

RHINEBECK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT/POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting of October 8, 2015

Present: Diane Lyons, Mark Fleischhauer (by phone), Lisa Rosenthal (first part of meeting), Joe Phelan

(1) Policy No. 8410: "Student Transportation" – Joe gave the Committee context for this policy: it was issued 10 years ago, on August 30, 2005, when the district was in the process of overhauling its transportation program and switching from its then long-term bus company. As part of that process (for which the district used the services of a transportation consultant), the policy was developed. Although, as with most of the district's policies, it contains some boilerplate language, large parts deal with Rhinebeck-specific issues of the era when the policy was promulgated (such as mileage limits for provision of bussing to students, and whether busses should pick up on cul-de-sacs).

In light of the amount of time since the policy was adopted, as well as the rocky start to the current year's service with the district's new carrier, Joe and Tom Burnell reviewed the policy to try to determine whether there were parts of it that they believed should be changed to alleviate problems that had been experienced. They did not identify any parts that they believe contributed to the difficulties the district has experienced.

After a thorough review of this policy, members of the Committee suggested that under the "School Bus Scheduling and Routing" section, the language of subsection 3(e) – dealing with minimizing the crossing of the road by students – should be reworded to emphasize safety, with additions to clarify that bus drivers will signal all students, from grades K-12, to cross when they exit the bus, and the students are to take directions from the bus drivers and not simply cross on their own. Joe will draft language for the Committee's review.

(2) Policy No. 8414, "School Bus Safety": This policy was adopted in 2002, before the comprehensive review referred to above. The Committee requested that Joe confirm that students who attend nonpublic schools in the district are receiving the bus drills or classroom instruction required by the policy. The Committee also asked Joe to ascertain whether bus drills are providing the training on use of the emergency equipment referenced in the second paragraph of the policy. Joe will report back to the Committee on both these items. The Committee also requested the addition of language prohibiting bus drivers from using or speaking on cell phones while driving, and requiring them to pull off the road to do so, when such communication is necessary. Joe will draft proposed language for the Committee's review. Finally, the Committee requested that the title "School Business Administrator" be changed to "School Business Official," to reflect the actual title of the relevant employee.

[Lisa left the meeting at this point.]

(3) Policy No. 8414.1, "Bus Driver Qualifications and Training": Joe will check to ascertain whether requirements of the policy that a potential driver submit three

statements attesting to his good moral character, and that he act in a moral character as a role model for students, are required by law.

(4) Policy No. 8414.5, “Alcohol and Drug Testing of Bus Drivers”: The Committee suggested adding language prohibiting a driver who had previous violations of the policy while driving for the district from driving for us again. Joe will ascertain whether such a change would be legally permissible.

(5) Policy No. 8414.6, “Bus Accidents”: At the Committee’s request, Joe will delete the provision calling for the bus dispatcher to call the School Business Administrator (should be changed to “Official”) “at home”.

(6) Policy No. 8415, “Field Trip and Extracurricular Activity Transportation, and Special Uses of School Buses”: At the Committee’s request, Joe will delete the references to late buses (because the district no longer operates a late bus) and cheerleaders (because we no longer have cheerleaders), and will add a reference to the use of coach buses.

In addition to the above, Joe and Tom will discuss the possibility of adding a new policy or amending an existing policy to specify conduct by bus drivers that the district wishes to mandate or prohibit (e.g., prohibiting smoking and use of profanity or cell phones, requiring bus drivers to direct students who must cross streets)

Proposed Agenda for Next Regular Meeting (November 12, 2015):

Continued review of district policies. Follow up on previously discussed items.

Dated: October 8, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Rosenthal (with additions from Diane Lyons)