

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Policy Committee Meeting

Monday, April 1, 2013
Education Center
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room
4:15 p.m.

Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Minutes
- III. Policy
 - #5112, 5115, 5117 Students – Attendance, Dismissal, Excused Absence
 - #5118 Students – Truancy
 - #6200 Policy Instruction - Curriculum
- IV. Open Discussion/Public Comment
- V. Adjournment

Future Items:

- Policy #4240 Personnel – Electronic Mail
- Policy #3552 Business – Lending School Owned Equipment
- Policy #5340 Students – Lost/Damaged Equipment
- Policy #4110 Personnel – Recruitment and Selection
- Policy #5542 Students – On Campus Recruitment
- Policy #6511 Instruction – Special Education
- Policy #6100 – 6110 Schedules – Student Calendar

Future Mtg. Dates and Times: **Monday, April 29, 2013, 4:15 p.m.**

*May 13, June 3, June 17, August 19, September 3, September 16, October 14, November 18,
December 2*

All meetings will be held at 501 Kings Highway East, Superintendent's Conference Room, at 4:15 p.m., unless otherwise noted.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, FAIRFIELD, CT
Monday, March 4, 2013

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m. Committee members present were Mrs. Jennifer Kennelly and Mr. Paul Fattibene. Ms. Karen Parks and Ms. Joanne Ryan, Town Nursing Supervisor, were also in attendance.
2. Approval of Minutes
Minutes of the January 7, 2013 Policy Committee meeting were approved: 2:0:0
Minutes of the January 15, 2013 Special Policy Committee meeting were approved 2:0:0
3. Policy
Policy #5514 Students - Administration of Medication in the Schools
Recommended motion "that Policy 5514 - Students - Administration of Medication in the Schools, be moved to the March 12 Board of Education Meeting for a First Read"
Motion carried: 2:0:0
4. Open Discussion/Public Comment - None
5. Adjournment
Meeting adjourned 6:08 p.m.

Future Items:

- Policy #6200 Instruction – Curriculum
**Bring in CABE Curriculum policy for next Policy Meeting*
- Policy #4240 Personnel - Electronic Mail
- Policy #3552 Business - Lending School Owned Equipment
- Policy #5340 Students - Lost/Damaged Equipment
- Policy #4110 Personnel - Recruitment and Selection
- Policy #5542 Students - On Campus Recruitment
- Policy #6511 Instruction - Special Education
- Policy #6100 – 6110 - Schedules – Student Calendar

Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy

Attendance

Connecticut state law requires parents to cause their children, ages five through eighteen inclusive, to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Parents or persons having control of a child five years of age have the option of not sending the child to school until ages six or seven. Mandatory attendance terminates upon graduation or withdrawal with written parent/guardian consent at age seventeen.

A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent. A student not meeting the definition of “in attendance” shall be considered absent.

Classroom learning experiences are the basis for public school education. Time lost from class is lost instructional opportunity. The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child, and students should not be absent from school without parental knowledge and consent.

Excused Absence

For absences one through nine, an absence shall be considered “excused” when a child does not attend school and appropriate documentation is provided by the student’s parent/guardian approving the absence, due to:

- A. Illness or injury,
- B. Death in the immediate family,
- C. Religious obligation,
- D. Court appearance,
- E. School sponsored activity,
- F. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends. (This reason does not require documentation.)
- G. An emergency, or
- H. Other exceptional circumstances and extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by a District administrator and in accordance with SDE guidelines. Written excuse for such absences should be submitted to school officials by the child’s parent or guardian. All other absences with or without written explanation shall be considered unexcused.

Students

Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy (continued)

Excused Absence

For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:

- A. Student illness (must be verified by a licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of the absence);
- B. Student's observance of a religious holiday;
- C., Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
- D. Mandated court appearances (documentation required);
- E. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation required);
- F. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and to be in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless:

- A. The absence meets the definition of an excused absence and meets the documentation requirements; or
- B. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence, which is the result of school or District disciplinary action and are excluded from these State Board of Education approved definitions.

When the school in which a child is enrolled receives no notification from a parent or other person having control of the child is aware of the child's absence, a reasonable effort shall be made by school personnel or volunteers under the direction of school personnel to notify by telephone and by mail such parent or other person having control of the child.

