Meeting Minutes
# Duval County Public Schools

**December 15, 2022, Policy Handbook Review Committee Meeting**

Dr. Kelly Coker, Chairman
Ms. Cindy Pearson, Vice-Chairman
Ms. April A. Carney
Ms. Lori Hershey
Mr. Warren A. Jones
Ms. Charlotte D. Joyce
Mr. Darryl Willie
Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present except Board Members Lori Hershey and Charlotte Joyce. Board Member Joyce participated via telephone. Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent, was not in attendance. Mr. Ray Poole, Office of General Counsel, was present.

**Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF BOARD MEMBERS VIA INTERACTIVE VIDEO/TELEPHONE SYSTEMS

**Motion:**
**That the Duval County School Board approve the participation of Board Member Charlotte D. Joyce via interactive video and/or telephone systems.**

**Vote Results:**
**Motion:** Cindy Pearson
**Second:** Warren A. Jones

**PASSED 5-0**

**Aye:**
Dr. Kelly Coker
Warren A. Jones
April A. Carney
Cindy Pearson
Darryl Willie

**Nay:**
None

**Items to be Discussed**

1. BOARD POLICY 4.20, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION AND ALLOCATION

Tashonia Grant, Policy and Compliance Director, explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Board Member Joyce inquired about section 6 of the policy regarding classroom libraries and the books that are available to students being in compliance with the state law.

Paula Renfro, Chief Academic Officer, responded that effective July 1, 2022, books in the school media center, school library, classroom library, and required reading list must be reviewed by a certified school media specialist, who also serves on the committee for review. She added that the district is compliant with the state regarding classroom libraries, school media books, and the required reading list.

Board Member Joyce requested that the verbiage regarding classroom libraries be added to the policy.

Board Member Willie inquired about the language of the state.

Ms. Renfro confirmed that it is the language from House Bill 1467 and that she would use that exact language in the policy.

2. BOARD POLICY 5.13, ADMISSION TO POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Ms. Grant explained the purpose of this policy.

Discussion:
Board Member Willie inquired about the purpose of the repeal of the original policy.

Ms. Grant explained that she did not know the rationale of the repeal and that Corey Wright, Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Assessment was not in the position at the time, but Chairman Dr. Coker was.

Chairman Dr. Coker tried to recall and explain the purpose of the repeal. She added that research could be done. Mr. Wright added that it appears the old policy was about post-secondary students with disabilities. The new policy covers all students. Chairman Dr. Coker stated previously students with disabilities received a different type of diploma instead of a regular diploma. She thanked Mr. Wright for his assistance.

3. BOARD POLICY 5.15, HOMELESS STUDENTS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Board Member Jones inquired when the students are identified, who determines if they are homeless.

Dr. Anna Dewese, Executive Director, Student Discipline and Support responded that there is a team of people led by Terri Jones, Supervisor of Dropout Prevention. There are different qualifications that must occur related to how the District defines a homeless student or an unaccompanied youth. She shared a term she just learned of, 'couch surfing', which is when an unaccompanied youth is going from home-to-home. This makes them homeless. If a student has been disconnected from their family, this makes them unaccompanied. Most unaccompanied youth are at the age of 16 and older.

Board Member Jones inquired about temporary transportation being provided for the homeless students.

Dr. Dewese stated that once a student has been declared homeless, they have that status for the year and then there is a review for the following year. The district is responsible for making sure that homeless students get their education.

Board Member Willie inquired about a 'card'.

Dr. Dewese responded that it is the district's responsibility to identify the resources that are being provided for the students. The card is not to identify the student as homeless, but during certain circumstances they need to know who they can contact at the district office.

Chairman Dr. Coker inquired if the card had information about United Way on it and how often the card is distributed and how frequently the district is touching basis with them.

Dr. Dewese confirmed that it does. She mentioned how some students may move to different places many times and sometimes they stay put, but they only need the card one time. Regarding ongoing services, there are social workers that are in contact with the schools, and they check on these students throughout the year.

Chairman Dr. Coker suggested if the information that is on the card could be put on the school district's website.

Dr. Dewese said it currently is not on the website, but believes the suggestion was a good one.

Board Member Willie commented about those under the age of 20 do not carry a wallet anymore. He agrees the information should be on the website.

4. BOARD POLICY 5.24, STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:

Board Member Joyce inquired if Zero Tolerance was defined by the state or the Student Code of Conduct.

