



Meeting Minutes Duval County Public Schools

May 24, 2023, 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 Member April A. Carney. Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent, was not present. Mr. Ray Poole, Office of General Counsel, was also present.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

1. BOARD POLICY 2.26, BOARD MEETING PROTOCOL AND FORMAT

Policy and Compliance Director, Tashonia Grant explained that the policy was being brought before the Board at the request of Vice Chairman Pearson.

Discussion involved:

- Two community members, not from the same organizations, stated that the script and the practice did not match the policy.
- Read a sentence from the script under Public Comment.
- Read C 8 & 10 under the Speaker Protocol from the policy.
- Could not find anything in the policy with reference to the sentence in the script.
- If this is going to be practice, it needs to be in the policy. If not in policy, the script needs to be changed.
- Puts the Vice Chair in an awkward position to try to manage public comment and not follow what's in the policy.
- Understands there are concerns about allowing references to specific people. Student names would be a violation of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). With employee names, especially teachers, there may be a violation of the contract.

Board Member Jones arrived at 9:07 a.m.

- People want to commend a staff person, but they have to be shut down.
- Regarding the waive cards, people are not speaking on the agenda items.
- Shared what the purpose of the waive card was to be used for.
- How people use the waive cards.
- Time it takes the Vice Chairman to read the waive card when time is limited. Hard to summarize what the information is on the waive card.
- Suggested having a 6-word limit on the waive card or get rid of the waive card altogether.
- The waive card should be used for or against an item.
- At the meetings in Tallahassee, they don't read the waive card. They have people waive in favor or against.
- Duval County School Board's public comment is open.
- How to categorize the waive cards: for and against.
- Suggestion made to not read the waive cards, but to scan and email them to the Board Members.
- Chairman Dr. Coker has had good feedback regarding the waive cards. Sometimes she reaches out to people who have completed a card to get more information from them.
- Add language to the script about the waive cards being scanned and emailed to the Board Members.
- Executive Director of Policy and Compliance, Brian McDuffie stated that clarification is needed to help the Board as to what they want to do with the waive cards.
- A suggestion to have the Communications Department collate and provide a tally to the Vice Chairman to read out.
- Continued working on ideas on the handling of the waive cards.
- Chief Officer of Communications, Dr. Tracy Pierce spoke on the summarizing the comments on the waive cards and things that could arise.
- A summary of what was requested: language providing a 10-word or less limitation for waive card, name, read cards in order received, and to scan and email the waive cards to the Board Members.
- FERPA and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) need to be followed even though not in the policy.
- The statement read at the meeting covers lines 8, 9, and 10.
- Why the language was put into policy was explained.

Board Member Joyce arrived at 9:28 a.m.

- No language in the policy denying anyone the right to reference someone specifically for something positive or negative, that is not a negative attack.
- Language in policy is very specific and language in script is very broad.
- An explanation about there being a gap for references and a suggestion regarding language was provided.
- How people look at speaker protocol vs how the Board looks at speaker protocol.
- People will have something to say if information is not in the policy.
- Expression of disagreement was made regarding the public not being able to reference someone whether the comment is negative or positive.
- How waive cards are handled at a City Council meeting.
- It is disheartening to not allow the public to make a comment, positive or negative towards someone sitting on the dais.
- A reminder was provided about students and FERPA.
- Suggestion to have language regarding FERPA added to the policy and something about staff, but the Board Members should be able to sit and take whatever is said.
- Items involving employee discipline and the MOU need to be reviewed so as not to have any

violations.

- No language in MOU, but there is statutory law on open investigations which are confidential.
- State law language could be added to the policy.
- Concern expressed regarding the protection that the Board must provide for principals and teachers.
- Unless there is an investigation, any communication between the principals and teachers is open for public records request.
- There is a review process in which things may be redacted depending on the situation.
- Explanation provided on when correspondence from employees becomes confidential and exempt.
- Members of the public will not know the status of an investigation or when it ceases to be active unless they make a public records request.
- There are a lot of legal pieces on why things are done in a certain way.
- Need to come back to have further conversation on what can and cannot be done, how to protect those who need to be protected, and how to follow the law.
- Language drafted for waive cards and prepared to be voted on at the next meeting.
- Additional work on 8, 9, and 10 will be brought back to the next Board Policy Meeting.
- The need for conversation about the public not being able to make a positive comment about someone and looking into the ramifications of what can and cannot be done.
- Something nice can be said, but a person's name does not have to be used.
- Vice Chairman Pearson mentioned about having the changes for C (3) added to the Regular Board Meeting for June and the other language at the next Policy Review Meeting.
- It was explained that the policy would have to be placed on the agenda for the Regular Board Meeting for July, because the 28-day notice for June has already expired.