Unexcused Absence

Board policy with respect to unexcused absences stresses prevention and inquiry leading to remediation of absences. The schools will make all reasonable efforts to keep parents and students informed as to attendance problems and will make all reasonable efforts to help students improve their attendance when such improvement is warranted. Only when all local resources are exhausted is referral to legal authorities recommended.

A student's absence from school shall be considered "unexcused" unless the absence meets the definitions, listed above, for an "excused" absence, including the documentation requirements; or if the absence is the result of school or District disciplinary action.

Students

Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy (continued)

Release of Student During School Day / Dismissal

The Board recognizes the need for students to be in school for the full instructional day. It is encouraged that early dismissal should be requested only in emergency or unusual situations.

Request for release of a student during the school day originating outside the schools must be handled by the administration to ensure maximum provisions for the safety and welfare of the student.

Students who become ill during the school day may be excused by the school nurse, and transportation home will be arranged by school personnel.

No student may be permitted to leave school at any time other than at regular dismissal without the approval of the student's parent/guardian. If a court official with legal permission to take custody of a child, or if a police officer arrests a student, the parent/guardian should be notified of these situations by the administration.

Truancy

The Board of Education must provide each child with a continuing education which will prepare the student to assume adult roles and responsibilities. Therefore, regular attendance and punctuality are expected from all children enrolled in our schools. By statute, responsibility for assuring that students attend school rests with the parent(s) or other person having control of the child. Every effort must be made to keep absences and tardiness to a minimum. To assist parent(s) and others in meeting this responsibility, the Board of Education has developed the following procedures regarding students ages five (5) to eighteen (18) inclusive.

1. Notify parents or other person having control of each child enrolled, ages five (5) to eighteen (18), inclusive in writing of the obligations of the parent pursuant to student attendance (C.G.S. 10-184).
2. Obtain from each parent or other persons having control of an enrolled child a telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or other person during the school day.
3. Establish a system for monitoring student's individual absences/tardies.
4. Notify, by telephone and by mail the parent(s) or other such person(s) whenever a child fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the child's parent or other person is aware of the student's absence.
5. Identify a student as "truant" when the student has four (4) unexcused absences in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences in any school year.

Students**Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy (continued)****Truancy**

6. Hold a meeting with appropriate staff and the parent or other person having control of the child identified as a “truant” within ten (10) days of such designation to review the reasons for the truant behavior and to evaluate the situation.
7. Referral will be made to the PPT to determine whether or not an educational evaluation is appropriate, prior to filing a written complaint with the Superior Court.
8. File a written complaint, by the Superintendent with the Superior Court alleging that the acts or omissions of any child identified as a “truant” are such that the student’s family is a “family with service needs” if the parent or other person having control of the child identified as “truant” fails:
 - a. to attend the required meeting to evaluate why the child’s truant or
 - b. to cooperate with the school in trying to solve the truancy problem.

Provide for the coordination of services and refer enrolled students who are truants to community agencies providing child and family services.

9. A student who is identified as a “truant” may be subject to the following consequences:
 - a. Promotion to the next grade may be contingent upon the student successfully completing a summer school program
 - b. The student may be retained in the same grade in order to acquire the skills necessary for promotion to the next grade level

Persons who in good faith give or fail to give notice pursuant to subdivision (4) above, shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which results from such notice or failure to give notice.

Students

Attendance, Excused Absences and Truancy (continued)

Truancy

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-184 Duties of parents. (as amended by PA 98-243 and PA 00-157)

10-198a Policies and procedures concerning truants (as amended by PA 00-157 and PA 11-136)

10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy in general. (Revised 1995 - PA 95-304)

10-221(b) Board of education to prescribe rules.

Campbell v New Milford, 193 Conn 93 (1984).

Action taken by State Board of Education on January 2, 2008, to define "attendance."

Action taken by the State Board of Education on June 27, 2012 to define "excused" and "unexcused" absences.

