



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

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Policies and Procedures Minutes 10/16/2007

Arlington School Committee
Policies and Procedures Subcommittee
Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Members present:

Ron Spangler, Chair
Jeff Thielman
Sean Garballey

The meeting was called to order at 2:07pm.

1. Approval of Minutes, September 10, 2007

On a motion by Mr. Garballey, seconded by Mr. Spangler, the minutes of September 10, 2007 were approved by a vote of 2 – 0. (Mr. Thielman had not yet arrived.)

2. School Councils and School Improvement Plans

The Subcommittee reviewed policies BDFA-E, BDFA-E-1, and BDFA-E-2 for consistency with applicable state law (MGL 71:59C and MGL 69:11). Mr. Spangler presented an analysis of the discrepancies between our policies and state law, attached hereto as Exhibit A, and a report of the administration on current actual practices (Exhibit B), and summarized all three by stating that a) our policies require actions by the administration that are not required by state law, b) we are not doing what our policies require, and c) even if we were, we would not be compliant with state law.

The sense of the Subcommittee is that our policies must conform to applicable state and federal laws and regulations in this area, but that we should otherwise minimize the burden on the staff associated with compliance with these policies. Mr. Spangler proposed consolidating BDFA-E-1, and BDFA-E-2 into a single policy, and redrafting BDFA-E as well. He will do so and present the results to the Subcommittee at its next meeting. Mr. Thielman suggested that we have the Superintendent, or his designee, at this meeting.

3. Online Policy Manual

Mr. Spangler reported on the MASC Online Policy Manual service. The sense of the Subcommittee was that this would be a great improvement in accessibility and usability of our policies. Mr. Spangler expressed concern over the cost, which is \$3500 initially and \$800/year maintenance, and asked whether we could do something almost as good in-house. Mr. Spangler will put this question to the Superintendent and IT Director for guidance, and report back to the committee.

4. Policy CBI-E: Evaluation of the Superintendent

The Subcommittee discussed revising the evaluation instrument under Policy CBI. Mr. Spangler expressed concern that the current instrument is vague and leads to different results if used "bottom up" instead of "top down," and expressed a desire to engage the public in the process of revision. Mr. Garballey echoed those sentiments. Mr. Thielman explained that this was a streamlined version of a previously more complicated instrument.

The Subcommittee reviewed the instrument used by the East Longmeadow school committee, which has 30 questions, each with three specific indicators. Mr. Spangler observed that Arlington's instrument has 6 questions with a total of 41 indicators. Mr. Thielman stated that 30 questions and 90 indicators is too many.

The sense of the Subcommittee was to take the following approach to revision of this policy.

- Get and review evaluation instruments from other districts (aside from East Longmeadow)
- Draft and circulate a revised instrument for Arlington

- Schedule one or more public meetings to solicit comment
- Prepare final instrument for committee approval

5. Next meeting

The next meeting will be Monday, October 29 at 8:30am. Mr. Garballey requested that the three-year policy review be placed first on the agenda.

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02pm