Board of Education Policy Committee Members Present:

Sheila Daniels, Chair and Ava Hart

Also Present:

Dr. Patricia Charles, Superintendent, Mark Langton, Transportation Manager, Elisha DeJesus, Director of Athletics/Student Activities, Michelle Gohagon, Technology Facilitator, and Kathleen F. Bengtson, Administrative Assistant

The Committee added the following policies to the Agenda:

#5131.1 Bus Routes
#6145.2 Athletic/Extracurricular Activities

The following policies and bylaws were discussed.

#4131 – Staff Development – Enza Macri had recommended we use the CABE policy for the updated policy. Dr. Charles stated she had discussed this policy with Dr. Macri. Professional Development rules and laws have changed. This is the latest updated version from CABE. Dr. Charles told the Committee the State no longer requires the District to track CEUs. We now have all different professional development training that must be done. Some of the training is part of our Alliance grant. Sheila pointed out it is the Superintendent, not the Board that determines the professional development program. The appropriate change was made. Because we will now have this new policy with an appendix concerning training, we can eliminate the regulation.

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

#5131.1 – Bus Routes – Mark Langton states this policy should be readopted to show it has been reviewed and to bring it current. There were no updates from CABE. He also suggested we substitute the new Transportation Handbook for the regulation to make it consistent with transportation policy #3541 and the Transportation Regulation Handbook.
The Committee discussed the matter and recommended this policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its re-adoption and first reading.

#5132 – Dress and Grooming - Dr. Charles stated our PBIS coordinator, Devon McCormick, recommended we update our policy with language in the positive instead of the negative concerning acceptable clothing for students.

A discussion ensued concerning the proposed changes and the direction we wanted to follow.

Dr. Charles will work on the dress and grooming regulation and have it read to be posted when this policy is accepted by the BOE.

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

#6145.1 – Co-Curricular Eligibility & Establishing a Sports Club - Elisha DeJesus brought this matter forward. We need a regulation which will address the procedure for establishment of a sports club. Kathy has checked with CABE to see if they had a policy concerning establishing a sports club. They did not and submitted policy #6145.1 – co-curricular eligibility as a possibility. The Committee did not want to use that policy number.

Discussion was held to decide under what policy this should be inserted. The decision was made to make it a regulation under policy #6145.2 Athletic/Extracurricular Activities as Regulation #2.

Some clubs come and go before they ever come to the Board. There are lots of things that don’t necessarily get to Board. Sometimes it is a monetary issue. If we don’t have the money, clubs can’t go forward.

Sheila shared her concern around new clubs becoming recognized sports in light of fall crew remaining a club for so many years. The belief that fall and spring crew are the same is not the case. Fall and spring crew are very different and should be treated as two different sports, and this difference is not recognized. Fall Crew is similar to cross country – long distance and Spring Crew is similar to track – short distance. She sees it as an issue because we keep allowing additional clubs to become sports teams. Elisha said we want to broaden our horizons and try to be consistent across the board. There was a discussion about the difference between a sport and a club. Technically, LaCross should be coming forward to the Board for approval as a sport, because they have been a club for three years. If the LaCross Club has enough funds, it will transfer to JV status until they have enough money for it to become Varsity
or until money is available. It was noted--none of the current clubs are taking part in the banquets.

After much discussion, it was decided to add Establishing a Sport Club as a Regulation under Policy #6145.2 Athletic/Extracurricular activities and label it as such on the website.

**The Committee agreed this matter will be put on the website as a regulation.**

#6145.2 – Athletic/Extracurricular Activities  — Elisha DeJesus requested we revise this policy to abide by the CIAC rules concerning participation in extracurricular athletic activities. The proposed change is as follows:

“The Middletown Board of Education expects that all students pass all of their courses. Students in grades 9 through 12 who have a cumulative grade point average below “70”, or a failure in fail one or more courses at the conclusion of each marking period, will be placed on academic review/probation.”

Pat wanted to know if our policy is stringent enough. The Committee reviewed different situations concerning passing and failing grades and the participation in extracurricular activities. Elisha stated we need to follow the rules of CIAC. Elisha stated her secretary, Robin Wilson, uses Power School to track the grades of students and is required to do this every three weeks. The probation period is for three weeks. Dr. Charles stated if students are not allowed to be in sports, they may lose the one thing that motivates them to go to school, and if they are in school, there is help for their academics.

The committee also recommended the present regulation be updated to reflect the changes in this policy.

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

#6141.3291 – One-to-One Device Program  — Michael Skott, Directory of Technology, was on vacation, but had requested this policy and regulation be reviewed by the Policy Committee, with Michelle Gohagon speaking to this policy. As the District has received grant funding, it will be supplying freshman students with devices, he wanted to have a policy in place to address the issue.

Michelle Gohagon stated CABE gave us many different examples of available policies and Mike and she selected the one that will work best for our District.
Dr. Charles stated she was recently asked if this policy would be in conflict with the Suspension Policy #5114. She does not believe it is -- having technology will not violate Policy #5114 provided the technology is not use incorrectly.

The regulation contains a form regarding insurance for the device. Mike told Kathy he wanted this insurance in place and possibly it could be tracked by the person taking Nancy Stella's position. If there is an issue with a student, we have the option to say that student can't take the device home. Ava Hart asked whether a parent can opt out of the program. Michelle said they didn't put it in because we want all students to have this learning tool.

Michelle stated these new devices can work online or offline. There might be a need for a little training which the Technology Department is still working out. Everything done on this devise can be done on a laptop. When we purchase the Chromebooks, we pay a couple of dollars more for them to be already imaged. All the Tech Department needs to do is put asset tag on and they are ready to go. No software needed. These Chromebooks will save many, many hours of the technicians’ time.

Dr. Charles said if we want to remain competitive we have to do this.

The Committee discussed the matter and recommended this new policy be brought forward to the Board at its next meeting for its first reading.

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled tentatively for Tuesday, August 18, 2015, at 8:00 A.M. in the Board Room of the Dr. Alfred B. Tychsen Administration Building.

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