

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**  
**Policy Subcommittee Meeting**

Name of Subcommittee: Policy Meeting type: Regular  
Date of Meeting: 9/22/21 Place of Meeting: Zoom  
Members present: Kathy Baker, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Stephanie Strazza  
Members absent: (none)  
Other attendees: Dr. Pat Cosentino, Peggy Katkocin  
Minutes submitted by: Rick Regan

The meeting was called to order by Samantha Mannion at 7:00 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. May 26, 2021 – Regular
- B. July 27, 2021 – Special
- C. September 1, 2021 - Special

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of May 26, 2021, July 27, 2021, and September 1, 2021, as presented

Made by: Samantha Mannion Seconded by: Kathy Baker

**Recording of Vote:** All in favor

**III. ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Policy 1120 – Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings

Samantha recapped the proposed policy and the reason for its proposal (see minutes from 9/1/21 special meeting). Rick reiterated his disagreement with the 15 minute time limit because it could limit discussion to five speakers. After a long discussion, the committee agreed to make two changes to the proposed policy: 1) Increase the time limit to 30 minutes from 15, effectively allocating 15 minutes to each public comment section, and 2) Remove the sentence “The Board may modify these limitations at the beginning of the meeting if the number of persons wishing to speak makes it advisable to do so.”

The committee discussed ways to make the public more aware of board subcommittees so that we can essentially move some public comment out of regular meetings into subcommittee meetings. Ideas included posting information to our website, including subcommittee member contacts and the stated purpose of each committee. (Kathy volunteered to write this up.). Rick suggested that during subcommittee reports at regular meetings we announce the date and time of the next subcommittee meeting, along with potential agenda topics, if known.

Cayden Walker (resident) agreed that a concise description of the subcommittees would be useful. Amy Johnson (resident) expressed concern about restricting public comment to items on the agenda, as some members of the public view board meetings on demand and may want to comment at the next meeting. AnnMarie Valerioti (resident) agreed that 30 minutes of public comment was better than 15, so that more people could speak. She further expressed concern about the chair's discretion to control who speaks, and concern about the board's responsiveness to email and how a lack of response could warrant an off-agenda public comment. Samantha and Stephanie suggested that we need a policy on how to respond to public contact emails, as there is currently no set protocol defining who responds and by when. (Samantha volunteered to draft a policy for next meeting.) Tim Blair (resident) also expressed concern about the chair's discretion to limit public comment, and asked about the timing of this proposed policy.

**Motion:** To move policy 1120, as amended, to the full Board for approval.

Made by: Samantha Mannion

Seconded by: Kathy Baker

**Recording of Vote:** All in favor.

- B. Policy 0200 – Goals for the Public Schools  
Bullet 2: Remove “and view”; Bullet 10: Hyphenate “grade-level”
- C. Policy 3542.43 – Charging Policy  
Consistent use of “parent/guardian” vs “parent” in this policy (and all others); Minor grammatical changes
- D. Policy 4118.11/4218.11 – Nondiscrimination
- E. Policy 5113 – Attendance/Excuses/Dismissal  
Discussion on mental health days (no changes)
- F. Policy 5113.2 – Truancy
- G. Policy 5131.911 – Hazing – Bullying
- H. Policy 5141.3 – Health Assessments and Immunizations  
Stephanie brought up the inconsistency of the deadline in the bill (April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at midnight) vs. the deadline in this policy (April 28<sup>th</sup>). No changes.
- I. Policy 6159 – Individualized Education Program/Special Education Program  
Bullet 10, p. 8: Remove “(for all other disability categories)”

**Motion:** To move policies 0200, 3542.43, 4118.11/4218.11, 5113, 5113.2, 5131.911, 5141.3, and 6159, as amended, to the full Board for approval.

Made by: Samantha Mannion

Seconded by: Kathy Baker

**Recording of Vote:** All in favor

#### **IV. INFORMATION ITEMS - none**

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn:** Made by: Kathy Baker

Seconded by: Samantha Mannion

**Recording of vote:** All in favor

**Meeting adjourned at:** 8:15 p.m.