

SCHOOL POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, January 23, 2012

A meeting of the School Policy Subcommittee was held on Monday, January 23, 2012 at 4:30 pm in the Superintendent's Conference Room on the 3rd floor of the NAGE Building. Present were Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Emily Lebo, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. David McCarthy, and Mr. Paul Bregoli, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Mrs. Colleen Roberts, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Jane Kisielius, Mr. Jim Rendle, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Mr. Bregoli.

Dr. DeCristofaro requested that the agenda be taken out of order and that the third item, Concussion Policy, be discussed first. Mrs. Kisielius opened the discussion by noting that the parent letter (Appendix D) was revised per Mrs. Lebo's suggestion to say that it is recommended that students be retested after head injury. Dr. DeCristofaro reminded everyone that the Appendix (forms and guidelines) would not be contained in the School Committee Policy Book.

The state's regulations (and QPS policy) cover athletics and marching bands, but not cheerleading. The cheerleaders received baseline ImPACT testing, and Mrs. Lebo suggested adding them to the QPS policy. On page 2, the sentence would be amended to include "advisors" after "coaches".

Mrs. Kisielius clarified that the school nurses are responsible for providing annual educational materials for teachers and staff on this issue. Mrs. Lebo suggested adding "and ongoing" to focus on the issue of how educational accommodations may need to be made. Individual Healthcare Plans can be put in place more rapidly than a 504 plan, which requires 6 months of symptoms. IHPs are part of SST discussions and distributed to all teachers (nurse is responsible for distribution, not guidance counselors). Mrs. Mahoney asked how long does a student have to be out before they are eligible for tutoring? Mrs. Papile clarified that tutoring requires doctor's note, and is administered by SPED department. Mrs. Kisielius suggested the creation of a QPS Academic Recovery and Accommodations Plan that parents would have doctors fill out so there is a specific plan for physical recovery and education accommodation. Mrs. Lebo feels that the head injury policy is comprehensive and we need to be careful that the guidelines support the policy.

Mrs. Hubley suggested that record retention should be extended to be "for three years or until the student graduates." (Pages 2 and 9 will be revised to reflect this.) On page 2, change "school physician" is "student's primary care physician or the QPS school physician advisor."

Discussion ensued about requiring baseline ImPACT testing. Although we received a grant this year, we may have to pay for it in subsequent years. The cost of testing is very low (\$1 per student). Mrs. Isola feels that we should be cautious and require students to take the baseline ImPACT testing and state what the consequences are for non-reporting of previous injuries. Mr. Rendle was concerned that school systems may be requiring the baseline, but not the secondary post-concussion test because of

the cost. Mrs. Kisielius noted that most health insurance policies are covering the post-injury testing cost. Mrs. Lebo wondered about potential liability for not interpreting the baseline tests? What about students who had head injuries previous to the baseline testing? Mrs. Kisielius noted that doctors do not see baseline tests unless there is a second injury.

Mrs. Mahoney inquired about why a parent would refuse the baseline test? Mr. Rendle cited a student who refused had a previous head injury that had been misdiagnosed and parent felt they had their own neurology and physician support.

Mr. Bregoli asked about adding accident & head injury form to nurse's file as well? Mrs. Kisielius noted that copies are sent to the nurse automatically. In a change to page 6, add "QPS accident forms". On page 7: Clarify training on an annual basis to deal with the issue of staff turnover. Mrs. Roberts suggested adding to start of school materials for staff members that principals distribute and that the information would be a good addition for new teacher orientation as well.

There was some discussion about the form notifying parents about head injuries. Mrs. Kisielius will research CDC information and present other options. Mr. McCarthy asked for clarification that the policy will require baseline ImPACT testing. For next steps, Mrs. Kisielius will revise the policy for further review by the School Committee and a vote at the February 8, 2012 School Committee meeting.

The Subcommittee then reviewed the draft of School Committee meeting dates for 2012-2013. Mrs. Isola asked for clarification as to whether it is stated in School Committee Policy Book that School Committee meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month and how exceptions are to be handled.

The Subcommittee then discussed the School Year 2012-2013 Calendar. All received information about the current list of schools used as polling places; Bernazzani may be eliminated, but the City Council has not yet passed the change. The Superintendent also shared an email from a local rabbi asking for consideration of the Jewish High Holidays as school holidays. Milton, Canton, Sharon, and Randolph all observe these holidays; Boston and other South Shore communities do not. This has not been an issue previously.

State Primary Election and Presidential Election – Schools would be closed on 9/6 and 11/6. It is currently proposed that teachers will report on 9/6 for a Professional Development day for Common Core Standards. There was some discussion about how this might affect other staff (secretaries, food services, custodial) and this needs to be reviewed further with Kevin Mulvey. There was also a discussion about making the last day before the winter break a half day, but all agreed not to do this. The current version of the calendar will be distributed to principals, administrators, QEA, Citywide, and QPAC for review. Both calendars will be up for vote on the February 8 School Committee meeting. It would then be approved as of March 7 School Committee meeting.

Mr. McCarthy made a motion to adjourn the Subcommittee meeting at 5:50. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.