Dr. Dewese confirmed that Zero Tolerance is defined by state statute.

Board Member Joyce inquired if it could change from year to year based on the statute.

Dr. Dewese confirmed and added that every time there is a rule hearing for one of the statutes, it goes to a committee review and sometimes the language gets updated due to components in the statute.

Ms. Grant added that each year as they go through the student code of conduct, they look to see if there have been any changes to the definitions.

5. BOARD POLICY 5.26, STUDENT DETENTION, SEARCH, AND SEIZURE

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Chairman Dr. Coker inquired if a student was arrested in Orlando, FL during Grad Nights since that is a school sanctioned event.

Ms. Grant responded that she was not sure how this works out of the city, that this is a Chief Burton question.

Dr. Dewese responded that during a discussion with Chief Burton, he stated that if something happened out of county, the two law enforcement agencies would collaborate so as to inform parents what have happened.

6. BOARD POLICY 5.28, ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SCHOOL RELATED CRIMES

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:

Board Member Jones inquired if there was a clear definition of what is a petty act of misconduct.

Dr. Dewese responded that during the Rules Committee meeting, there was discussion but not able to come up with a clear definition. Chief Burton stated that for the purpose of using it in the School District, petty acts of misconduct would be for fighting.

Board Member Jones expressed that legally, it should be put into policy so that there is a clear line so that the district does not get in the same situation it was in previously.

Board Member Carney stated that fighting is an assault, and assault is not a petty act.

Dr. Dewese mentioned that assault has its own definition which is mutual combat. With regards to assault, if someone touches another person and that person does not want to be touched, that is considered an assault. She added that the district will continue to get the CCR numbers to identify that children were in a fight. However, it is not necessarily sent to SESIR. The superintendent has stated that every incident that occurs will have a CCR number, which Chief Burton's office will handle and those in the schools who handle discipline in the schools will be working along with them.

Board Member Joyce expressed that things are coded and they are subjective because people see things differently. She inquired what the district is doing to make sure that we are defining this specifically, because there is no objectivity for school administrators.

Dr. Dewese responded that principals and everyone that handles discipline were notified that training with them would be more frequent and coding issues could be corrected if needed. There will be a meeting with the conduct committee soon due to upcoming rulings and needing to make sure the district is in compliance.

Board Member Joyce inquired about the district providing written guidelines in order to be more proactive.

Dr. Dewese responded that she would include it in discussion for the next meeting.

Chairman Dr. Coker stated that making this guide is hard for various reasons. However, to provide written guidance is a good idea and understands that it will take time. She also added that the language about CCR should be added.

Ms. Grant explained what the Student Code of Conduct looks like with regards to the policy and the process for updating the Student Code of Conduct.

Ray Poole mentioned that there is nothing that defines specifically what are petty acts of misconduct.

Board Member Jones inquired if the district created a definition of petty acts of misconduct even though it is not in the statute, would it give the district a better legal standing instead of leaving it at an individual decision. Mr. Poole read a portion of the statute.

Mr. McDuffie explained that the school decision is not whether something is a petty acts of misconduct but the decision is based upon the charge in the Student Code of Conduct. He added that the definition of petty acts of misconduct are the infractions noted in the Student Code of Conduct that do not require consultation or police reporting.

Board Member Willie does not think anything new needs to be created but to add the definition to what already exist in the Student Code of Conduct.

7. BOARD POLICY 5.45, ACCELERATION PROGRAM ACCESS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:

Chairman Dr. Coker explained the original purpose of the policy.

Mr. Wright stated that they may need to refine Board Policies 5.46 with 5.45 due to confusion.

Board Member Willie expressed that there is a two-fold purpose regarding this policy: schools should stay true but be willing to make adjustments and meet the needs of the community.

Bring Board Policy 5.46 back for review.

8. BOARD POLICY 5.61, USE OF RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Chairman Dr. Coker requested a quick overview of the reporting and how it works for new Board Member Carney.

Amy Valentine, Executive Director of Exceptional Student Education explained the policy as regards to Exceptional Education Students (EES).

Board Member Jones inquired about the policy applying to the contractors of the district. Ms. Valentine confirmed that they are applying the state guidelines.

Board Member Joyce inquired if a school does not have their own SRO, but uses an agency, would the officers from the agency receive training for restraining a student with a disability?

