

# School Administrative District No. 53

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**Excellence in Education**

Michael A. Gallagher  
Superintendent of Schools

## Policy Committee

10/19/09

Minutes

Members in attendance: R. Williams, S. Nolan, administrators, S. Shorey, and M. Gallagher

Item 1. Policy Discussion – review of policy 9.40, Student Withdrawal from School – Mrs. Williams first asked whether or not anyone collected any feedback from any board members regarding any of the policies that were brought to the October board meeting. No feedback had been received. Mrs. Williams made a suggestion to modify policy 9.40, by adding the words “to be” in between “system” and “selected” in section E. Superintendent Gallagher then suggested that the words “withdrawal” and “school” in the title of the policy be capitalized. No additional modifications were suggested. This policy will be brought to the November 2 school board meeting for approval.

Policy 9.41, Alternative Education Programs was reviewed. Two revision suggestions were made. The first was to change the font at the top of the policy, and the second revision was to add the words “to meet these instructional needs” at the beginning of the second paragraph. Additionally, the margins will be justified. No additional modifications were suggested. This policy will be brought to the November 2 school board meeting for approval.

Policy 9.42, Free and Appropriate Public Education – only one suggestion was made and that was to modify the font at the top of the policy to be the same as the rest of the document and the rest of the policies. Policy 9.42 will be brought to the November 2 board meeting for adoption.

Policy 11.09, Model Procedure on Parent Involvement in Special Education – no additional recommendations were made for revisions to policy 11.09. This policy will come before the board for adoption as modified at the November 2 board meeting.

Policy 5.05, Crisis Intervention was reviewed. Many suggestions for revisions were offered to the policy. The title of the policy will be changed from “Crisis Intervention” to

“Emergency Response”. The first sentence of the policy was modified to include the words “Board of Directors” after MSAD #53. The words “that we” were changed to “the” and the word “crisis” at the end of the sentence was changed to “emergency”. In the second sentence the word “crisis” was changed to “emergency”. It was suggested and agreed that each of the crisis or emergency situations that were listed in the policy be exactly the same as they are in the district’s emergency response plan. In the first paragraph after the bulleted list of emergency situations, the word “well being” was hyphenated; the word “in” was changed to “when”, and the word “crisis” was changed to “emergency”. In the last paragraph of the policy the words “To affect the above, a crisis intervention” was crossed out and replaced with “An emergency response”. Additionally, “be in place and” were deleted from the sentence. It was determined that the policy should have legal citation and that there be information included in the policy regarding staff training, availability of emergency response plans and materials, and the readiness of all staff to fulfill their roles.

Policy 1.01, Educational Goals – the committee discussed the first two paragraphs and decided that they could be deleted and replaced with number 11, the equal educational opportunities paragraph. The list of educational goals should be made into a numbered list without explanation and that a sentence stem be added prior to the list to read: “Opportunities are provided so that students may develop:” The paragraph after the list of goals should read “The board hereby affirms its belief that each child attending the public schools shall be given every opportunity to develop the highest personal potential according to his/her capabilities, talents, and learning styles regardless of...” and use the language used in our harassment policy for delineating the list of categories who would not be discriminated against. The next paragraph under number 11 was deleted. The last paragraph prior to the goal statement at the bottom of the policy, was modified by adding an “s” to the word “goal” in the second line, and deleting the word “school” at the end of the second line. A question was asked regarding what the legal reference was to this policy. Mrs. Shorey reviewed a law book and learned that the policy was making reference to high school accreditation.

Policy 1.02, Academic Freedom – several suggestions were made to modify this policy. In the first paragraph, first sentence, the words “of MSAD #53 Directors” was added to describe the board. The numbered items listed in paragraph format describing academic freedom were reordered and modified. Number 3 became number 1 and read “The board shall attempt to insure that an atmosphere of academic freedom exists within the schools”. The new number 2 would be the current number 1 modified to read “Teachers will be responsible for determining when and how to deal with controversial issues according to the maturity and needs of students, the rights of parents and guardians, and the policies of the Board of Directors”. The third listed item would be the current number 4 modified to read “The community has the right to expect that controversial issues will be presented in a fair and unbiased manner and to communicate...” and insert the language from the controversial issues policy clarifying the hierarchical process for making complaints. This policy should also have a policy reference to controversial issues.

Policy 1.04, School District Goals and Objectives was reviewed prior to policy 1.03. Revisions to policy 1.04 included changing the title of the policy from “School District Goals and Objectives” to “Strategic Planning”. The only other suggestions that were made were to change the words “school unit” in sentence one, and the word “unit” in sentence two of the policy to the word “district” in both of those locations. This policy also had as a legal reference to the accreditation law.

The committee then reviewed policy 1.03, Staff Involvement in Decision Making. Several modifications were offered to this policy and accepted by the committee. In the first paragraph the comma after the word “generally” was removed. The sentence stem prior to the list of decisions to be made was modified to read “Such participation shall include, but not be limited to:” It was determined we would bullet each of the items listed. The third full paragraph will be deleted and the first two sentences of the last paragraph of the policy will be inserted into its place. Additional changes were suggested to the fourth paragraph beginning with the sentence “Each administrator,”. The word “pre” was added to “K-4” and the second sentence of the paragraph was modified to read “this committee shall serve as the main channel for communication with grade level teams and staff regarding the operation of the schools”. The last sentence of that paragraph was deleted, and the last sentence of the last paragraph was also deleted.

The last five policies will come before the board at the November 2 board meeting for their first reading.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Gallagher