



**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1J, MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

**Board of Education's Policy Committee Meeting**

**November 16, 2020**

**INFORMAL MINUTES**

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*The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the discussions and actions taken by the committee and reports given. Anyone interested in viewing the full meeting, please visit the School Board website at <https://www.pps.net/domain/219>.*

A Meeting of the Board of Education's Policy Committee came to order at 4:03 pm at the call of the Committee Chair Brim-Edwards. This meeting was held virtually due to Covid-19 and streamed live at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ppscomms/videos>

**There were present:**

Committee Members

Directors Bailey, Brim-Edwards, Kohnstamm, Lowery, Moore (Committee Chair); Student Representative Shue

Staff and Other Attendees

Kara Bradshaw – Executive Assistant, Board of Education

Shanice Clarke – Director of Community Engagement, Strategic Partnerships

Dr. Kregg Cuellar – Deputy Superintendent, Instruction & School Communities

Guadalupe Guerrero – Superintendent of Schools

Mary Kane – Legal Counsel

Liz Large – Contracted General Counsel

Rachel Lent – Paralegal

Dani Ledezma – Senior Advisor, Racial Equity and Social Justice

Lidia Lopez-Gamboa – Confidential Executive Assistant and Complaints Services Coordinator

Parker Myrus – District Student Council Representative

Rosanne Powell – Senior Board Manager

David Roy – Interim Senior Director, Communications

Stephanie Soden-Back – Executive Chief of Staff

Jillian Skelding – District Student Council Representative

Dr. Luis Valentino – Chief Academic Officer

Jackson Weinberg – District Student Council Representative

Don Wolff – Chief Technology Officer

**Pre-meeting**

The virtual meeting opened for attendees to arrive at 4:15 pm. No deliberation or decisions were made prior to the start of the meeting.

**Board Assignments to Policies Under Draft and Revision**

Time Started: 4:04

Director Moore shared that committee members would be working on copy editing in pairs offline and that the committee would focus on content and conceptual ideas during meetings. The committee assigned the policies scheduled on the work plan to committee members. There was discussion regarding whether student representatives would be involved in the offline editing process. Director Moore suggested that the student reps have the opportunity to assist if they are interested.

## **Formal Complaint Process**

Time Started: 4:19 pm

Director Moore shared that there was an expressed interest in refocusing the complaint policy to include more than the formal complaint process and that some preliminary language had been drafted. She noted that there were already some changes taking place at the district, which are meant to streamline the process. Liz Large shared that a new Resource Coordinator position is being created in the district. She explained that the person in the position would serve as a liaison between families and the Office of School Performance (OSP) team and assist with complaints. Director Moore shared that although the new position has not yet been fully defined, language could be drafted to reflect the intended changes.

Director Brim-Edwards suggested including a pre-formal complaint step to the policy with guidance for resolving issues without going through the formal complaints process. Director Bailey suggested changing the policy title to the Conflict Resolution Policy. There was discussion regard potential change in title. The committee expressed interest in changing the title to reflect a fuller resolution process. Liz Large stated that she would check on the legal requirements of the policy title.

The committee went through the policy in detail by section, starting where they left off the last time the policy was looked at (section 4B). Director Brim-Edwards requested that the language that states the complainant will receive all communication that the board receives concerning the complaint, with the exception of confidential information. Liz Large shared that there is language in the policy regarding sharing information related to the complaint. There was committee discussion. The committee requested that the language be revised to clarify that materials shared with the board would also be shared with the complainant except for under certain circumstances.

Director Brim-Edwards requested specific language within the policy which states that a complaint must be addressed within 30 days. Lidia Lopez-Gamboa noted that it was included in the policy. Liz Large stated that she would make the language clear. Rita Moore suggested that it be clear in the policy that the formal complaint policy is tied to Division 22 regulations. There was discussion regarding adding other complaint resources and other complaint avenues.

There was discussion regarding addressing who can attend complaint hearings and how many people a complainant could bring to an executive session. It was decided to revise the policy so that there is no restriction on the number of people that complainants could bring in, while also acknowledging that information in an executive session is confidential.

There was discussion regarding the fact that a complaint could not be resubmitted once a decision had been made by the Board. Liz Large noted that new evidence was not a reason to restart a complaint for which a decision has already been made, but that if concerning new evidence were provided the district could choose to address it. There was discussion regarding whether multiple families could complain about the same topic. Liz Large stated that each family has the right to complain about a subject. There was discussion regarding the annual summary and the information that would be provided within the report. It was decided that it should at least include the number of complaints and a summary of trends, types of complaints, and emerging issues.

