Committee chairperson Nathan Fennessy called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. The agenda was to consider a proposed resolution regarding candidates’ financial disclosure, and continue to review and revise Board policies, specifically in Section 400, Personnel.

Candidates’ Financial Disclosure

School Board Clerk Roger Phillips had offered a recommendation at the last meeting related to the need for candidates who run for public office to submit financial disclosure information for spending above $500. Attorney Ed Kaplan recommended mirroring the city’s ordinance, and the Superintendent will bring a draft for consideration in May. Mr. Fennessy asked Superintendent Forsten to check with Attorney Kaplan about enforceability.

Policy #411 Physical Examinations

There was a question whether language regarding “additional examinations” would possibly commit the District to pay for additional exams and/or treatment. The intent would be to pay only for the additional exam required/requested, not for associated treatments, etc. Attorney Will Phillips from NHSBA reviewed the existing language and noted that it did not indicate a liability to pay for additional exams. The Committee struck the last sentence of the current policy “d.” and added, “The District will bear the cost of any medical examination which the District may require, but shall not, however, be responsible for any costs for treatment(s) indicated by, resulting from or relating to such examination.”

Policy #521 Sexual Harassment

The Committee had agreed to review and revise the student sexual harassment policy after a review and update of Policy #414, Sexual Harassment, under Personnel. Several differences are apparent between the staff and the student-focused policies.

The Committee decided to adopt the NHSBA sample policy, with additional language under section IV. Superintendent Forsten noted that some of the language on reporting and investigating procedures derives from the Office of Civil Rights.

Superintendent Forsten indicated that a specific reporting form would be created for this policy. If a complainant chose not to use the form, subsequent investigation would need
to fulfill the areas which the form would otherwise cover. The Superintendent would report annually to the Board on completed investigations and how each is resolved.

Policy #423 Placement on Salary Schedule Steps
The District’s collective bargaining agreement with CEA (and other collective bargaining units) provides clarity to placement on a salary schedule. Mr. Fennessy suggested that changes to collective bargaining laws might necessitate this policy. The Committee recommended deleting this policy.

Policy #423.1 Vocational Teachers, Creditable Experience
This is addressed in the CBA for the CEA; this policy is not necessary. The Committee recommended deleting this policy.

Policy #423.2 Salary: Advancement to a Higher Degree Category
The Committee discussed setting a timeline for this process. After some discussion, the Committee recommended deleting this policy.

Policy #423.3 Advance to Higher Salary
As this policy is referred to in the collective bargaining agreement for CEA and after some discussion, the Committee recommended deleting this policy.

Policy #424.1 Leaves of Absence for Health Reasons
This topic is addressed in each of the District’s collective bargaining agreements; this policy is lenient in that it offers up to 38 weeks of leave for “health reasons.” The Committee recommended deleting this policy and revising the NHSBA policy on FMLA.

Policies #424.2, 424.3 Leaves of Absence
The District currently has two related policies: Policy #424.2 Leaves of Absence for Military Obligations and Policy #424.3 Leaves of Absence for Military Service. The NHSBA policy, Military Leave, encompasses the District’s current two policies and defers to the USERRA. The Committee recommended adopting the NHSBA policy, Military Leave.

Larry Prince joined the meeting.

Policy #424.4 Unpaid Leaves of Absence
The Committee recommended adding “Professional” to the title of this policy, “Unpaid [Professional] Leaves of Absence,” to allow unpaid leaves for those who want to pursue professional development but want to maintain their position in the District.

Policy #425 Subpoena/Jury Duty
This policy is referred to in several collective bargaining agreements. The Committee reviewed the policy, without changes.

Policy #426 Guidance Counselors
The Committee recommended minor textual changes to the policy, which would cover extra work days over and above the counselors’ individual contracts. The Committee changed the title to School Counselors – Additional Days.
Policy #428 Death Benefits (Sick Leave)

This policy is referred to in several contracts. In such a case, the District pays out 100% of the employee’s accrued sick time, regardless of percentages specified in contracts. Mr. Prince noted that the insurance carrier has indicated that if no beneficiary is named, these payments must be made to the deceased’s estate. He noted that this payment would be made regardless of whether a particular employee’s contract allowed any sick-day payout upon leaving the District. Mr. Prince will further research this policy and return to the Committee next month with information about which collective bargaining agreements have language that references this policy.

Policy #429/681 Instruction of Temporarily Home-Bound Students

This policy may be misplaced in the “Personnel” section; it should be maintained in the “Instruction” section. If continued, it should be updated to 10 hours/week.

The Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the full Board a first reading of the policies which were reviewed, revised, or suggested to be deleted (Policies 411, 521, 423, 423.1, 423.2, 423.3, 424.1, 424.2, 424.3, 424.4, 425, 426, 429/681 (moved by Maureen Redmond-Scura, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

The Committee voted 4-0 to adjourn (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Croteau).

The committee meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Fennessy, Chair

Linden Jackett, Recorder