Board of Education Policy Committee Members Present:

Cheryl A. P. McClellan, Chair
Edward Ford, Jr.
Marilyn S. Rios

Also Present:

Michele DiMauro, Manager of Human Resources
Kathleen Bengtson, Administrative Assistant
Colleen Weiner, Princial Middletown High School
Meg Susi, Community Member
Mary Emerling, School Health Supervisor
Melaina Cossette, Administrative Assistant

The following policies and bylaws were reviewed:

#1250 – Visits to the Schools - Kathy Bengtson stated this Policy was quite old dated April 13, 2004 and required updating. She stated that the Regulations for this policy had been updated by the administration with the newest procedures for school visitors. Marco Gaylord had reviewed this policy and recommended we insert the proposed CABE wording to replace the original policy.

Visits to the Schools

The Board of Education and staff of the school district welcome and strongly encourage members of the community and other interested persons to visit the schools.

The Superintendent shall establish regulations that will:

1. Encourage visitors to observe our schools.
2. Ensure that public visits will not hinder the educational program.
3. Require all visitors to register in the principal's office upon arrival at the school.

Board of Education members who visit schools of their own volition have no more authority than any other citizen. Board of Education members have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board of Education, or when delegated specific tasks by specific Board of Education action.

The Board of Education encourages visits by citizens, residents, and parents to all school buildings. In order to promote a safe and productive educational environment for all students
and staff, the Board of Education requires all visitors to receive prior approval from the school Principal or his/her designee before being permitted to visit any school building. The Board of Education, through the administration, reserves the right to limit visits in accordance with administrative regulations.

Upon arrival, all visitors must comply with Administration Regulation #1250a-c and any other applicable building security procedures, including but not limited to utilizing security buzzers for access, complying with requests for photo identification, reporting directly to and signing in and out at the visitors’ reception area/main office of the school office, prominently displaying visitors’ badges or other identification required for visitors to the school buildings, limiting access to those areas of the buildings and grounds for which the visitors have authorized access, and complying with directives of school officials at all times.

#5125.11 Health and Medical Records – This policy is a new required policy - Mary Emerling, School Health Supervisor, indicated this policy is directly from CABE and deals with FERPA. The only change made was to designate the School Health Supervisor or designee as its HIPAA Privacy Officer.

Mary also recommended we use the HIPAA – Compliant Authorization for Exchange of Health & Education Information form developed by the CT State Department of Education & CT Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics.

The New Policy #5125.11 was reviewed and the Policy Committee recommended it be brought forward to the next BOE meeting for its first and final reading.

#6114 – Emergencies - Kathy Bengtson stated this policy was quite old dated June 6, 2006 and required updating. She stated that the regulations concerning fire drills and bomb threats had been deleted by the Administration. Marco Gaylord had reviewed this policy and recommended we insert the proposed CABE wording to replace the original policy. We should not post what our procedures are during emergencies, but we do want the public to know that the district is conforming to all state and federal laws to protect our students and staff.

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

All employees of the school system are responsible for the safety of students at all times.

The administration shall require the building principal to maintain procedures and an emergency response manual for fire, civil defense, and other emergencies, and to insure the maintenance of the fire alarm system and regular and emergency exits of all buildings.

First Aid

At least one person at each school site should hold current first aid and/or CPR certification.

The Board of Education recognizes that the health, welfare and safety of its students and employees are dependent upon sound emergency preparedness planning. All employees of the
school system are responsible for doing everything in their power to promote the safety of all of the students at all times. District staff shall be prepared to respond immediately and responsibly to any combination of events which threaten to result in a disaster as well as to a disaster when it occurs.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall use state-approved School Security and Safety Plan Standards and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template to be compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and incorporate the National Incident Command System when updating District and site-level emergency and disaster preparedness plans. Each school in the District, each school year, will develop and implement a school security and safety plan. Such plan shall be based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection/Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DESPP/DEMHS) and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template. In addition to preparedness and response, the plan shall provide guidance on recovery from any emergency incident.

Each school shall establish a school security and safety committee which will assist in developing and administering the school’s security and safety plan. The members of the Committee shall include a local police officer, local first responder, teacher and administrator from the school, a mental health professional, a parent or guardian of a student at the school and any other person deemed necessary; (school nurse, custodian, local health director, transportation coordinator, etc.)

The Revised Policy #6114 was reviewed and revised and the Policy Committee recommended it be brought forward to the next BOE meeting for its first reading.

#6146 – Graduation Requirements -  Colleen Weiner requested we review this policy again. There were references to the CAPT testing which are no longer in effect. Said references were removed.

The Revised Policy #6146 was reviewed and the Policy Committee recommended it be brought forward to the next BOE meeting for its first and final reading.

#6146.2 – Statewide Proficiency / Mastery Examinations  Colleen Weiner requested we review this policy again. There were references to the CAPT testing which are no longer in effect. Said references were removed.

Note:  After the meeting more CABE recommended changes were noted and Chair Cheryl McClellan decided to have this policy further reviewed at our next Policy meeting.

#9222– Resignation/Removal from Office – BYLAW –  This revised CABE bylaw was sent to the Policy Committee members for their review before the meeting.

State law provides that municipal officers seeking to resign from office must submit a written resignation to the municipal clerk. The resignation takes effect upon the date specified in the resignation or, if no date is specified, upon the date of its submission to the clerk.
Removal from Office

The chairperson of the Board may be removed from office by a two-thirds/majority vote of the membership of the whole Board, and in case the office of chairperson shall become vacant, the Board shall, within 30 days thereafter fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

Any Board officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership of the whole Board.

Censure

The Board may vote to censure or reprimand a member by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership of the whole Board.

If the Board is considering adoption of this language pertaining to censure, keep in mind that censure has no legal effect and that the legal question regarding the potential violation of an individual’s First Amendment rights is still unanswered. Consult your Board’s attorney for further advice.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
7-103 Resignation of municipal officers

Christopher Sugar was unable to attend the meeting, but emailed his thoughts on this policy, as follows:

“I've been called away this morning for work but wanted to share my thoughts on 9222. If you could pass this along I would appreciate it:

Essentially because the passage of the home rule act and the creation of a city charter which outlines the process for election to the Board of Ed., it follows that removal would likewise need to be authorized by the charter. You can see examples of where this has been effectuated in other areas (council, planning and zoning) where the removal procedures are enumerated. Here this bylaw would appear to be usurping the right of the voters as dictated by the charter which is not permitted under the home rule act.

I would suggest an opinion from the Town attorney on the legality of this process. “

The Policy Committee discussed this Bylaw #9222 and decided to check with our attorneys for their opinion. This bylaw will be brought back to the Policy Committee for further review when we have more information.

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 8:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Bengtson
Administrative Assistant