Concord School District
Communication Committee Minutes
August 20, 2014

Committee members present: Jennifer Patterson, Chair; Melissa Donovan; Kass Ardinger; Oliver Spencer

Other Board members present: Clint Cogswell, Tom Croteau

Administrators and school staff present: Chris Rath, Superintendent; Donna Palley, Assistant Superintendent; Pam McLeod, Director of Technology

The committee discussed policies related to social media, filling Board vacancies, and dress code.

1. Social Media Policy

Superintendent Rath provided a revised version of this policy for the committee’s consideration. This draft includes recommendations from Attorney Jeanine Poole.

In the revised draft, a clear distinction is made between employees using the District’s network and employees using personal social media. This policy speaks specifically to district employees using the district’s network for District or school-related purposes. Language has been added that clarifies this.

The second area of revision relates to the expectation of privacy. The policy states that when staff use the District’s network as employees, there is no expectation of privacy. The revised draft requires staff to inform the District when setting up a site and provides means for District administration to access, review and administer it.

The policy includes an explicit reference to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which governs the privacy rights of parents and students. The Right to Know law is also referenced.

Pam McLeod, the District’s new Director of Technology, provided additional information about procedures needed to implement the social media policy. The group discussed the importance of parents understanding what they are agreeing to in terms of the use of names and images on social media. Ms. McLeod noted that challenges will arise that we aren’t even aware of yet, as technology is constantly evolving. She recognized the importance of staff training, and of active monitoring of our social media presence. The goal is to ensure that staff understands the parameters for using social media as employees, but also to encourage its use as a communication and teaching tool.

Next steps include working on a social media policy for students and modifying our Acceptable Use policy.
The committee voted 4-0 to recommend Policy #434 Social Media– Concord School District Staff, as revised, to the full Board for a second reading at its September, 2014 meeting (moved by Mrs. Ardinger, seconded by Mr. Spencer).

2. Filling a Vacancy on School Board

Superintendent Rath presented a draft policy regarding filling a vacancy on the School Board. One suggestion for revision was made—changing ‘ward’ to ‘district’ in order to be consistent with the language in the District Charter.

The committee voted 4-0 to recommend Policy #115 – Filling a Vacancy on School Board, as revised, to the full Board for a first reading at its September, 2014 meeting (moved by Mr. Spencer; seconded by Ms. Donovan).


Superintendent Rath provided an article for the committee that summarized the pros and cons of school uniforms. She noted that Pinkerton Academy seems to be the only public school in New Hampshire that has recently discussed the issue of school uniforms. Pinkerton recently considered a unified dress code that would govern what students could wear to school. They explored the topic over a roughly 18-month period using several study strategies, including a research committee, surveys and forums. Ultimately they decided not to pursue this policy.

The committee discussed various options for next steps, and agreed that they should engage the community, gathering the opinions of administrators, parents and students regarding this issue. The Superintendent will begin with an administrative survey, and then develop a draft survey to be completed by students and parents together for the committee to review.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Patterson, Committee Chair
Donna Palley, Recorder