Students

Attendance

REQUIRED AGES OF ATTENDANCE

5112

It is the legal responsibility of every parent or guardian of children of compulsory school age (five (5) to eighteen (18), twenty-one (21) years of age as outlined in statute) to ensure that regular, uninterrupted attendance at school and classes is maintained. A lack of consistent attendance can have an adverse effect on a student's academic achievement. Therefore, it is the policy of the Fairfield Board of Education to take appropriate legal action against a parent or guardian who fail to abide by the Connecticut Compulsory Attendance Law.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15 Towns to maintain schools
10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year olds
10-76a through 10-76g re special education
10-184 Duties of parents (re mandatory schooling for children ages five to sixteen, inclusive) as amended by PA 98-243 and PA 00-157
10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Amended by PA 96-26 An Act Concerning Graduation Requirements and Readmission and Placement of Older Students
Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board
10-233a through 10-233f Inclusive re suspend, expel, removal of pupils
10-233c Suspension of pupils
10-233d Expulsion of pupils
State Board of Education Regulations:
10-76a-1 General definitions (c) (d) (q) (t)

Approved 8/27/04

Students

Attendance

DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS

5115

No child shall be dismissed prior to the regular school dismissal time to anyone other than his parent or guardian except in the case of a specific request from the parent or guardian asking that the child be dismissed to such designated person.

Approved 8/27/04

Students

Attendance

EXCUSED ABSENCES

5117

Principals and teachers shall continually emphasize that students should not be taken out of school unless absolutely necessary. The idea that a student should attend school must be a priority for the student and his parent or guardian.

Students are to be excused from school upon written notification from the parent or guardian for any religious holidays not already observed in the school calendar. Students will be allowed to make up tests, quizzes, or any other assigned class work / homework, and students will not be deprived of any awards.

Appointments for dental and medical services should be made outside of school time whenever possible. In cases where an appointment during school hours is unavoidable, the parent or guardian will provide advance notification whenever possible.

Approved 8/27/04

Students

Attendance

TRUANCY

5118

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, it is the policy of the Fairfield Public Schools to define a truant in the following manner:

A **truant** is a child aged five (5) to eighteen (18) inclusive who has four (4) unexcused absences in one (1) month or ten (10) unexcused absences in one (1) year.

Upon the determination that a child ages five (5) to eighteen (18) inclusive is a truant, the building administrator or designee will hold a meeting within ten (10) days with the parent or guardian of the child who is truant. Reasons for the truancy will be reviewed and evaluated including referral to the building Planning and Placement Team to determine whether or not an educational evaluation is appropriate. School services will be coordinated with referrals of the child to community agencies providing child and family services, as appropriate. The Superintendent may file a complaint pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes in the Superior Court, Juvenile Matters regarding the child's truancy alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his family is a family with service needs, if the parent or guardian fails to attend the required meeting with appropriate school personnel to evaluate why the child is truant or fails to cooperate with the school in trying to solve the truancy problem.

At the beginning of each school year and upon any enrollment during the year the building administrator or designee shall obtain from the parent or guardian of each child ages five (5) to eighteen (18) inclusive a telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or guardian during the school day. Provision will be made that, whenever a child ages five (5) to eighteen (18) inclusive fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled day and no indication has been given by the child's parent or guardian of their awareness of the child's absence, school personnel or volunteers under the direction of school personnel will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or guardian by telephone.

Parents or guardians of children, ages five (5) to eighteen (18) inclusive, in the Fairfield Public Schools will be notified annually in writing of their obligation to cause their child to go to school.

Students

Attendance

TRUANCY (continued)

5118

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-184 Duties of parents (as amended by PA 98-243 and PA 00-157)
10-198a Policies and procedures concerning truants (as amended by PA 00-157)
10-199 through 10-202 Attendance, truancy in general (Revised, 1995, PA 95-304)
10-202e through 10-202f Policy on dropout prevention and grant program
10-221b Board of education to prescribe rules. *Campbell v. New Milford*, 193 Conn 93 (1984)

Approved 8/27/04

Instruction

CURRICULUM (continued)

6200

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
(continued) 10-18b et seq. re Firearms safety programs
10-19 Effect of alcohol, nicotine, or tobacco and drugs to be taught
10-19a et seq. re Substance abuse prevention team
10-221a High school graduation requirements
10-21 et seq. re Vocational education and cooperation with business
10-220 Duties of boards of education as amended by PA 08-153

Approved 8/27/04

Revised and Approved 5/24/2011