Mr. Fennessy opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The agenda was to consider changes and updates to several student-related policies.

Mr. Richards was appointed a member of the committee for the meeting.

Jennifer Patterson made a motion to move into non-public session at 5:33 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3 II (e) that states: “Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with any body or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph.”

The Committee voted 4-0 by roll call to move into non-public session at 5:33 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3 II (e) (motioned by Jennifer Patterson, seconded by Mr. Richards).

Mr. Fennessy, Ms. Patterson and Mr. Richards recessed into non-public session.

Ms. Patterson moved to come out of non-public session at 5:43 p.m.

Committee members voted 4-0 by roll call to come out of non-public session (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Richards).

The Committee recessed the non-public session at 5:43 p.m.

Committee members voted to seal the minutes of the non-public session.

Committee members voted 3-1 (Ms. Redmond-Scura abstained) by roll call to seal the minutes of the non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (e) (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Richards).
Policy #517 – Manifest Educational Hardship

The committee added text from the NHSBA policy and renumbered items 1 through 10.

New policy #517.5 – Change of School or Assignment – Best Interests

This new policy represents a means to distinguish reassignment requests based upon “manifest educational hardship” from requests based upon “best interests,” but does not provide an appeal right. Ms. Patterson noted that under the statute, a parent may appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the State Board of Education under “manifest educational hardship,” but not with this policy.

Superintendent Forsten noted that while the policy is legally required, the Board can modify the sample policy. Ms. Patterson noted that this policy will be beneficial to the Superintendent, and to parents as an option.

Ms. Redmond Scura noted that if permission were granted, transportation costs are the responsibility of the parent.

Superintendent Forsten noted that the total number of students granted school reassignment will not exceed 1% (or 3-4 students) per school. Currently, one student from another district is attending a school in Concord, and one Concord student is attending a school in another district.

Mr. Fennessy suggested that the policy does not define “best interest,” which might be useful when the Superintendent brings a request forward to the Board, and Ms. Patterson agreed that the statute is not particularly helpful in terms of criteria.

Superintendent Forsten noted that reassignment involves a superintendent approaching another superintendent with an honorable request based on student need; she has not encountered any random or questionable requests.

Mr. Richards noted that the Superintendent can develop administrative regulations, and asked what would happen if the Superintendent decided against the request.

Under this policy, a request would go to Board for ratification only if the Superintendent grants it. Ms. Patterson reiterated that according to law, a parent may appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the State Board of Education under “manifest educational hardship,” but not with this policy.

The Committee added the sentence to item B.5: “There shall be no appeal of a decision by the Superintendent not to recommend the reassignment.”

Policy #520 - Safe School Zone

NHSBA has three relevant sample policies that cover the multiple topics covered in the District’s current policy. Ms. Patterson recommended adopting the three new policies.

The current Policy 520 Safe School Zone would be replaced with the NHSBA sample text of policy ADD Safe Schools in its entirety.
Student Discipline and Due Process (NHSBA sample policy JICD) would be numbered Policy 543.

Weapons on School Property (NHSBA sample policy JICI) would be numbered Policy 544.

Mr. Fennessy noted that “weapons” is better defined in the District policy, and suggested that the list be doublechecked and clarified.

Ms. Redmond Scura suggested that different NH RSAs are listed and suggested that these be reviewed.

In response to a question from Mr. Richards about whether District policy can be enforced at bus stops, or would apply to a weapon held by a non-student, Mr. Fennessy noted that the policy is primarily for students.

Mr. Richards asked whether the new Policy Safe Schools would present a hardship for the District, as item no. 10 requires school climate professionals to assess whether students feel safe in school.

**Policy #529 Homeless Students**

Current District policy references the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act.

Ms. Patterson asked whether the law governing services to homeless students changes all the time, and suggested the policy should simply reference the statute. Mr. Fennessy agreed, noting that he does not have a reference about whether changes to the law would influence this policy.

Mr. Richards suggested comparing any requirements from the new law (Every Student Succeeds Act – ESSA) to the older (No Child Left Behind) law.

The Committee recommended this policy to the full Board for a first reading. The Superintendent will review the current law and ensure all components are up to date.

**Policy #535 Exploitation of Students**

It was noted that NHSBA does not have a similar policy. This policy was considered for deletion, but it was decided not to recommend deletion at this time.

**Policy #535.1 Solicitation of Students**

Superintendent Forsten noted an associated NHSBA sample policy KH:

**Public Solicitation in Schools:** As a general policy, there will be no solicitation within the schools for any purpose whatsoever. No commercial enterprise may be represented in the schools and there will be no sale of goods or services on the premises.

Any request for the exception to this rule must be submitted in writing to the School Board or its agents (Superintendent and/or Principal) at least 30 days prior to the
implementation of the requested activity. The School Board reserves the right to grant exceptions.

Ms. Patterson asked the Superintendent if it would be worthwhile to adopt a more specific policy combining Policy 535 and 535.1 that describes specific, current situations, and provides guidance about commercial and nonprofit requests. Superintendent Forsten will develop a policy to address this issue for the next Communications Committee meeting. The Committee decided not to recommend deletion at this time.

Policy #536 Corporal Punishment

Superintendent Forsten noted that the second paragraph of the NHSBA sample policy would be pertinent, as at times parents have offered their permission for corporal punishment. However, the District has had a long practice of not using corporal punishment. The Committee recommended replacing Policy #536 with NHSBA sample policy JKA.

Policy #541.2 Dress Code

This policy was last reviewed in 1976 and has stood the test of time. The Committee decided to simply add a review date to the policy, with no changes.

Ms. Patterson thanked Ms. Redmond Scura and Mr. Fennessy for their valuable and diligent work on this committee over the past three years.

The Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the full Board a first reading of the policies which were revised: Policy #517 Manifest Educational Hardship; Policy #517.5 Change of School or Assignment – Best Interests; Policy #520 Safe Schools; Policy #543 Student Discipline and Due Process; Policy #544 Weapons on School Property; Policy #529 Homeless Students; and Policy #536 Corporal Punishment. Policies #535 Exploitation of Students and Policy #535.1 * Solicitation of Students will be developed at a later committee meeting. Policy #541.2 Dress Code will set a review date only (moved by Ms. Redmond Scura, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

Mr. Fennessy asked for a motion to adjourn.

Committee members voted 4-0 to adjourn (moved by Ms. Redmond Scura, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Fennessy Fennessy, Chair
Linden Jackett, Recorder