

Policy Subcommittee

Wednesday, December 14, 2022 *6 p.m. *Please note change in the start time of the meeting.

Meeting Access: Policy Subcommittee (12/14/22 at 6 p.m.) Web:
<https://zoom.us/j/97644209104> Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 976 4420 9104;, 3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

II.A. November 16, 2022 - Regular

III. ACTION ITEMS

III.A. Policy 5132 – Dress and Grooming

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

IV.A. Policy 5118.111 – Tuition for Students of Staff
Members

IV.B. Vaping Update

V. OTHER

VI. ADJOURNMENT

BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT
Policy Subcommittee Meeting

Name of Subcommittee: Policy Meeting type: Regular
Date of Meeting: 11/16/22 Place of Meeting: Zoom
Members present: Kathy Baker, Samantha Mannion, Amy Johnson, Stephanie Strazza
Members absent:
Other attendees: Ken Craw, James D'Amico, Karen Gruetzner
Minutes submitted by: Kathy Baker
Meeting Access: Policy Subcommittee (11/16/22 at 7 p.m.) Web: <https://zoom.us/j/92672219313>
Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 926 7221 9313

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 26, 2022 - Regular

Motion: To approve the minutes of October 26, 2022, as presented

Made by: Samantha Mannion

Seconded by: Kathy Baker

Recording of Vote: All in favor

III. ACTION ITEMS

A. Policy 1312 – Public Complaints – The amendments to the policy were discussed. Committee confirmed that the amendments to the policy included language surrounding public hearings being held that potentially violate FERPA law. The Committee agreed that the language was clear, and the amendments acceptable to move forward.

B. Policy 1331 – Smoke Free Environment

James D'Amico reported that the high school plans to administer a survey from the New Fairfield Prevention Council. James reported that they found twelve suspensions this year for vaping, and three were repeat offenses. The building administration is looking into counseling responses. A smoking cessation program was discussed. Ken suggested that middle school, grades 7 and 8, be included in the survey. Karen Gruetzner reported two incidents at the Middle School in the previous year. Dr. Craw stressed the importance of tobacco-use education from late elementary through high school. Dr. Craw discussed the option of detectors. Samantha agreed with the strategy. Plans to raise funds and to purchase were discussed. The efficacy of the sensors was discussed. James mentioned that adult monitoring was an effective deterrent, but the implementation was difficult. Dr. Craw agreed that a multi-pronged approach was necessary. The committee stressed the importance of correcting the issue immediately. Students are unable to safely use the bathrooms at school due to the excessive vaping issue in the bathrooms. The conclusion was to administer a survey to collect data, ramp up the education piece, review potential board policies with specific consequences, and funding to administer staff monitors and/or sensors. Dr. Craw also suggested parent engagement as a component. The education components will be referred to curriculum subcommittee, the policy subcommittee will review additional policies. Full board to review detectors and survey results. Policy will be tabled.

C. Policy 5132 – Dress and Grooming – Kathy Baker reported that a meeting was held with students to voice their concerns. One major concern was misinformation about what the policy states.

Motion: To move Policy 1312 - Public Complaints to the full Board for approval

Made by: Samantha Mannion

Seconded by: Kathy Baker

Recording of Vote: All in favor

Motion: To table Policy 1331 - Smoke Free Environment and Policy 5132 - Dressing and Grooming

Made by: Samantha Mannion

Seconded by: Kathy Baker

Recording of Vote: All in favor

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS - none

OTHER – Samantha asked that Policy 5132 be continued on next month's agenda.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Made by: Samantha Mannion

Seconded by: Amy Johnson

Recording of vote: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at: 8:25 p.m.

Students

Dress and Grooming

The Board of Education (Board) dress code policy aims to maintain a safe and stable learning environment while allowing students to respectfully express their individuality.

The Board encourages students to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The District is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student and that dress code enforcement does not increase marginalization or suppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance or body type/size.

Restrictions on freedom of student dress may be applied whenever the mode of dress in question:

1. Is unsafe either for the student or those around the student.
2. Is disruptive to school operations and the education process in general.
3. Depicts or advocates violence, criminal activity, use of alcohol or drugs, pornography or hate speech.
4. Contains or can be construed to be racist, misogynistic, lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, or threatening.
5. If breasts, genitalia and buttocks are not covered by opaque materials.

No restrictions on freedom of dress and adornment will be imposed which:

1. Reflect discrimination as to civil rights.
2. Enforce particular codes of morality or religious tenets.
3. Attempt to dictate or adjudicate style or taste.
4. Do not fall within the direct or implied powers of the Board of Education.

Staff Responsibility: All school staff must be notified of the policy at the beginning of the school year with a refresher in early spring in regards to its purpose and spirit. Teachers and staff are not empowered to discuss the dress code with individual students and should not discuss dress code concerns among themselves. They should notify the school administration of any concerns. Only the school administration (Principal or Assistant Principal(s)) are permitted to address dress code concerns.

Enforcement: If there is a dress code concern, only the school administration (Principal or Assistant Principal(s)) are permitted to address the concern with the student. They must enforce it consistently and in a sensitive manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization of any group based on race, sex, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Students

Dress and Grooming

Consequences:

The only consequence for the student shall be that they correct the situation.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statute § 10-233 et seq.

DRAFT

Policy adopted: June 6, 2002
Policy amended: October 6, 2005
Policy revised: May 2, 2019
Policy revised:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut