Jennifer Patterson convened the meeting at 5:34 p.m. There were five agenda items: a review of the Committee’s goals for the year, developed at the Board Retreat in January, and consideration of four topics potentially in need of policy development or revisions: Social Media for Staff; Student Representation on the Board; Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students; and Consideration of Narcan in the Health Offices.

Review of Goals

Superintendent Forsten presented the goals as developed at the retreat. The goals are:

- Check which policies reference appeals
- Review all policies to identify gaps and redundancies
- Revise the structure of District policies to align with the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) structure
- Complete alignment of District policies to support changes in the law
- Review procedures for grievance hearings
- Confirm expectations that all employee search processes would be confidential

Tom Croteau asked about the process for reviewing the policies to identify gaps and to check which policies reference appeals, and asked whether this should be done by Committee members or by the administration. Superintendent Forsten was tasked with finding out how many District policies reference appeals. Once Committee members see the number of policies involved, they can better understand the scope of the work needed.

Ms. Patterson suggested that Committee members take more ownership with other tasks related to policy review. She suggested that members take time to review the policies on the website. A review of the Policies page on the website will help members understand how the policies are organized currently. The Committee may want to split up some of the policy tasks, as needed, and members may look for topics within the policies in which they have a special interest.
Mr. Croteau asked about the policy organizational structure used by NHSBA and how its structure differs from the one the Board uses. Superintendent Forsten noted that there are some similarities between the way the two different organizations group and title their policies, but the NHSBA uses a lettering system and the Board uses a numbering system. She suggested that since the NHSBA provides the district guidance on this topic, it might make sense to convert to its lettering system. Superintendent Forsten suggested that the Committee might take one section at a time, perhaps beginning with the 100s, comparing District policies with those from NHSBA in the same topic area, ensuring all policies required by law are included.

Ms. Patterson noted that the Committee has developed or revised many of the District’s policies over the years, and have many the way it wants them. The District does not necessarily need to have identical policies to the NHSBA’s, but it would make sense to have those that are required, and that the District’s policies are well organized.

Maureen Redmond-Scura noted that once the Committee finishes the first pass with the policies, they may need to circle around again, keeping an eye on the policies as time goes on.

Social Media for Staff

Superintendent Forsten presented several documents for consideration: the District’s Policy #434 Social Media — District Staff, and several draft policies on the same topic, from NHSBA. Ms. Patterson noted that the Board adopted Policy #434 in September 2014 and that there is no need at this time to review the relatively new staff social media policy. There is a need to develop a student social media policy. Superintendent Forsten will provide the Committee with a draft or sample policy at its next meeting.

Student Representation on the Board

Rebecca Proulx, one of the student representatives on the Board, proposed that Policy #125 Student Representative be revised to allow student representatives to hold a second one-year term. This would be optional for the student. She also proposed that two students serve simultaneously on the Board. This has been the practice for several years.

Ms. Proulx noted that she has served one term as a junior, and would like the opportunity for another term. She feels that she’s learned about the expectations for the position, and would be a good mentor for a new student coming onto the Board next year. Ms. Proulx noted that there is an application process for the position that includes writing a letter to the principal and participating in an interview. In response to a question, Ms. Proulx noted that she is not a member of the School Senate.

Committee members proposed several revisions to Policy #125:

First sentence: striking “A student representative from the Concord High School Senate” and replacing with “One, or if possible two, Concord high school student(s) shall serve as the student representative(s) to the School Board.”
2. d. “Serving as liaison between students and the …” strike “principal” and replace with “administration, other faculty,” strike “Senate Advisors,” and appropriate outside agencies.”

Second from last sentence: “The student board member(s) shall serve” strike “for one term,” and replace with “a one term minimum with a two term maximum, from June 15 through June 14.”

Committee members discussed ways for the student representatives to increase communication between the Board and the District’s students, including use of email and appearances on the morning announcement show at Concord High School. Members also asked that other schools, in addition to the high school, have an opportunity to share events and news. Superintendent Forsten will arrange for each District school to have a short period of time at a monthly board meeting for staff, students and/or parents to share a highlight from the work of the school.

The Committee voted 4-0 to bring forward Policy #125, amended as discussed, to the May Board meeting for a first reading (motioned by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students

Superintendent Forsten presented, for the Committee’s consideration, a sample optional policy from NHSBA, on Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students. The District does not currently have a policy on this topic, and Superintendent Forsten is not necessarily advocating that one be created. This has been a topic of conversation over the last few years at the middle and high schools. Superintendent Forsten would like to meet with students and administrators to forge guidelines on this topic, without recommending a policy.

Mr. Croteau noted that questions on this topic can arise in the schools and decisions have to be made by building administrators. Both Mr. Croteau and Ms. Patterson indicated that they would be open to consideration of a policy if administrators felt they needed one for guidance. Superintendent Forsten noted that the District has a strong non-discrimination policy, Policy #160 which offers protection to individuals. Ms. Redmond-Scura raised a question about the guidelines that may be in effect regarding participation in interscholastic sports, which are governed by NHIAA. She also noted that the District’s policy on dress code seems to be very open and appropriate for all students. Committee members agree that they are open to adopting a policy that is tailored to Concord, after input from others, if one is needed or desired.

Consideration of Narcan in District Health Offices

Superintendent Forsten shared the position statement from the New Hampshire School Nurses’ Association about the use of Naloxone (Narcan) in schools. She notes that school nurses share the position of the NH group, believing that there is a strong rationale for having Narcan available in the schools. Superintendent Forsten would like to have the District’s consulting physician’s opinion on this.
A number of questions were raised on this issue, including about the availability of Narcan; who would be authorized, in the absence of the school nurse, to administer the medication; the medication’s shelf life; and how quickly it needs to be given in order to be effective. Does the closeness of medical emergency services mitigate the need to have it in the schools?

Ms. Patterson noted that, under Policy #531, the Superintendent is authorized by the Board to update the Health Procedures Manual without Board approval, although if there is a major change, this would go before the Board. Superintendent Forsten was asked to bring a recommendation for revision to the Manual regarding the use of Narcan in schools as soon as possible.

Superintendent Forsten will work with the school nurses, the District’s consulting physician Dr. William Storo; and the Concord Police, and come back with answers to these questions.

The Committee voted 4-0 to adjourn (motioned by Mr. Croteau, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

The Committee adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Patterson, Chair
Donna Palley, Recorder