



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Policies and Procedures Minutes 08/03/2010

Policies and Procedures Subcommittee, Arlington School Committee

School Committee Room – August 3, 2010 – 5:40 p.m.

APPROVED Minutes

In Attendance:

Subcommittee Members: Judson L. Pierce-Chair

Cindy Starks

Leba Heigham

Professional Staff:

Superintendent Dr. Bodie, Mary Cummings

Ms. Starks' Motion, seconded by Ms. Heigham, to adopt the 7/20/10 minutes passed unanimously.

A discussion of adopting a bullying policy took place. Dr. Bodie noted that there are comparisons between the towns and that the Department of Education would like uniformity. However, sample policies and protocols have not been delivered yet. Apparently the Superintendent of Somerville developed a bullying policy but it is a long one. It may not be until December when we get any sample policy from MESE. A suggestion was made that APS begins the school year with at least a sample policy, one that we can modify edit as we go. Dr. Bodie stated that there will be a meeting on Wednesday August 25, 2010 with Robert Cole regarding bullying training and APS assistant principals will likely be in attendance.

Ms. Heigham noted that bullying is repeated harassment.

Dr. Bodie noted that principals will have to engage in investigation per the new state law and that the principals are planning several trainings this year, including one with teachers.

Ms. Cummings would like to know what causes students to engage in bullying behaviors, and what if any research is out there on this topic.

Dr. Bodie stated that she will be attending a morning workshop with Stoneman Chandler and Miller regarding bullying.

Ms. Heigham asked if we should revise the harassment policy to add a section on bullying with a reference to upholding the law.

Ms. Starks indicated that we can also do this along with adding the transgender piece. Our policy should say we won't stand for this behavior and every school has to have a process of how to follow up immediately.

Ms. Heigham referenced Section AC/ACA regarding reporting harassment and discrimination. Ms. Heigham suggested that we could revise this to include transgender, bullying, and sexual harassment.

Ms. Starks noted that bullying may not stop entirely but at least we'll make people more aware of the problem and present ways to combat it. Consequences may shape behavior.

Dr. Bodie noted that it really comes down to a judgment call on the part of administrators and that we will as a school district follow the requirements of the law as simply as possible.

Ms. Starks suggested making minor adjustments to the current harassment policy with definitions of bullying, cyberbullying, and by referencing the bullying law and then later on amend it as more specifics come in.

There was a Motion made by Ms. Heigham, seconded by Ms. Starks: "we bring to the full School Committee a motion to comply with the state anti bullying law and in support of it to have first reading of a revision of policy AC/ACA (POLICY ON HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION) to include LEGAL REQUIREMENTS surrounding the bullying law at the next School Committee meeting or by 9/14 whichever is earlier. "

Discussion: We'll report out in roundtable tonight that the Arlington SC take the position in support of the anti bullying law and to that end do a first reading on policy at our meeting on 9/14.

Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

New Business:

Ms. Starks brought up the issue of the daughter of Alec and Olga Segel and wondered if it was possible to do a revision of the kindergarten entrance age policy to include a waiver process for a first read on 9/14/10 and a 2nd read on 9/28/10 so that the Segals' daughter would be able to start Kindergarten by this October. There was extensive debate and discussion about this idea with nothing decided and no motions made.

Motion to Adjourn made by Ms. Heigham, seconded by Ms. Starks, passed unanimously at 7:00 p.m.