The following policies and bylaws were discussed.

#5123.1 Summer School – Mike Pitruzzello spoke to this policy. Last year the Board approved a waiver which allowed the inclusion of Physical Education classes in Summer School. It was very successful. It helped decrease the amount of students in this year’s classes. MHS will have six PE classes in fall and spring and now the amount of students in each class will be smaller (38 to 45 per class) Summer school has helped. Physical Education classes have changed dramatically, among other things the classes have a written component.

Sally Boske stated she can support this change because now there are other requirements for the classes. Sheila Daniels asked about enrollment. Ralph D’Amato stated it is too early in the quarter to give figures.

The Policy Committee recommended this revised policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.

Robert Fontaine stated he had a question about credit withdrawal in reference to another section of the summer school policy concerning exclusion of students who had a passing grade, but failed the course because of lack of attendance. He requested these students be allowed to attend summer school. This way the student wouldn’t have to take the entire year over considering the student had a passing grade. After being deprived of their summer, this could be an incentive to keep students in school in the coming years. This is a way to help the students get back on track.

Right now the district has about a 93%-94% attendance rate. So this change would only affect a small number of students.

It was also noted that summer school is self-sustaining.
Presently the #5123.1 Summer School policy is worded in Item #3 as follows: “Admission to Middletown High School’s summer school remedial classes will be granted to those students who have previously met a particular class’s attendance requirement but who, as of July 2003, failed the course with a grade no lower than 50. Students who have withdrawn from a course or who have lost credit for the course because of attendance will not be eligible for summer school.”

Kathy suggested a waiver be allowed for this portion of the policy, as it was done last year for the inclusion of the PE courses in summer school. The Policy Committee agreed and recommends the following resolution to the Board to act as a waiver for the present policy for one year. Sheila Daniels requested data and statistics after this waived year. Ralph D’Amato agreed to provide that data next year. The Board of Education will review the outcome of these changes next year and determine whether to permanently change the policy.

NEW RESOLUTION OR MOTION: To waive the policy restrictions concerning Item #3 in Policy #5123.1 Summer School as follows: “Middletown High School’s summer school remedial classes will be granted to those students who failed the course with a grade no lower than 50. Students who have withdrawn from a course will not be eligible for summer school.” Next year, the Board will receive a report containing data on the program to decide whether said change should be permanently adopted.

As the two items in this policy must be addressed before summer school begins, Sally Boske will request they be added to the Board’s agenda for the May 12, 2009 meeting.

Ms. Boske requested Ralph D’Amato attend the May 12th Board Meeting to inform the Board of details concerning this policy.

#5131.911 Bullying – At the last Policy Committee meeting, Sally Bose spoke to this policy and stated new legislation, P.A. 08-160: An Act Concerning School Learning Environment, was enacted. “This new legislation also specifically expands the definition of bullying and requires school boards to implement the bullying policies they were required to adopt. Finally, it (1) requires people in a teacher preparation program to be encouraged to complete a school bullying and suicide prevention component and (2) requires teachers to receive in-service training in bullying prevention. Boards of education that implement an evidence-based model approach to bullying do not have to provide the training. In addition, the legislation makes the changes relative to what must be included in bullying policies, requires the policies be submitted to the State Department of Education (SDE) and requires it (SDE) to take certain steps with regard to policies and report to the General Assembly, and defines the term “prevention and intervention strategy.”” The Committee discussed the proposed policies from CABE and
decided to put forward to the Board the policy developed by Attorney Tom Mooney of Shipman and Goodwin. Jay Keiser questioned some language in the policy.

Kathy Bengtson told the Committee she had again contacted CABE to discuss the concerns that Jay Keiser had about the policy. The Committee found no problems with the subdivision language that Jay had questioned. Vin Mastro Senior Staff Associate of CABE stated they had just released an updated policy from Attorney Tom Moody. Note: The language Jay had questioned stayed the same. Kathy obtained the policy, and showed it to the Committee. She will email the new policy to the BOE members as this policy must be addressed at the May 12 BOE meeting.

*The Policy Committee recommended this revised policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first and final reading. As this is a mandated policy, it will require only one reading.*

#6145.231 Transgender Athletic Policy  – Mike Pitruzzello stated that the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) recommended that all state Boards of Education adopt a policy concerning transgender participation in athletics. *The Policy Committee recommended this new policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.*

#6146 Graduation Requirements  – Robert Fontaine, Mike Pitruzzello, and Ralph D’Amato spoke to this policy and its requested changes. All three had met with Kristen Byrd and two physical education teachers and numerous parents concerning this matter.

Up until Mike Pitruzzello got here, students had to take a full year physical education/health every year. This clogged up the student’s schedules. With these proposed changes, the 9th grade students will take 1.0 credits for the full year, 10th grade and 11th grade students will take .5 fall or .5 spring. That would total 2.0 required credits. This will soften up the 10th and 11th grade students’ schedules, and allow seniors more freedom to take elective and AP classes. Ralph D’Amato stated the Guidance Department has evaluated these proposals and feels it will work well in scheduling.

These changes allow for a much better flow in scheduling. Parents were totally supportive regarding this restructure.

Robert Fontaine also requested we remove the Credit Section which is on page 6146(d). He feels the credits have been addressed in the previous pages. *The Policy Committee recommended this revised policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.*

Bob Fontaine stated that someday we have to talk about increasing credits at the high school.
#3543.31 Electronic Communications Use and Retention – Robert Polselli asked Kathy to bring this new policy before the Committee. We are legally bound to have a policy in place to cover our procedures for data archiving. The Policy Committee recommended this new policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.

#4118.4 Electronic Mail – Robert Polselli asked Kathy to bring this new policy before the Committee. Equally important is our notification to staff regarding confidential information sent by email and the fact that email is not private as it is the property of the Middletown Public Schools. This policy will take the place of our present policy #4118.4 which is entitled Electronic Mail/Telecommunication. The Policy Committee recommended this replacement policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.

#4118.5 Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology) – Robert Polselli asked Kathy to bring this new policy before the Committee. It is also important to put into effect a policy that entails the acceptable use of the computers by employees. This policy is recommended by CABE. After review, the Policy Committee recommended this new policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.

The Policy Committee Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2009 at 9:15 a.m. in the Board Room of the Dr. Alfred B. Tychsen Administration Building

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