Concord School District
Board of Education
Communications and Policy Committee

Date: September 18, 2017

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

Other Board member: Clint Cogswell

Administration: Terri Forsten, Superintendent; Donna Palley, Assistant Superintendent; Tom Sica, CHS Principal; Steve Mello, Director of Physical Education and Sport

Committee chairperson Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to continue to review Board policies, with a focus on 10 policies from Section 600: Instruction. The policies under review were:

1. Policy 541 Co-Curricular Expectations
2. Policy 690 Participation in Interscholastic (related to NHSBA Policy JJIB)
3. Policy 690.1 Athletic Philosophy and Guidelines
4. Policy 691 Athletic Program
5. Policy 691.1/712 Athletic, Transportation
6. Policy 691.2 Practice-Orientation Sports Program
7. Policy 691.3 Exceptional Athletic Ability
8. Policy 691.4 Student-Parent Consent, Athletics
9. Policy 695 Athletic Trips
10. New: Eligibility for School Athletics (NHSBA Policy JJIC)
11. New: Concussions and Head Injuries (required; NHSBA Policy JLCJ)

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

She guided Committee members to the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA) model policies that corresponded to the topics under review.

As a member of NHIAAA, these by-laws apply to Concord programs and athletes.
Director of Physical Education and Sport Steve Mello described the District’s NHIAA membership and spoke about that organization’s process for developing policy.

In response to a question from Maureen Redmond-Scura about whether the District has additional requirements for eligibility to participate in the athletics program, Mr. Mello noted that students must pass four units in the preceding grading period. Concord High School (CHS) further requires that three of those four units must be passed with a score of 70 or above. There is a probationary period for those potential athletes that usually results in eligibility for those falling just below this level.

In response to a question from Tom Croteau about eligibility requirements for students who transfer, Mr. Mello noted that there is a waiver process outlined in the NHIAA bylaws.

In response to a question from Ms. Redmond-Scura about whether homeschooled or foreign exchange students are eligible, Mr. Mello noted that they are. Concord residents (attending Bishop Brady, for example) can access the athletic program at CHS in accordance with the process outlined in the NHIAA handbook.

In response to a question from Ms. Patterson about the frequency of policy changes at NHIAA, Mr. Mello noted that policy changes are infrequent but do happen as needed.

In response to a question from Ms. Patterson about the whether the Unified teams are covered under NHIAA policies, Mr. Mello noted that these are fully delineated.

**Policy 541 Co-Curricular Expectations**

Ms. Patterson suggested removing several sections on the first page and re-numbering the remainder of the sections.

Mr. Sica asked whether the intent of this policy is also to govern academic expectations of all students in clubs, noting that broad participation in clubs is hoped to have a positive effect on all aspects of a student’s life at the high school. He did indicate that the behavioral expectations delineated in the policy are important and needed.

Ms. Palley also spoke to the purpose of the 21st Century after-school programming relative to the academic requirements in this policy.

Ms. Redmond-Scura suggested placing an asterisk to reference this or a similar sentence, “Academic expectations may be modified by the Club Advisor.”

Superintendent Forsten suggested that this policy may be too specific in certain areas; for example, the step-by-step process for first violation, second violation, third violation; academic performance; school attendance; suspensions.

Mr. Croteau asked whether the CHS administration needs this specific language to maintain the required standards. Mr. Mello indicated he uses this policy on a regular basis. Mr. Sica noted that this policy has also been used for violations in the performing arts program, for example.
Mr. Cogswell suggested that the inevitable circumstances that do not fit within a particular policy can be left to the discretion of the administration.

Ms. Patterson suggested that the sentence connected to the asterisk read “Academic expectations and procedures for violations of behavioral expectations may be adjusted for clubs as appropriate.”

**Policy 690 Participation in Interscholastics (NHSBA Policy JJIB)**

Mr. Croteau asked if this could be broadened to include all co curricular activities. The Committee decided to leave the policy unchanged for now.

