

Policy Committee Remote Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 23, 2020 @ 12:00 noon

Attendees: Denise Day, Dan Klein, James Morse, Kenny Rotner, Catherine Plourde, Wendy DiFruscio

Visitors: Attorney Allan Kropp – Drummond Woodsum

Dr. Morse opened the meeting by explaining that once again we have invited Attorney Allan Kropp to this meeting to continue reviewing the policies and procedures surrounding the Title XI legislative changes at the Federal level, that the District will need to adopt prior to the August 2020 deadline, and that Catherine Plourde will be joining in on this meeting as well.

The following policies and procedures are being reviewed: AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students, ACCA-R – Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title XI Sexual Harassment Complaint procedure, ACAB – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees, and ACAB-R – Employee Discrimination/Harassment and Title XI Sexual Harassment complaint procedure.

Atty Allan Kropp began by explaining that he has provided the District specific policies that were requested by Superintendent Morse. He explained that the committee needs to be working from the second set of documents that were sent yesterday.

Policy AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity is very similar to the existing policy that the District currently has and explained that this is the general notice policy. There were no questions on this policy.

Policy ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students is a broad-based policy that goes into effect for the 2020-21 school year. Atty Kropp reiterated the differences in this policy between the State and Federal requirements. He also pointed out a difference from the prior version which was the definition and steps needed to be taken for the category of “Other Forms of Sexual Harassment.”

Catherine Plourde asked Atty. Kropp if the Policy JICK – Bullying could be reviewed again against the new regulations to make certain that the District is in compliance, as we refer to this policy frequently.

Atty. Kropp stated that he could do that. He also explained to the committee that Policy AC and ACAA are Board policies that require Board approval and they also direct, if needed, the Superintendent to develop a procedure. Typically, procedures are not Board approved.

Jim explained that in the past the Wellness Policy was mandated by Federal requirements that needed the procedure to be approved along with the policy. Policies/Procedures ACAA&R and ACAB&R will also fall under this category.

Procedure ACAA-R – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students Procedure – Atty Kropp reviewed again with the committee the three sections to this procedure: Section 1 – Definitions, Section 2 – Unlawful Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure, and Section 3 – Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure. The committee asked clarifying questions pertaining to the different roles especially the decision maker and if this person has been determined yet. The training of individuals at the District level, the timelines involved in an investigation. The complaint process and who is responsible, the handling of the investigation and the findings and subsequent actions that need to be followed. The language surrounding emergency removal and administrative leave and requesting additional language be added to the procedure. The guidelines that need to be followed by the Title IX Coordinator for all parties involved in the investigations. The options that the District has if an investigation does not fall under Title IX.

Atty Kropp stated that the remaining two policies are very similar but are adapted to employees and their employment.

Jim asked if we needed to be the first to adopt these new guidelines and asked Catherine what her thoughts were. Catherine and Atty. Kropp felt that we should follow through with adopting as soon as they are ready. Jim asked Atty. Kropp if he would be willing to come to the August 19 Board meeting to present these policies and subsequent procedures and that he would discuss with the Board Chairs. He agreed.

Additional discussion ensued. Jim thanked Atty. Kropp and Catherine.

No additional questions or comments. Meeting ended at 1:05 PM – Next meeting: September 10, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy L. DiFruscio