

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
REMOTE MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 2022

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: February 28, 2022
TIME: 2:35 PM

Present: Kate Bowen, Chair Policy Subcommittee
Mike Crowley
Meg Moriarty
John P. Phelan, Superintendent of Schools

1. Call to order at 12:02 pm by Member Bowen
2. Adjustment to the Agenda
 - To accommodate a community member who is present to speak about changes to the Homework Policy 6014, religious holidays and homework/attendance policy, approval of minutes will follow the discussion.
3. Updates
 - Religious holidays with Homework and Attendance Policy

Meryl Junik introduced herself as a parent of 2 students who are Jewish at the Chenery. She explained that the Jewish calendar, a lunisolar calendar, conflicts with the school calendar, which is based on the Gregorian calendar. Each time there is a conflict, students must ask for exemptions for holidays that do not require them to be absent from school but do require they observe after school and evening religious events/rituals. This, she stated, is because there is no calendar memory - these holidays come up every few years and they are not made explicit to teachers, etc.

Superintendent Phelan agreed with Ms. Junik that students should not need to re explain their conflicts/holidays and absence from school should not be a requirement of exemptions.

Prior to this meeting, Member Bowen spoke with Ms. Junik about creating a reference guide for teachers. Member Bowen suggested this may fall under the district's DEI work or work that PTAs are doing to promote inclusiveness.

Public Comment:

Kim Roussos - As a member of the Orthodox Christian community, she noted that the list on the district's calendar is not inclusive of all religions and religious holidays in the

community. She has previously communicated with Andrea Prestwich and is hopeful with this being brought forward again.

Edits were made to Homework Policy 6014 and will be read at the next Policy Subcommittee reading before being put forth to the School Committee for a vote for approval.

To Do: Superintendent Phelan will work with others to explore the holiday calendar and potential website listing. He will send any changes to the Policy SC.

4. Minutes - 1/24/2022

- Ms. Moriarty read three edits in the minutes that were suggested by Ms. Bowen. Then, Mr. Crowley moved to approve minutes from January 24, 2022. Member Bowen second. Roll call vote. (3-0-0)

3. Updates Continued

- Immunization Policy
 - Superintendent Phelan emailed Colby Bryant to inquire about vaccine mandates. She provided a written response. She is aware of the following districts who implemented any vaccine mandate: Cambridge Public Schools - extracurricular vaccine mandate. Amherst-Pelham Regional School District - vaccine mandate along with the local BOH.
 - There is still some question about the goal of new vaccination language/mandate as proposed by Member Saeh
 - Member Bowen read the current JLCB - Immunization of Students policy language and MASC language for communicable diseases (https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Portals/0/docs/scpublicdocuments/2021-22/Policy_Procedures_Subcommittee-Immunization_1_24_2022.pdf?ver=2022-01-25-095457-620) .
 - Superintendent Phelan will have the nursing staff take a look at the language in these 2 policies with attention to COVID vaccinations and provide feedback to the Policy SC.
- Transportation Policy
 - Member Bowen presented Transportation Policy 7006 with added language
 - The goal of adding language is to recognize all forms of transportation to school
 - Superintendent Phelan suggested removing the reference to "Safe Routes" to keep it broad
 - Bowen suggested retaining the language with MassDOT and its recommended organizations
 - Member Moriarty motioned to bring the policy to the full School Committee. Member Crowley seconded. Member Bowen will send the revisions to Chair Checkoway.

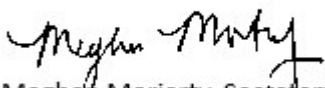
- Policy Hosting with MASC
 - Would cost \$950 per year for the MASC to host on their website. MASC will do all of the updates.
 - A full policy review would be required because our classification is not aligned with that of the MASC. This takes 3-6 months at a cost of \$10,500 which can be paid out over three years. They are open to negotiating the fee if it only requires a reclassification of the policies as they are.
 - Next steps: Member Bowen will ask a representation from the MASC to join a Policy SC meeting to answer questions and provide more details.

- Naming Policy
 - Member Moriarty provided a summary of the last rink fundraising committee meeting and discussion about naming policies. She shared policies from the Town (Select Board), Newton, MASC, and Hopkinton in the shared Google folder. These examples are more detailed than Belmont's policy. There was some discussion about whether there is time to take on the language in this policy before any decisions need to be made with the Select Board about the rink.
 - Member Moriarty will follow up with Select Board Member Paolillo. Superintendent Phelan will look over the Newton Policy as a good example.

4. Next meeting Monday February 28, 2022

5. Meeting adjourned on a motion by Member Bowen, second by Member Moriarty at 1:09 pm

Respectfully Submitted by:


Meghan Moriarty, Secretary