Concord School District  
Board of Education  
Communications and Policy Committee

**Date:** May 10, 2017

**Committee members present:** Jennifer Patterson, Chair; Alana Kimball, Maureen Redmond-Scura, Tom Croteau

**Other Board members present:** Clint Cogswell, Pam Wicks

**Administration:** Terri Forsten, Superintendent; Donna Palley, Assistant Superintendent

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to continue to review Board policies, with a focus on 12 policies from Section 200: General School Administration. The policies under review were:

1. Policy 212: Superintendent, Approval of Employees
2. Policy 212.1: Summer Vacancies
3. Policy 213: School Cancellation/Delayed Opening
5. Policy 215: Transfer within the District
6. Policy 216: Absence of Superintendent
7. Policy 231: Administrative Prerogative in the Absence of Policy
8. Policy 248: Response to Public Information Requests
9. Policy 249: Data/Records Retention (Records Retention Schedule)
11. Policy 252: Local/State Grant Authorization
12. Policy 261: Agreement between the State of New Hampshire and/or the City of Concord and the Concord School District

Superintendent Forsten provided Committee members with copies of the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) model policies that corresponded to the topics under review.

Other topics for discussion at the meeting included a process for parent and public input, and information about coaches.

**Policy #212 (also #693) Superintendent, Approval of Employees**
Policy #212.1 Summer Vacancies

Superintendent Forsten recommended that the two policies be combined. The members agreed to retain Policy #212 with the current title and language, and extend it with language from the corresponding NHSBA model policy, as well as a statement that reflects the Board’s practice relative to authorizing the Superintendent to hire in the summer. Policy #212.1 will be removed.

This policy, like a number of other Board policies, resides in two different sections of the policy manual, because it relates to two categories. This will remain in place until the Committee decides whether to continue having duplicate policies.

Policy #213 School Cancellation/Delayed Opening

Committee members noted that the current Board policy provides very limited information, while the NHSBA policy seems overly detailed. Members requested that Superintendent Forsten include the first, last and perhaps one paragraph from the middle of the NHSBA policy, and include a reference to the use of social media.

Policy #214 (also #831) Acceptance of Gifts

The Committee reviewed the policy related to gifts, and an additional document that describes the criteria the Superintendent will use in accepting a gift. Members recommended keeping the Board’s current policy in place, replacing language in the last sentence related to non-discrimination with the list from the Board’s non-discrimination policy. The criteria document will be removed.

Policy #215 (also #442) Transfer within the District

Several collective bargaining agreements include language about the issue of transfer of personnel. The first sentence of the Board’s policy refers to this and will be retained, with minor revision. The second sentence will be removed. The second sentence of the NHSBA model policy will be added to the Board’s policy.

Policy #216 Absence of Superintendent

Committee members agreed to several revisions for Policy #216. The following sentence was recommended to be added to the policy: ‘If the short-term absence is anticipated to become long-term or permanent, the Board will decide the process for appointing an Interim Superintendent.’ In addition, ‘Chief Finance Officer’ was changed to ‘Business Administrator.’

The NHSBA has a model policy describing an administrative succession plan. Committee members requested that Superintendent Forsten develop a policy related to hiring administrators, with reference to District procedures. This could be reviewed at the next Committee meeting.

Policy #231 (also #140.2) Administrative Prerogative in the Absence of Policy

No revisions were recommended to this policy. The review date will be updated to reflect the Committee’s review of duplicate Policy 140.2 in April 2017.
Policy #248 Response to Public Information Requests

Several revisions were made to this policy, including changing ‘public information’ to ‘public records’ and adding one sentence from the NHSBA model policy requiring the Superintendent to review records before they are released to ensure that no confidential or exempted information is disclosed. Committee members recommended that the words ‘and shall for no reason release such information’ be removed from the third section, noting that a court could require information to be released under certain circumstances.

Policy #249 Data/Records Retention (Records Retention Schedule)

The Board’s policy is identical to the corresponding NHSBA policy. Committee members recommended keeping this policy with no revisions. It was noted that the Board also has a records retention schedule, which describes which records must be saved, and timelines for retaining various types of documents. This document is an appendix to the policy. The review date for this policy will be updated.

