



Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORT

OCTOBER 13, 2022

Policy and Legislative Committee

The Policy & Legislative committee met on Thursday, September 22, 2022, to discuss student representatives on the Board of Education, live-streaming of meetings, student ID cards, student journalism, and other matters.

- The Committee approved proposed Policy 0143.2, High School Student Representative, to move forward to the Board of Education. This policy would implement recent legislation mandating at least one student representative on every school board in a district with a high school.
- The Committee approved changes to Policy 0168, Recording, to move forward to the Board. The changes add language to permit live-streaming of Board meetings with certain restrictions to maximize safety and changes the title to "Recording and Live Streaming Board Meetings."
- The Committee approved an update to Policy 5513, Care of School Property, to move forward to the Board to reflect changes to the related Administrative Code section and certain terminology. Ms. Corradino and Ms. Smith expressed concern about withholding diplomas for non-payment of outstanding charges, but trusted it would not be common practice.
- The Committee approved proposed Policy 5517, School District Issued Student Identification Cards to move forward to the Board. The purpose of this policy is to implement recent legislation requiring that ID cards for students in Grades 7-12 have suicide-prevention contacts printed on the back. Mr. Rubin reported that ID cards are issued to students in all grades, but only middle and high school students are required to wear them.

- The Committee approved proposed Policy 5722, Student Journalism, to move forward to the board. The policy is intended to replace Policy 2432, School Sponsored Publications, implementing recent legislation recognizing editorial freedom of student journalists, subject to certain restrictions to respect the rights of others.
- Mr. Rubin briefed the Committee on two laws approved by Governor Murphy in September:
 - ⇒ P.L. 2022, c. 103, requires districts to disseminate promotional information about school nutrition and available food choices in the two languages most commonly spoken in students' homes in the district.
 - ⇒ P.L. 2022, c. 104, the Working Class Families' Anti-Hunger Act, effective September 2023, requiring districts to provide free school breakfasts and lunches to students from middle-income families.
- Mr. Patel asked the Committee to consider a policy addressing advertisement banners at the football stadium to assure equity for all student groups. Mr. Rubin will gather information from the Administration on the district's current practices.

Fiscal Planning and Operations Committee

The Fiscal Planning and Operations Committee met on Wednesday, October 5, 2022, to discuss the budget calendar, health benefit expenses, capital projects, and more.

2021-2022 Audit: The auditors completed their field work in September including a thorough review of federal grants. No issues are anticipated.

2023-2024 Budget Calendar: The Committee reviewed and approved the 2023-2024 Budget Calendar.

Health Benefit Expenses

- Mr. Oliveira updated the Committee on the poor claims performance during the first quarter and discussed several measures administration is taking to address claims costs.
- The Committee recommended that the revised proposed NJSBA Draft Resolution opposing SEHBP premium increases be added to the Board meeting agenda.

Facility Capital Projects

- HVAC Upgrades #1 – The temporary HVAC units have been working well. Delivery of unit ventilator and metal shelving shipments is reported to be imminent.
- HVAC Upgrades #2 – The bid release date has been postponed to November 1.
- Five-Year Capital Project Plan – The Committee discussed the plan for updating the five-year capital project plan based on the current financial resources.

Energy Savings Improvement Program (ESIP)

- Solar PPA – Cable limiters were received for Eisenhower and King. The contractor is exploring alternative solutions for Arbor. The Quibbletown modified solar proposal is expected soon.
- Honeywell Projects – LED lighting work is occurring at Fellowship Farms. Work on the boilers, destratification fans, water conservation measures, and transformers is ongoing.

Transportation: Staffing remains a challenge, however, all regular routes and athletics/activity runs are being covered. The District was able to reinstate the middle school late bus to increase participation in after-school activities. The District continues to recruit bus drivers and aides.

Food Services Update

- School Nutrition applications – A reminder email and telephone message to complete this year's application was sent to parents on October 2. Reminder messages have been added to the school marquees and the schools have assisted with targeted outreach. Our current free and reduced student eligibility rate is 30 percent of enrollment.
- Student feedback meetings – The first PHS student meeting was held on Sept. 29. Feedback was positive regarding food quality, food variety, and menu messaging.
- Food service equipment – New refrigerators were received at Arbor, King, and Quibbletown, and two combi ovens were received at PHS.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee met on Monday, October 3, 2022, to discuss state testing, civics curriculum, English Language Arts updates, and more.

“Running Against the Odds” – The committee discussed the book “Running Against The Odds” by Desmond Dunham for middle school and high school English Language Arts. Students are encouraged from the reading of this memoir to tell their own stories. The district is exploring having Mr. Dunham present to Grade 8 ELA teachers during the November 8 in-service day. A teacher’s guide to “Running Against the Odds” is available online for free. Ms. Iduh suggested giving the book to athletes, especially ninth-graders.

Metlar Bodine House Museum – The committee discussed highlights from the museum. Dr. Connors told of an event occurring on October 29, from 7 to 10 p.m. There is an open invitation for anyone who would like to attend at the Piscataway Community Center, and the public can call for reservations.

Children’s Book, “Leola Bakes In Paris” – Author Stephanie Dunlap discussed her inspiration for writing this book and highlighted the importance of diverse texts, as well as the idea of baking as a universal “language.” Dr. Baskerville had a district support specialist preview the text.

ELA Updates – Janine Albanese discussed small-group instruction and said it is not limited to specialized groupings of students but is a part of the independent reading and writing portion of Workshop.

State Testing and Learning Acceleration Guide – Dr. Baskerville told the committee that the NJSLA Individual Score Reports have been mailed home to parents and families, and that the district is in the process of implementing the Learning Acceleration Guide focusing on targeted skills and aligned resources.

Grade 6 Civics – Dr. Baskerville said that in compliance with the state mandate, Piscataway will teach Civics in Marking Periods 2 and 3 in Grade 6. During the in-service days of October 24 and November 8, teachers will continue their work on aligning and pacing lessons using the most recent resources from the Center for Civics Education.

Comprehensive Health and PE – Dr. Baskerville said an information letter has been sent to the community containing information about the implementation plan for Comprehensive Health and PE standards as well as the upcoming opt-out procedure. It has been received well.