

**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH
LEGAL DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM**

DATE: JANUARY 4, 2017

TO: PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: POLICY COMMITTEE

RE: JANUARY 4, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Leslie Stevens, Ann Walker, Steve Zadravec and Kathleen Dwyer

Others Present: Paulette Rouse

Policies Considered:

Public Complaints about School Personnel, Employees, Students or Administration (KEB)

This policy was up for adoption and the Committee recommended the addition of language regarding that more clearly stated circumstances under which the School Board would hear complaints. The Committee recommended a reference that the Board would hear complaints that “are authorized by law or by collective bargaining agreements.” In addition, the reference to the Clerk as the person authorized to receive complaints against the Superintendent be changed to the Chair.

This policy will be recommended for adoption.

Public Complaints (KE)

The Committee reviewed the School Board Association model policy and determined that it was not necessary for adoption as the policy KEB provided enough opportunity to address complaints.

Graduation Requirements (IKF)

Kathleen explained that this policy has been under discussion with the High School, the Pupil Services Director and the Out of District Coordinator. Ann inquired as to the reasons why students are out of district and Kathleen explained there are a variety of circumstances including incarceration, court ordered placements and special education placements. The

issue has come up on occasion when a student in an out of district placement wants to participate in senior year end activities and/or graduation in Portsmouth. Kathleen further explained that students who are in out of district placements usually participate in these activities at the placement. Students receive their diplomas upon completing the requirements of the out of district placement and from that entity. There are rare circumstances where there is no graduation ceremony.

Prom is another issue where students are in out of district day placements, but continue to live in Portsmouth. There was a discussion regarding the prom and a recommendation was made to permit students to attend with the same requirements for non-resident students (i.e. prior sign up and being in good standing at their school). The Committee suggested that requests be considered on a case-by-case basis by a group consisting of the Senior Guidance Counsellor, the Out-of-District Coordinator and the Principal of the High School. Prior to any formal action being taken, Kathleen said that she will take this discussion back to the High School.

The issue of graduation requirements was also discussed. Currently, students on Individualized Education Plans may receive a Portsmouth diploma when the IEP team, Principal and Student Services Director recommend it. Kathleen explained when this was reviewed at the High School there was a recommendation to include a reference to the transition piece of the IEP. In addition, there are very rare circumstances, where a student can meet the minimum state requirements of 20 credits for graduation and a Portsmouth diploma would be recommended by the team referenced above. Kathleen said that she will make the changes to the policy and it was recommended for revision.

Evaluation of Instructional Program (IL)

This policy was reviewed because of the need for updating to reflect current practice. It had last been reviewed in 2005. The Committee also reviewed the model policy before making recommended changes.

The Committee recommended changing the title of the policy to Analysis and Assessment of the Instruction Program. In addition, it included language from the model policy that has the Superintendent reporting to the Board at least annually on the instructional program. The Assistant Superintendent will remain the designated administrator in charge of the educational program development and evaluation along with School Department staff. References to the Curriculum Council were deleted as this is no longer used. In addition, the section on New Courses was deleted to conform with the aforementioned changes and long standing practice.

First Aid & Emergency Medical Care (EBBC)

Kathleen said that she had forwarded this to Barbara Pamboukes for comment before the holidays and has not touched base with her yet. She will do so before the next meeting.

Non-Policy Items Discussed:

MOU with Portsmouth Police Department

The Committee had a copy of an unsigned draft of an MOU with the Portsmouth Police Department. This is a much more detailed document than the mutual aid agreement with Portsmouth and the towns. No one on the Committee could recall that this ever got past the draft stage. Steve mentioned that, given the current hiring process for a new Chief, this might be brought up with the police after the new chief is hired.

There are other agreements in place for information sharing and the SRO's.

Elections

Since the State opined during the election season in the fall, that voters could not be prevented from voting because they were carrying a weapon notwithstanding Federal and State laws on Gun Free School Zones, the School Board has decided to close schools on voting days. This includes Federal and State elections and primaries and municipal elections. This is problematic for the School Department as, in some years, it is a large interruption in the required days of school and instructional time. Kathleen said that this would be an easy item to forget on the back burner when there is no election pending, but would become an issue when there might not be enough planning time for it. Steve said that he would get a list of voting days from the City Clerk to know how many days are effected. Kathleen said that she would pass along the minutes of the Policy Committee on this item to the City Clerk and the City Manager so a dialog about alternatives to school voting sites could commence.

Recommended Board Actions:

Adopt: (two readings)

Public Complaints about School Personnel, Employees, Students or Administration (KEB)

Revise: (two readings):

Evaluation of Instructional Program (IL)

Graduation Requirements (IKF)

Revise and Reapprove: (single reading)

Weapons on School Property (JICI)

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 25, 2017 9:00 a.m.