and/or screenings required by State law or Board policy for employees; student teachers; students doing field or clinical experience other than student teaching; and contractors' employees who have direct, daily contact with one or more children.**

- Adding policy 5:260 (Student Teachers) to the cross references.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

- **Policy 5:60 (Expenses) and two corresponding exhibits (the resolution applies to both 2:125 and 5:60)** – The changes made to this policy and its three corresponding exhibits mirror what was done with policy 2:125 (Board Member Compensation; Expenses) and its exhibits. Therefore, the team recommends that the board approve/adopt the versions of the policy and exhibits that were drafted with the help of the board attorney. Once approved/adopted, we will work with PRESS to assign the appropriate numbers to the documents in accordance with the process it has in place for policies, procedures and exhibits that districts change in a substantive manner or write from scratch.
- **Policy 5:100 (Staff Development Program)** – PRESS recommends making several non-substantive changes for quality assurance purposes. The most significant revision is the addition of policy 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students) to the cross references.

In addition to the changes from PRESS, the administration is recommending that a list of the in-services and/or trainings that are required by law be included in the policy. While adding this list is optional, it will help the board and community monitor the topics being covered during these sessions.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as described above.

- **Policy 5:260 (Student Teachers)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and legal references be updated to incorporate changes in the law and clarify School Code requirements regarding criminal history records checks for student teachers. These updates include:
  - Changing the second sentence of the policy from:

**No individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense listed in Section 5/21B-80 of the School Code is permitted to student teach or complete field or other clinical experience.**

to:

**No individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense that would subject him or her to license suspension or revocation pursuant to Section 5/21B-80 of the School Code<sup>2</sup> or who has been found to be the perpetrator of sexual or physical abuse of a minor under 18**

**years of age pursuant to proceedings under Article II of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 is permitted to student teach.**

- Changing the first sentence on the second page of the policy from:

**Each student teacher must provide written authorization for, and pay the costs of, his or her criminal history records check (including any applicable vendor's fees), and the Superintendent or designee will provide each student teacher with a copy of his or her report.**

to:

**The School Code requires each individual student teaching or beginning a required internship to provide the District with written authorization for, and pay the costs of, his or her 105 ILCS 5/21.9(g) check (including any applicable vendor's fees). Upon receipt of this authorization and payment, the Superintendent or designee will submit the student teacher's name, sex, race, date of birth, social security number, fingerprint images, and other identifiers, as prescribed by the Department of State Police, to the Department of State Police. The Superintendent or designee will provide each student teacher with a copy of his or her report.**

- Deleting the last sentence of the policy regarding Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDU) because the practice was repealed in both School Code and Administrative Code.
- Removing the School Code and Administrative Code citations regarding CPDU from the legal references.
- Adding a citation for 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9 to the legal references.
- Changing the name of policy 4:175 in the cross references from Convicted Child Sex Offender; Criminal Background Check and/or Screen; Notifications to Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications.

In addition to these updates, the administration recommends including optional language about this policy applying to individuals who are participating in a field or clinical experience. If the board agrees with this recommendation, the first sentence of the policy's second paragraph would be revised to read:

**Before permitting an individual to student teach, begin a required internship, or participate in any field experience in the District, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that:**

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as described above.

- **Policy 6:145 (Migrant Students)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and legal references be updated to reflect the new migrant student program requirements under §6391 of ESEA, as amended by ESSA. The policy language that PRESS suggests be added or revised is taken directly from the law.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

- **Policy 6:160 (English Learners)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and legal references be updated to reflect the new English Learner program requirements under ESEA, as amended by ESSA. The policy language that PRESS suggests be added or revised is taken directly from the law.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

- **Policy 6:340 (Student Testing and Assessment Program)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and legal references be updated in response to a change in the law that requires “every school district to report all reliable assessments that are scored by entities outside of the district to ISBE by certain dates, along with making such information available to the public.”