The Board Members next discussed those who are allowed to go over the 3 minutes when commenting.

Discussion involved:

- Under the section public comment from elected officials, there is no time limitation.
- There is also no time limitation on any of the other organizations for public comment.
- There is no slot for elected officials on other meetings that are not the Regular Board Meeting, where there is public comment.
- Vice Chairman Pearson explained how she handles public comments. She added information regarding what the perception is for people who hold an office.
- When the speaker's time is up, they are allowed to finish their sentence and not start a new one.
- Never heard the Chair announce for elected officials be called up to make a comment. If someone is an elected official and wants to make a comment, they should be able to do it before the regular public comment.
- Suggestion to have the same protocol for public comments that is in the Regular Board Meetings added to the Special Board Meetings.
- How the City Council handles elected officials at their meetings.
- Explanation provided about why certain language was added to the policy.
- Concern about elected officials being treated differently.
- Definition of an elected official is 'current'.
- Chairman Dr. Coker requested for Administrative Assistant Gail Collins to make sure the information was in the script.
- Clarification given regarding current elected officials.
- Language will be used at any meeting where public comment is scheduled.
- Language needs to be in the script. Language suggested for adding to policy.
- Time limit for officials to speak.
- Suggestion made if more than 3 minutes is needed.

- Explanation about an elected official speaking in their capacity or an elected official wanting to speak.
- Current elected official and not an official who has just been elected but not installed.
- If officials arrive late, they can get in line with everyone else.

2. BOARD POLICY 2.38, AUDIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DRAFT)

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy change.

Ms. Blades shared the 2 additional items that the AAC requested:

- Name change due to the finance portion of their work.
- If the new sales surtax could be handled by the Oversight Committee. It was determined that it would stay with the Audit Advisory Committee (AAC).

Chairman Dr. Coker suggested to Ms. Blades to get with Legal to draft language and bring to the next Policy meeting so the Board could address those items.

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

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- The change to the policy is a result of the state emergency rule which became effective April 19, 2023.
- Concern was expressed about districts having different Student Code of Conduct and there possibly being a code of conduct that trumps what Duval has.
- The District makes sure they are in alignment with the state by making sure that the Student Code of Conduct definitions align to the statutory definitions.
- Specific response to Zero Tolerance is outlined. There is no room for interpretation. In some other areas of the Code of Conduct, it is up to the District for interpretation.
- The Student Code of Conduct meetings are conducted on an annual basis to update the codes. At the meetings, the first order of business is to review all rules and new statutes that come in. The rest of the process was explained.
- The Student Code of Conduct review for the year has taken place and the information will be brought to the Board soon.
- A scenario was presented that if a student, regardless of age, attacks a teacher and causes harm to the teacher is the situation reported as a zero tolerance violation.
- Executive Director of Student Discipline and Support Services, Dr. DeWese spoke about Zero Tolerance explanations, law enforcement recommendations, the differences between kindergarten, Pre-K, and high school students.
- An explanation was shared as to what happens if a situation involves a kindergarten student.
- Concern was expressed about the consequences.
- Making sure there is reporting taking place.
- The need to make sure there are no discrepancies in the Student Code of Conduct.
- An inquiry was made if a situation is still considered Zero Tolerance when action is taken but the adult does not want to press charges.

- Concern was expressed about nothing happening to a child and the child ends up in another school doing the same thing.
- It was explained that criminal action is handled through law enforcement. Whether someone wants to press charges or not is handled by law enforcement and they make the decision.
- Anything involving the Code of Conduct must be reported to School Environment Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR). This allows for checks and balances.
- Consequences that do differ; age or mental capacity (ESE). Dr. DeWese reviews the SESIR reports weekly and reports to the Office of Safe Schools once a month.

