

RHINEBECK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT/POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2015

Present: Diane Lyons, Mark Fleischhauer, Lisa Rosenthal, Joe Phelan, Tom Burnell (by invitation)

The agenda discussed at this meeting were: (1) updates on policies previously reviewed by the Committee; (2) status report on operation of recently-adopted policy on late-meal payment charges; and (3) new issues potentially requiring Committee action.

(1) Policy No. 8530: "Cafeteria Meal Charges": This policy was adopted this past February. Tom reported that, in general, the policy has helped the district reduce the numbers of students who were delinquent in paying for school lunches. However, over the past few months, two issues have arisen. First, the State Education Department has notified Larry Anthony that the district is not permitted to carry over a negative balance in the cafeteria account if a student's family has not brought it into fully paid status by the end of the school year; rather, the district must transfer that item to the general fund as a debt so that the business office can take collection efforts, but the student's cafeteria account must start the new school year with a zero balance, meaning that the student has the opportunity to obtain a "Type A" lunch until that student's balance has 10 unpaid meals in it, after which the policy takes effect anew and the student will be transferred to the alternative meal until the deficit incurred in that school year only is paid. This raises the question as to whether the district should lower the number of meals a student must be in arrears in paying before the policy takes effect.

Second, some families whose children are delinquent in paying for lunches have indicated that they are unable to pay the deficit at once, but could pay for lunches going forward and would do so if their children could obtain a "Type A" meal rather than the alternative meal. Tom informed the Committee that the business office has been working with families in this position to structure payment plans to retire the amounts owed for previous unpaid-for meals, but the policy as written did not offer any guidance on what to do in this situation.

After a thorough discussion, the Committee asked Tom to continue in his and the business office's efforts to work through these issues as the policy is fully implemented, and then to report back to the Committee early in 2016. It is hoped that there will be more data at that point to guide the Committee on how best to address these issues.

(2) Policy No. 8410: "Student Transportation" – Joe provided the Committee with copies of this policy, marked up to show the changes he had drafted to address the Committee's requests from the October 2015 meeting. After a thorough discussion, Joe agreed to make some further changes, which the Committee will take up at its next meeting.

(3) Policy No. 8414: "School Bus Safety": Joe has discussed the issues regarding bus drills that the Committee raised at its previous meeting with Brett King. Brett will review the old files on the drills that had been compiled by his predecessor as CLS's

principal, to ascertain whether those materials show that nonpublic school students are to be receiving the bus drills and the training required during those drills. Brett will report back to Joe and Joe will update the Committee.

(4) Policy No. 8414.1: “Bus Driver Qualifications, Training, and Conduct”: The Committee reviewed language Joe had drafted to be added to this policy regarding bus driver conduct. After a thorough discussion, the Committee asked Joe to confer with the district’s legal counsel regarding this policy.

(5) Policy No. 8414.5: “Alcohol and Drug Testing of Bus Drivers”: At the Committee’s request, Joe agreed to discuss this policy with legal counsel.

(6) Policy No. 8414.6: “Bus Accidents”: Joe has made some minor linguistic changes to this policy to reflect similar changes made in the other policies in the 8410 series. No substantive changes were made.

(7) Policy No. 8415: “Field Trip and Extracurricular Activity Transportation, and Special Uses of School Buses”: Joe will make similar linguistic changes to this policy as have been or will be made to the other policies in the 8410 series. In addition, the Committee will consider at a future meeting whether the district’s practice regarding the issuance of bus passes for students riding the late bus should be added to this policy.

(8) Potential New Policy Regarding Social Media Use: The Committee discussed a workshop given at the recent NYSSBA convention regarding the use of social media as it affects schools. It was reported that a presenter of that workshop recommended that school districts have policies regarding social media use by students and adults who are employed by or otherwise act under the auspices of the district. After a thorough discussion, the Committee asked Joe to confer with legal counsel regarding this matter.

Proposed Agenda for Next Regular Meeting (December 10, 2015):

Continued review of district policies, starting from Policy No. 5154. Follow up on previously discussed items.

Dated: November 12, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Rosenthal