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

- **Policy 7:60 (Residence)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and cross references be updated. These updates include:
  - Revising the language about the residency challenge procedures in response to changes in the law.
  - Changing non-resident to nonresident to align the policy language with what is used in School Code.
  - Deleting the references to No Child Left Behind’s school choice provisions in response to the repeal of the statute that corresponded with the passage of ESSA.
  - Changing the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in the legal references.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the updates as written.

- **Policy 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy)** – PRESS recommends that the following changes be made to the policy and cross references:
  - Revise the language in the section titled “Compulsory School Attendance” to align the compulsory school attendance age information in the policy with what is stated in the law.
  - Add an item under the section titled “Absenteeism and Truancy Program” to reflect that, per a change in the law, districts must have “a protocol for excusing a student in grades six through 12 from attendance to sound *Taps* at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.”
  - Change the title of policy 7:190 in cross references to Student Behavior.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

- **Policy 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Education)** – PRESS recommends making several changes to the policy and legal references. These changes include:
  - Renaming the policy from Exemption from Physical Activity to Exemption from Physical Education in accordance with a change in the law.
  - Adding the following sentence to the first paragraph of the policy based on a change in the law requiring districts to have policies in place that address the “evidence or support the board will require for excuses it deems appropriate.”

**An excuse because of medical reasons must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request.**

- Moving the following sentence lower in the policy so it is more directly connected with the other information regarding special education students.

**A student requiring adapted physical education must receive that service in accordance with his or her Individualized Educational Program/Plan (IEP).**

- Adding a citation about the new physical education regulations to the legal references.

Please note that the first paragraph on page two of the document is specific to high schools, and will not be included in our policy.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

- **Policy 7:305 (Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries)** – PRESS recommends updating the policy language, more specifically the first sentence in item one on the policy’s first page, to reflect the legal requirement regarding the full implementation of the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act. The information about certified athletic trainers that is featured on page four of the document only applies to districts that belong to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA), and will not be included in our policy.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the updates as written.

- **Policy 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)** – PRESS recommends that changes be made to the policy and cross references. These changes include:
  - Changing the phrase free-times to duty-free times under the section titled “Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent.”
  - Changing the title of policy 7:190 in cross references to Student Behavior.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt the changes as written.

### **Tri-Annual Review**

In April 2015, the policy review team presented the board with its plan for monitoring policies on an annual basis. In accordance with this plan, the team decided it would:

- Review one or more of the eight sections of the district’s policy manual on a quarterly basis, and place the policies from those sections into one of the following categories:
  - **Review Only**
  - **Review and Possibly Revise**
  - **Review and Spot Check for Enforcement**
- Present the board with a written report at the conclusion of each quarterly review session that features the results from the session, as well as next steps. These reports will be shared with the community.

- Perform the next steps detailed in the written report, and provide the board with an update on the work that was completed.

On June 28, 2016, we informed the board members that our original calendar/timeline for reviewing the entire manual was too ambitious. We also told them that, based on the size and scope of each section of the manual, the complexity of the policies being reviewed and the other work that must be completed by the members of this team, we were proposing a move from quarterly to tri-annual review sessions.

The most recent session we conducted featured a review of section four of the manual. In addition to the proposed changes to policies from that section that are either featured above or have been reviewed and approved/adopted by the board in recent months, our team and the district's administration are recommending that the following two revisions be made at this time.

- In **policy 4:30 (Revenue and Investments)**, we recommend that the phrase "subject to the review of the Treasurer" be removed from the second to last sentence in the subsection titled "Investments" since the district's assistant superintendent for finance and operations also serves as the treasurer.
- In **policy 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs)**, we recommend that the total cost listed in the third sentence in the subsection titled "Standards for Managing Buildings and Grounds" be changed from \$12,500 to \$25,000. This figure serves as the threshold for determining when board approval is required for projects related to the renovation and/or permanent alteration to buildings or grounds.