Ms. Valentine responded that Police Officers receive specific training that is different from what teachers and staff are trained. It was added that Chief Burton would be better able to provide more information.

9. BOARD POLICY 6.80, PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Board Member Jones inquired how teachers were being made aware of the change.

Tameiko Grant, Executive Director of Office of Equity and Inclusion responded that they are notified during the Code of Ethics training (done throughout the year) and onboarding and refreshers at various meetings.

Chairman Dr. Coker inquired if the information would be part of the PowerPoint presentation used by the principals at the beginning of the school year.

Ms. Grant confirmed that it would be.

Board Member Joyce mentioned the document that the Board Members sign every year stating that they are in compliance with Professional Ethics. She suggested that maybe district staff should do the same thing.

Mr. Poole responded to Chapter 7 of the policy as a possibility for a separate free-standing rule.

Mr. McDuffie agreed.

Board Member Willie inquired if Board Member Joyce was suggesting staff sign a document to say that they are being ethical.

Board Member Joyce responded that a member of the Audit Advisory Committee made the suggestion that if the Board members signed something every year regarding ethics, then it would be good policy for anyone in the organization to abide by the same ethical rules. She added that it is something that the Board could talk about later.

Mr. Poole shared 7.71 & 6.87, can be the 2 policies that the Board can look at. later.

10. BOARD POLICY 8.09, SCHOOL SAFETY MONITORING

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Board Member Willie inquired about line F, saying that at least 80% of school personnel, including personnel at charter schools have to complete the approved training.

Ms. Grant responded that 80% is the minimum per state statute. She added that this upcoming year is the first time the district will be submitting a report.

Dr. Dewese stated that there's collaboration between the departments of Mr. Wright, Chief Burton's and hers, to ensure that the Youth Mental Health training is occurring monthly as well as the Behavior threat Assessment training. There is a spreadsheet that is being used to track everything.

Board Member Willie commented that the district was going for 100%, but the state gives us 80% as leeway. Dr. Dewese confirmed his comment.

Board Member Jones stated that the goal should be 100%, because the number of personnel varies from time-to-time.

Dr. Dewese confirmed what Board Member Jones stated and added who the members of the team must be. Change in team status is tracked and school-based administrators are informed monthly as to who has and has not completed the required training and when training is available.

Board Member Jones mentioned that elementary schools do not have SROs. They have whatever law enforcement personnel is assigned.

Dr. Dewese confirmed the statement and added they law enforcement still receives training and that Chief Burton is responsible for them.

Board Member Carney inquired about the timeline of completing the training for a new employee.

Dr. Dewese responded they have 90 days.

Chairman Dr. Coker inquired if this was the one mentioned in the state audit.

Dr. Dewese responded yes.

Chairman Dr. Coker inquired if the School Safety Specialist is handling this on behalf of the district.

Dr. Dewese confirmed.

Chairman Dr. Coker suggested to the Board Members in attendance if they may want language added regarding the superintendent requesting a copy of the report when Chief Burton is submitting it to the state.

Vice-Chairman Pearson inquired if the superintendent already had authority to request for the report.

Ms. Grant stated the statute states that the District must submit, so it is not Chief Burton uniformly. It is in consultation with the superintendent and since this will be the first year, the District does not know what it will look like.

Chairman Dr. Coker shared what she got from reading the Grand Jury report and expressed what her concerns were.

Board Member Willie suggested mirroring the language on line F, 'will coordinate with the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee(s) to submit to the Department of Education.'

Chairman Dr. Coker expressed what she had experienced regarding submitting documents to the state when she was employed by the District.

Board Member Joyce commented that the language was not nnecessary, because at the end of the day, it is the Superintendent's responsibility for everything that goes to the state.

Vice-Chairman Pearson concurred.

Chairman Dr. Coker expressed that she saw this as an opportunity to make sure the Board was in compliance.

Board Member Willie made an operational inquiry into the process.

Dr. Dewese responded that it is in tandem:  Chief Burton ensures that all his officers are trained, the Office of Student Discipline and Support Department is ensuring that all the school-based members are trained, and Mr. Wright's office is ensuring that those who handle mental health are trained.

11. BOARD POLICY 8.21, BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion:
Dr. Dewese explained that Duval County is ahead of the game and the information is already in FOCUS. She added that there is a way to put the information into the system so that parents are notified.

**Adjournment**

1. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

GC

Superintendent

Chairman