There was discussion regarding the paragraph that states that board members should not intentionally discuss a complaint with a complainant once the complaint process has been initiated, including discussion on how to respond to people that reach out directly. Director Brim-Edwards requested a clear definition of what is considered investigate in relation to this policy be included. Director Moore asked to call the question who is in favor of the paragraph restricting investigations with relatively minor revisions. Directors Lowery, Moore, and Bailey voted in favor and Director Brim-Edwards voted against, stating that she would like to suggest that language be added to clarify that staff should also not talk to board members outside of the formal process.

Director Moore shared that Ms. Large would look at requested revisions, reach out to the Board Directors who are working on the policy offline, and bring it back to the meeting at the next meeting on December 07, 2020.

Break: 5:55 pm – 6:00 pm

## **All Students Belong Policy**

Time Started: 6:04 pm

Director Moore shared that the current draft is early in its creation and asked the committee to provide comment on conceptual ideas. Dani Ledezma shared that the policy came from the State Board of Higher Education adoption the All Students Belong initiative which included a set of rules that school districts must follow along with the requirement that all districts across the state adopt a similar policy. She added that staff focused on not only creating a policy to meet the legislative regulations, but one that aligns with the policy to the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) work that is already occurring at the district. She stated that they changed the title of the policy from All Students Belong to Anti-racist Learning Communities. She provided an overview of the draft policy, noting that the policy lays out the prohibition of hate crimes and the consequences of their uses. She noted that the policy focuses on three hate symbols which were required by legislation, and there will be a link to a database of hate symbols. She stated that the policy is focused on anti-racism, but that there is also reference to LGBTQ and other forms of hate speech. Director Scott asked why anti-racism was the only focus and other types of hatred were not also called out. Ms. Ledezma shared a strong antidote to hate is to focus on anti-racism. There was further discussion on including other forms of hate.

There was a discussion on hate symbols and how to encompass all of them, and how many there are, and how some are not known to all people. Director Bailey asked that there be reference to the emotional impact of hate speech and not just the impact on learning.

## **Title IX**

Time Started: 6:29

Director Moore postponed the Title IX discussion due to time constraints and because the Title IX coordinator was not available for the meeting. She added that a policy has not been drafted and that the goal was to have a conceptual conversation prior to drafting a policy. Liz Large shared that there was a desire to look at an indemnification policy and consider whether to provide legal coverage for employees who are subject to legal claims from acting within the scope of their job that are not covered by the Tort Claims Act. Ms. Large provided a list of questions to consider, including whether the district provide defense up front or offer reimbursement and whether there should there be a cap. Liz Large noted that there is not a high frequency. Director Moore requested sample scenarios to consider. The committee discussed items to consider, including reimbursement, how to determine who qualifies, and whether the district would have the option to refuse a request for assistance if there was evidence of wrong doing.

## **Public Comment**

- Xander Zipp: He / Him. Testifying on behalf of Publius United regarding hate speech at PSS. The coalition of students is formed of students across PPS high schools to change the hate speech policy. They propose that students participate in drafting the policy. He shared details of two incidents at Lincoln High School and how they were responded to. The coalition does not believe that the policy supports affected students nor addressing the issue of hate speech. Students have a right to a safe and accepting learning environment.
- Kylie Jones: She/Her. Testifying on behalf of Publius United. The advocacy group is dedicated to creating safer spaces for students of color and students with marginalized identities. She provided a list of ways that the coalition proposed to address hate speech, which included creating concise definitions of what hate incidents and hate crimes are, designing a hate incident crime reporting system, developing preventative education with a focus on equity, and creating support for students and staff when incidents occur. She added that if they were to work with the policy committee on the policy, they would bring student perspective.
- Beth Cavanaugh: She / Her. She is a part of a group of parents and teachers from across PPS who formed to review the Foundation Fundraising Policy. In reviewing district data, they found that Foundation dollars disproportionately benefit white students. She is sharing her findings to bring transparency to the PPS foundation system and build community support. They hope that the policy committee will establish a policy that focuses on racial equity.

**Adjourned**

Committee Chair Moore adjourned the meeting at 6:57 pm.

Submitted by:



Kara Bradshaw, Executive Assistant  
PPS Board of Education