4. BOARD POLICY 6.10, NON-DEGREED VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

No discussion.

5. BOARD POLICY 8.21, BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- It was explained that all the changes were based on legislation changes with the exception of III-C regarding the designee of the principal.. The expectation is that the principal would serve on the committee, but in their absence, it would be their designee.
- Principals need to know that they cannot delegate this responsibility to their designee. It needs to be the responsibility of the principal.
- It was suggested to add language that if a principal cannot serve in the capacity and the designee will, the principal needs to provide a reason to their supervisor.
- The current practice of reporting was explained and language would be added to the policy.
- As a direct result of House Bill 543, charter schools now must follow the same law that the districts are required to follow effective July 1, 2023.
- It was shared that School Police Chief Burton stated that there may be additional changes occurring regarding this policy. Once the changes are official, it will be added to the policy.

Board Member Darryl Willie arrived at 10:24 a.m.

- A suggestion was made to consider using the term 'shall inform' when the updated language is added to the policy and an explanation was provided for the making the suggestion.

Ms. Grant stated that the new term Threat Management Team is referenced in Board Policy 5.28. She requested permission to revise the term in Board Policy 5.28. The Board agreed.

6. BOARD POLICY 8.22, MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- The current practice of the District.
- The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) made the recommendation, but the District had already been implementing the practice.
- Director of Full Service Schools, Katrina Taylor stated that she shared what was in the District's policy with her contact and was informed that it looked great, but the only thing missing is the information being added to the policy.

7. BOARD POLICY 8.26, VANDALISM AND MALICIOUS MISCHIEF

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- The Superintendent's designee would be Chief Burton or Dr. DeWese, depending on the level of the vandalism.
- Loitering on school premises is handled by Law Enforcement, Chief Burton.
- The policy is being put into alignment with the practices of the district as suggested by Dr. DeWese.
- School principals do not contact the Superintendent regarding vandalism. They follow the practices of the district.
- Information regarding vandalism is sent to the Board Members by the Chief of Staff as the Superintendent's designee. An inquiry was made as to why the Superintendent was being taken out.
- The chain of command was explained.
- There is a separate policy that involves the Superintendent providing the information.
- An inquiry was made about watching for trends since information went to 2 different people. The process was explained.
- The Superintendent is not left out. The chain of command process is followed.
- Information does not go to the Superintendent first because the level of vandalism must be determined, specifically the dollar value.
- Depending on the dollar value, some vandalism goes to Law Enforcement for investigation or may be considered as mischief.
- As soon as a report is received and levels are determined, information is sent out to all involved and the Chief of Staff informs the Board Members.
- Some higher levels of vandalism are reported through SESIR.
- Some levels of vandalism can lead to Threat Management.

8. BOARD POLICY 8.32, BUS ROUTES

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- The increase for transportation was a recommendation that was in the Brief that was shared with the Board Members at a meeting.
- If the policy was to pass, it would be effective December 1, 2023, and then another at the end of the year with an effective date of August 2024.
- With regards to alternatives to help cut costs the policy says 'may', so the district must be

consistent. A lot has been done due to the bus driver shortage. Ztrip drivers do not have a commercial license. The district has been looking into ways to cut costs.

- The number of bus trips for the magnet students are the most expensive routes affecting the least number of students. Will not be increasing the number of trips. The district needs to get the transportation costs under control.
- There are Z-Trip routes, and each route carries 4 children. The benefits of this were explained.
- The cost of Z-Trip is \$7.50 for the first mile and then the costs drop after that. This is by the trip and not by people.
- Parents have called to complain about the change in transportation. Must look at complaints vs cost per student and being able to get transportation costs down.
- Parental notification.

9. BOARD POLICY 8.41, USE AND CARE OF DRIVER EDUCATION CARS

Ms. Grant explained the changes to the policy.

Discussion involved:

- Title change for correspondence purpose.
- Making the policy match what is practiced.
- Updating other information as needed.

Adjournment

1. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

GC

Superintendent

Chairman