

July 12, 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. Dana Kriznar, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present except Board Member Lori Hershey. Dr. Dana Kriznar, Superintendent, and Mr. Ray Poole, Office of General Counsel, were also present.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:21 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

1. BOARD POLICY 2.26, BOARD MEETING PROTOCOL AND FORMAT

Vice Chairman Pearson requested Tashonia Grant, Director of Policy and Compliance explain the changes to the policy. Ray Poole, Office of General Council (OGC) Attorney assisted with the explanation.

Mr. Poole spoke specifically about the Speaker Protocol.

- There are two types of public comment:
 - Agenda items - items on the agenda.
 - Business of school district - not on the agenda, at the end of the board meeting.
- Public hearing is separate from public comment.
- Time limitations extended to other groups of people:
 - Student government.
 - Committee reports.
 - Elected officials
 - Parent organizations
 - Employee organizations.

Discussion involved:

- Change in the format of the meeting.
- Concerns about changing the format of the meeting was expressed.

- Concern about public perception on limiting or refocusing public comment.
- Appreciation for the current scale of time.
- The meetings are simple, but the potential change may create another barrier.
- Knowing when the public comment is going to happen.

Vice Chairman Pearson explained her rationale:

- Received comments from Board Members and others about public comments.
- Script does not line up with policy regarding public comment:
 - Can't mention people by name, not in policy.
 - Public being stopped and interrupted.
 - Board gives preferential treatment.
 - There are points of contention between policy, implementation, and public.
- Provided the most extreme example of a change that could be made based on Pinellas County after reviewing their policy on what public comment section should look like.
- Provided the Board with options.
- Speaker card limited to agenda items as done in City Council and Florida House and Senate, write down item, circle oppose or support.
- Applying the 3-minute limit to the other groups.
- Get legal guidance regarding certain terms.
- Not consistent with groups.

Discussion continued:

- What happened at the 7/10/2023, Regular Board Meeting was shared.
- Mention of the legal parameters of public speaking.
- Request for Mr. Poole to speak on a general note. He shared some information from a brief summary he prepared on public commenting.
- Comment about not shutting people down because of being uncomfortable.
- The need to talk about protocols.
- The possibility of how the public may feel about the potential changes.
- Leave the public comment at one block.
- The Board is efficient at getting things done, and consider doing the two blocks of public comment.
- Public comment on agenda items need to be heard before the Board votes.
- Would be nice to have a hybrid of the way city council does their meetings.
- Board Chair should not express personal thoughts. Things are done at the will of the Board.
- Rules allow the Board Chair to make certain decisions even though the information is not in the policy.
- Suggestion to have two sections of public comment, but run them back to back.
- Changing the speaker cards.
- Concern about adding another layer of work to the Office of Communications.
- Tracy Pierce, Assistant Superintendent of Communications, shared his thoughts about speaker card and public comment.
- Having the waive cards on the tiered approach as those who speak.
- 10-word limit on waive cards.
- Blue cards being subject to the same rules regarding personal attack on someone.
- Establish what is a personal attack and whether people allowed to say a name or not.
- Limit waive card to topic item and to the option to select oppose or support.
- If someone has more than 10 words and has subjective words they want to express, then they need to make the comments in person instead of using the waive card.

- Dr. Pierce will work on the new cards with his staff. They will instruct the public about the cards.
- Ms. Grant inquired about the 10 word limit that was just approved by the Board.
- Board Members do not agree to applying the time limit to the other groups.
- Board Members Joyce and Willie's first experience of public comment at a meeting was shared.
- There should be no line drawn about what the public has to say regarding the Board Members.
- Discussion of line #11 regarding language and conduct of a speaker.
- Board Members need to rely on OGC for guidance.
- Who will determine the threshold of a personal attack?
- Concerned about those who are not elected officials.
- Concerned about certain words being used if minors are watching the meetings and parents having to explain what those words mean.
- Name calling would be a problem.
- Can use other terms instead of a person's name: ie - Board Member of District 5.
- People have latched onto the 'can't call out a name' and found other ways that people know who is being talked about.
- How can this matter be policed?
- Mr. Poole explained the difficulty of trying to define what the Board Members were doing.
- Suggestion to look at script to set the expectations more clearly as to what is being looked for in the public comment section. Desire for people to police themselves.
- Suggestion made to take out the phrase 'personal attack' and use the word 'derogatory or negative'.
- The way the public expressed themselves at the meetings about the school name changes was shared.
- Concerned about people getting upset, but they should be able to speak and not use derogatory speech.
- Experience shared about the public being cleared from the auditorium during one of the board meetings.
- If people can't act like adults at the meeting, then the Board has the right to shut things down.
- Nothing needs to be policed. It is the Chair's responsibility to handle the meeting.
- During the time of the school name changes, it showed the community what was being dealt with at that time.
- The point is to make sure everyone is safe.
- Don't want the district to be in a position where it can be sued.
- Board caught between groups who are fighting one another.
- Groups see things in a different perspective, not fighting. They are standing up for what they believe.
- Respect for each other's opinions is needed.
- Experience about how a political figure treated the public at a meeting in the past was shared.
- A lot of work is being done with legal in an attempt to get things done correctly.
- Chairman received a negative email about how she handled a meeting.
- The board chose to leave the language in #11 as is. A suggestion was made to also have the language put on the speaker card.
- Language in the script and language in policy.
- The script needs to align with the policy.
- Discussion about whether to use or not to use a person's name.
- An excerpt from the statute was read about records.

Vice Chairman Pearson suggested to put the policy down until the next time to discuss.

Summary of the decisions made are as follows:

- No changes in protocol.
- Making changes pertaining to the waive card.
- Striking the individual's name and written statement of 10 words.
- Keeping public comment during public hearing

2. BOARD POLICY 3.26, OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS OF SCHOOLS

No discussion.

3. BOARD POLICY 4.10, THE CURRICULUM

No discussion.

4. BOARD POLICY 4.20, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION AND ALLOCATION

No discussion.

5. BOARD POLICY 4.30, CHALLENGES

Vice Chairman Pearson explained that the only change was to add the phrase 'at the expense of the district' in item E.

The Board Members were in agreement with that change.

6. BOARD POLICY 5.23, TRANSFER POLICY FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF TRANSITIONING MILITARY PERSONNEL

No discussion.

7. BOARD POLICY 5.28, ZERO-TOLERANCE FOR SCHOOL RELATED CRIMES

No discussion.

8. BOARD POLICY 8.09, SCHOOL SAFETY MONITORING

No discussion.

9. BOARD POLICY 9.96, CRITICAL INCIDENT PREPAREDNESS

No discussion.

Adjournment

1. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

GC

Superintendent

Chairman