MIDDLETOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE
Minutes
Tuesday, April 22, 2014
Dr. Alfred B. Tychsen Administration Building
8:00 A.M.

Board of Education Policy Committee Members Present:
Sheila Daniels, Chair, and Ava Hart

Also Present:
Dr. Patricia Charles, Superintendent, Marco Gaylord, Director of Operations, Kathleen F. Bengtson, Administrative Assistant, and Mark Langton, Transportation Manager

The following policies & bylaws were discussed:

#9121 Board of Education Officers – The Policy Committee reviewed this bylaw with the policy that is on C Abe’s website. It was decided that our current bylaw does not need to be changed. The Policy Committee recommended this bylaw be presented for readoption to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#9130 Committees - This bylaw was discussed at the last Policy committee meeting and the members felt it was necessary to clarify the language for this bylaw. It was determined to include the CABE Standing Committees language in our bylaw, along with the CABE Ad Hoc Committees language. The proposed bylaw was reviewed. The Policy Committee recommended this revised bylaw be presented to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#9131 – Community Members on the Board – After the changes were made in the previous bylaw, no changes were needed in this bylaw. It was decided that our current bylaw does not need to be changed. The Policy Committee recommended this bylaw be presented for readoption to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#3541 – Transportation – There was full discussion about the transportation and busing issues, including bus stops, walking distances, etc. Dr. Charles stated our current policy only needed a few minor changes: on item #2, change the wording “Supplement and Reinforce desirable student behavior patterns.” Also in the second paragraph the listing of Policy 3541.341 will be added. The legal references will be updated to correspond with the CABE references. The Policy Committee recommended this revised policy be presented to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#3541 – Transportation REGULATIONS – The Regulations for this policy will be the New Handbook that Mark Langton has been drafting. We are highlighting the fact that supervision is the responsibility of the parent. Dr. Charles proposed changing the regulation to reflect this fact.
The changes are as follows and can be found under the section labeled responsibilities of Parents/Guardians/Designees:

F. It is required that, when a student is dropped off at his/her home, parents/guardians/designees of students in grades Pre-K and Kindergarten be present and visible at the time of student drop-off. If a parent/guardian/designee is not visible, the driver will keep the student on the bus and return to the school, unless prior arrangements have been made. The parent/guardian/designee will then be notified and requested to come to the school to transport the child. Once students are dropped off at a common drop-off area, it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure the child’s safety.

Another issue which the Committee decided to add to the regulation is:

K. Parents/Guardians/Designees are not permitted to board the bus unless granted in writing for a specific purpose by the Superintendent of Schools.

It was also decided to change the wording in the Transportation policies from “parent/guardian” to “parent/guardian/designee.”

The letter to parents was reviewed and a change will be made that will now allow a Parent to assign only one additional bus route for arrival or departure to accommodate child care arrangements and will be approved only after a Day Care Bus Form has been completed and submitted for review by the school office and Transportation Department. Dr. Charles suggested the letter should be signed by Mark Langton, Transportation Manager.

It was noted the Middletown Public Schools District has different walking guidelines than the State requirements:

**Walking Guidelines:**
Connecticut State School Accommodation Guidelines permit a maximum walking distance to school or to a bus stop to be one (1) mile for Kindergarten to grade 3 and one and one-half miles (1 ½) for grades 4-8 and two miles (2) miles for grades 9-12. In addition, every effort is made to limit per trip travel time to no more than one hour.

However, Middletown Policy states Kindergarten to grade 5 is one mile (1) and grades 6-12 is one and one-half mile (1 ½).

The Committee reviewed the Day Care Bus Form and recommended it should be substituted with the walker form that was prepared at the last Saturday Policy Committee meeting. Mark will look it over.

Dr. Charles noted we do have many huge bus stops in certain areas, and it is hard for the bus driver to keep track of all the students. The Committee spoke about possibly have a strap badge made for PreK & K students to make sure they are on the correct bus. Marco Gaylord will look into it.
Along with distributing this Transportation Handbook (regulation), it will be found on-line in both the Policies & Bylaws section as a regulation and in the Bus Routes section.

Sheila had a question whether there was a requirement that was specific to Kindergarten students wherein they could only be picked up on their side of the street. Dr. Charles looked in the CSDE School Accommodations Workshop Package and didn’t find that requirement.

This Handbook/Regulation will be revised and approved when the other transportation policies are accepted by the Board of Education.

#3541.3 – Routes and Services – The Policy Committee reviewed this policy and decided it does not need to be changed. The Policy Committee recommended this policy be presented for readoption to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#3541.3 – Procedures Regarding Busing Issues REGULATION – The current regulation was reviewed and it was decided to remove the reference to posting the bus routes in the local newspaper. It was also decided to change the wording in this regulation from “parent/guardian” to “parent/guardian/designee.” Also the changes mentioned in the #3541 Regulation/Handbook, will be incorporated into this regulation.

The changes are as follows and can be found under the section labeled responsibilities of Parents/Guardians/Designees:

F. It is required that, when a student is dropped off at his/her home, parents/guardians/designees of students in grades PreK and Kindergarten be present and visible at the time of student drop-off. If a parent/guardian/designee is not visible, the driver will keep the student on the bus and return to the school, unless prior arrangements have been made. The parent/guardian/designee will then be notified and requested to come to the school to transport the child. Once students are dropped off at a common drop-off area, it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure the child’s safety.

Another issue which the Committee decided to add to the regulation is:

K. Parents/Guardians/Designees are not permitted to board the bus unless granted in writing for a specific purpose by the Superintendent of Schools.

This Regulation will be revised and approved when the other policies are accepted by the Board of Education.

#3541.33 – Special Transportation for Exception Children -- This regulation was reviewed and the only changes made were to change the title Associate Superintendent for Administration to Associate Superintendent. This Regulation will be revised and approved when the other policies are accepted by the Board of Education.
#3541.341 – Non-Public School Students – The Policy Committee reviewed this policy and decided it does not need to be changed. The Policy Committee recommended this policy be presented for readoption to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#3541.4 – Transportation Equipment – The Policy Committee reviewed this policy and decided it does not need to be changed. The Policy Committee recommended this policy be presented for readoption to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#3541.44 – Privately Owned Vehicles – Dr. Charles stated Mark Langton is still researching this policy and we review it at the next policy committee meeting.

#3541.5 – Transportation Complaints, Reporting of Accidents/Procedures for Emergencies, Safety – The Policy Committee reviewed this policy against the proposed CABE policy and decided to use the CABE policy. The changes in the Policy were made. The Policy Committee recommended this revised policy be presented to the Board of Education at its next meeting and will require two readings. All members agreed.

#3541.5 – Transportation Complaints, Reporting of Accidents/Procedures for Emergencies, Safety REGULATION – Dr. Charles stated that the section on Transportation Complaints was added to the beginning of this regulation. Another change to the regulation was to substitute the title of “Director of Operations” for all mention of “Business Manager.” This Regulation will be revised and approved when the other policies are accepted by the Board of Education.

The Policy Committee suggested the policies and bylaws to review at its next meeting would be:

1. #3541.44 – Privately Owned Vehicles & Form
2. Other

The next Policy Committee meetings will be scheduled for Tuesday, May 20, 2014, at 8:00 A.M. in the Board Room of the Dr. Alfred B. Tychsen Administration Building.

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