

LAMOILLE UNION DISTRICT #18 BOARD
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2009

Committee members present: P. Ingvoldstad, D. Osborn, S. Reber, K. Roberts. Others: D. Taylor, C. Hindes, B. Schaffer, J. Teegarden.

The meeting started at 5:32.

B. Schaffer talked about his recommendations for the substance abuse policy. He suggested updating it to refer to new legislation about student medication. He noted that the definition of drugs does not include things students may be pretending are drugs. K. Roberts said by definition they're not drugs, just a behavioral issue. On p. 41 there is a typo – it should be “assistance” not “assistant.”

D. Osborn asked whether B. Schaffer thought it would be better to have definitions in each policy, or a common set of definitions for the whole manual? B. Schaffer said he thought it would make sense to have a common set of definitions in one place, and to take definitions out of individual policies. S. Reber said there are words that can mean slightly different things in the context of different policies, but we could specify those in individual policies. He suggested that as we go through policies, we pull out definitions from those we work on and add them to the common glossary. D. Osborn said she thought the requirement to warn policy changes wouldn't apply to the glossary.

B. Schaffer said that we don't have any parent information and training programs, as mentioned on p. 42. D. Osborn asked, is the parent component state-mandated? B. Schaffer will check. He noted that on p. 42, under Community Support and Referral System, the policy says, “The District shall maintain a liaison with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department for the purpose of obtaining assistance . . . and to ensure that current law enforcement requirements are followed.” He doesn't know how he can ensure that. S. Reber said he reads that to say that's why we have a liaison with the sheriff's department. B. Schaffer said he is not sure who the liaison is.

B. Schaffer said the section on consequences is his real beef. There is some repetition that may not need to be in there. Also, this is the only policy that runs from grade 7 to 12. Violations and consequences are cumulative throughout a student's 7-12 grade career. Do we want students' records to follow them from middle school to high school? We could run students out of the system who could benefit more from being in it. S. Reber asked how often that happens. B. Schaffer said it hasn't happened yet. He asked whether consequences might be more applicable in procedure rather than policy.

P. Ingvoldstad asked about students on 504 plans. B. Schaffer said when a student is on an IEP or 504 plan, the school board doesn't determine the student's placement. P. Ingvoldstad said maybe we should treat all kids like kids on 504 plans – have the LEA come together and come to the board with a recommendation for consequences. D. Taylor said the board can exceed what's required by federal law. We can implement something for all students that federal law requires for some. K. Roberts said we need to keep in mind kids who might really pose a threat. We should have the power to expel a student if we need to. She is not sure we want to lump kids who don't need federal protection into the same group. B. Schaffer said he feels having a scripted response – specific consequences listed in the policy – is the problem. K. Roberts thinks a lot of what is in the policy is required. She recommended looking at the VSBA-recommended policy. D. Taylor said the high school graduation completion bill

could have implications for this policy. B. Schaffer said his recommendation is to look at a split between middle school and high school for accumulating violations and consequences.

B. Schaffer said the current policy has different consequences for sale, distribution or exchange than for purchase, use, or possession. It makes a value statement that distribution should be considered worse. Is this still true? He noted that it is harder to prove distribution. S. Reber asked, who determines whether it is distribution? B. Schaffer said D. Jewett is usually the disciplinarian, but he gets involved in some cases. D. Taylor said being too prescriptive in our response can get in the way of doing what's best. B. Schaffer said he is looking at removal of this part (Specific Violations and Consequences) from the policy. K. Roberts said she thinks it may be federally required, but maybe we can refer to federal law without spelling it out. It was noted that consequences may be federally or state mandated – but not the age range across which they are cumulative. B. Schaffer will look into the federal requirements. He hasn't seen specific consequences described in state statute. If this section remains, he suggests in the list of consequences, changing "Recommendation to the School Board for long-term suspension" to "If there is a recommendation to the School Board for long-term suspension." The policy currently requires students with violations to schedule an appointment with the S.A.P., but in the past there have been cases where a student schedules an appointment but doesn't show up. He recommends making actually going to an appointment a requirement. But he thinks the board doesn't want a student brought to them for missing or not making an appointment. He would change "Athletic eligibility affected" to "Extra curricular eligibility affected."

S. Reber asked how drug issues at the tech center are handled – how much is handled there, and how much through the sending high school? J. Teegarden said tech center students are disciplined at the tech center. If a kid is suspended from his sending school, he is suspended at the tech center, and vice versa. D. Osborn asked, does the tech center use the same S.A.P. counselor and sheriff's department person? J. Teegarden said yes. J. Teegarden said he doesn't think the board can expel a tech center student from the student's sending school. That needs to be cleared up in the policy. There was a question about how to handle the reference to Policy 6.11 near the end.

B. Schaffer read some comments from the parent of a student who recently had a second offense. The parent wants to make the policy less punitive and more rehabilitative. Keeping kids off sports teams does nothing to make them substance-free. B. Schaffer said maybe kids could still have some role with the team instead of being completely removed. K. Roberts said, what if the drug is steroids? She thinks the policy should clearly state its objectives and philosophy to give guidance. It was agreed that B. Schaffer would work on suggested revisions to this policy over the summer, with the help of C. Hindes, and bring it back to the committee in the fall.

D. Osborn said she wanted to get a feeling for the direction the committee would like to take – putting out fires vs. systematic review. It was noted that a medication policy should be adopted. S. Reber said issues tend to come up during the school year, so summer might be a time to review. B. Schaffer suggested a policy retreat. D. Taylor said she thought that was a good plan, but suggested that prep work be done in advance, for instance, checking to see if we have all policies required by law. She said we should make sure our policies are in line with new goals the board adopts. D. Osborn suggested that everyone should bring their summer calendars to the June meeting and consider setting a date for the retreat.

P. Ingvoldstad asked, can we look at Policy 6.11?

The meeting ended at 6:31.