Policy #251 Federal Programs Authorization

Policy #252 Local/State Grant Authorization

Committee members agreed to merge Policies 251 and 252, keeping Policy 251, and changing its title to Local/State/Federal Grant Programs Authorization. The words ‘in its behalf’ in the second line of Policy 251 will be changed to ‘on its behalf.’ The last sentence of Policy 252 will be added to the end of Policy 251. The remainder of Policy 252 will be deleted.

Policy #261 Agreement between the State of NH and/or the City of Concord and the School District

This policy was revised to read as follows: ‘The Superintendent is authorized to enter into a reciprocal agreement with the State of New Hampshire and/or the City of Concord subject to authorization from other policies. The Superintendent will notify the Board of any agreements at its next possible meeting.’

The Committee voted 4-0 to recommend Policies 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 248, 249, 251 and 261 to the full Board for consideration, with changes or deletions as noted, and that Policies 252 and 212.1 be eliminated (moved by Maureen Redmond-Scura, seconded by Tom Croteau).

Committee members discussed the potential involvement of parents with policy development. Superintendent Forsten highlighted Policy #140, which provides for parent input relative to policies. She suggested that the Committee seek parent input as part of the revision process for the Special Educational Policy Manual, which is up for review by December 2017. Members noted that parent input is welcome, and if there is a specific policy that is of interest to parents, this input could be provided during a committee meeting.
Superintendent Forsten will let Student Services Director Bob Belmont know that there are parents interested in being part of the Special Education policy review process, and he will contact them. Committee members would like to hear what changes are recommended when the process is complete, and hear from the public on this issue. A member of the Communications and Policy Committee may be interested in being part of the revision work. At the next Committee meeting, Superintendent Forsten will provide information about the process and the time commitment for this work.

Ms. Redmond-Scura requested additional information about the role and responsibility of athletic coaches. She noted that individuals interested in being coaches may wonder about the responsibilities, and has asked for a policy to clarify this. Other Committee members asked about coaching contracts, job descriptions and evaluation procedures. Superintendent Forsten will bring the committee additional information on these topics. She will also ask Steve Mello, Director of Physical Education and Sport, to attend a meeting and offer his input.

Ms. Redmond-Scura indicated that a written description of expectations for coaches would be useful. She offered possible language to be included in a coaching policy:

The Concord School District expects its coaches to:

1. Treat all student athletes fairly and equally.
2. Follow all rules and policies of the sport, Concord School District, and NHIAA.
3. Work to create a positive relationship with all student athletes on the team in an effort to teach elements of the sport as well as sportsmanship, teamwork, and elements of nutrition and fitness such as stretching, recovery, preparation, etc.
4. Create a positive team attitude so that every team member has the opportunity to improve throughout the season, individually and as a group, and so that student athletes encourage each other and look forward to reuniting as a team.
5. Encourage each student athlete to be his/her best self as an athlete, a student and a person.
6. Be knowledgeable of the sport in order to teach it properly.

Jennifer Patterson noted that the Board has several policies related to athletics in Section 600, and recommended that the Committee review these policies at its next meeting.

Mr. Croteau asked whether the Committee could see revisions made to the policies on the projection screen as the changes are discussed at the meeting. This would allow members to see changes as they are suggested, which could make it easier to follow the revision process. This will be tried at the next meeting.

Pam Wicks noted that, at the last Committee meeting, members discussed a policy related to Board member emails. She recently attended a School Board orientation program where advice about emails was provided. She noted that, for example, if Clint Cogswell received an email from a constituent, he should forward the email to
Superintendent Forsten, who would then forward it to the rest of the members of the Board. Superintendent Forsten would act as the conduit for sharing information, rather than relying on Board members.

Several parents, including Penny Duffy and Adrienne Evans, attended the meeting. They thanked Committee members for considering a request they made at a previous Communications and Policy Committee meeting to provide advice and support with policies. They indicated that they were available as a resource to the Committee. Ms. Patterson encouraged them to come to the meetings if there is an issue they would like to discuss or on which they would like to provide input. They asked if the Committee packet would be available to review before the meeting. Superintendent Forsten will determine where the information, including agenda and other documents to be discussed, will be posted before the meetings so that they can be reviewed by the public.

Committee members agreed to schedule two summer meetings, one each in July and August. The Committee will continue to review Board policies, moving first to Section 600 and eventually to Section 300.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Patterson, Chair

Donna Palley, Recorder