**Policy 690.1 Athletic Philosophy and Guidelines**

There was some discussion about the specificity of criteria for adding or discontinuing a particular program. Mr. Mello noted that the only team that was dropped in the last decade was gymnastics.

Superintendent Forsten noted that athletic programs at the elementary level are all run by the City Parks and Recreation program.

Mr. Croteau noted that the policy expresses and is itself a philosophy, and the section on the elementary level addresses the District’s overall approach. He suggested minor revisions in the first paragraphs after “elementary schools” and “Rundlett Middle School.”

There was some discussion about whether to include sections A, B and C; it was decided to keep these.

**Policy 691 Athletic Program**

Ms. Patterson asked whether specific physical education curriculum should be included as part of the Director of Physical Education and Sport role. Mr. Mello noted that he guides the physical education curriculum but does not write it. There was some discussion about whether this policy is needed. Mr. Croteau noted that the policy provides structure for the Director. It was decided to add the review date and make no further changes.

**Policy 691.1/712 Athletic, Transportation**

The Committee decided to remove the words “and intramural” from the policy, add “or contracted,” and adjust grammatical structure so that the policy will read “All intrastate travel for interscholastic purposes shall be by school buses owned by, operated by, or contracted with the Concord School District.”

**Policy 691.2 Practice-Orientation Sports Program**

Superintendent Forsten noted that this content is covered in the NHIAA handbook, and asked whether this policy is needed at all. Mr. Mello noted that this is not current practice either. Committee members agreed that this policy should be deleted.
Policy 691.3 Exceptional Athletic Ability

Ms. Patterson suggested that this policy be deleted, since this is covered by specific NHIAA policies. Committee members agreed that this policy should be deleted.

Policy 691.4 Student-Parent Consent, Athletics

There was some discussion about whether students in the District have health insurance; Mr. Mello noted that the District has auxiliary coverage for injured students. Ms. Patterson noted that this policy might be needed for risk management purposes. Superintendent Forsten will check with NHIAA and NHSBA about the enforceability of this policy. The Committee will review the policy again after Superintendent Forsten brings back this information.

Policy 695 Athletic Trips

There is a standard procedure for Superintendent approval of overnight trips. Mr. Cogswell noted that former Board member Betty Hoadley asked for specific language about athletic trip distances, and also annual consideration by the Board for funding these trips. The Committee decided to remove the final sentence of the policy.

New: Eligibility for School Athletics (NHSBA Policy JJIC)

Ms. Patterson noted that as there is some overlap with several existing policies and given that this is not required, that this policy not be adopted. The Committee decided not to adopt this policy.

New: Concussions and Head Injuries (required), derived from NHSBA Policy JLCJ

Superintendent Forsten noted that this is a required policy, and suggested that the policy follow the guidelines included in the District Health Manual. There is no need for a separate policy. Mr. Mello noted that the Athletics Department deals with concussion protocol every day. He noted that the athletic trainer, present on the same field complex for every sporting event, checks with injured athletes and, if any possible concussion symptom is noted, the player is immediately taken off the field. This is backed up in the NHIAA handbook.

The Committee voted 4-0 to recommend to the full Board for consideration, with changes as discussed, the following: Policy 541 Co-Curricular Expectations; Policy 690.1 Athletic Philosophy and Guidelines; Policy 691.1/712 Athletic, Transportation; and 695 Athletic Trips, with changes, for a first reading; and the elimination of Policy 691.2 Practice-Orientation Sports Program and Policy 691.3 Exceptional Athletic Ability. The Committee further voted that Policy 690 Participation in Interscholastics be unchanged, with the potential to be broadened in the future to all curricular activities; and that the review date be added to Policy 691 Athletic Program. Policy 691.4 Student-Parent Consent, Athletics will return to the Committee for further work (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

The Committee thanked Mr. Sica and Mr. Mello for their interest and feedback.
The Committee voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting (moved by Ms. Redmond-Scura, seconded by Mr. Croteau).

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Patterson, Chair

Linden Jackett, Recorder