

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
MAY 17, 2023

In attendance: Donald DiBiasio of Somerset, Joan Menard of Fall River, Jeffrey Begin of Swansea

Also in attendance: Fr. Jay Mello of Fall River, Brian Bentley, Interim Superintendent-Director, Andrew Rebello, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

Remote attendance: Decio Matos

The meeting began with a roll call at 4:21 p.m.

It was moved by Ms. Menard seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously to dispense with the reading of the December 8, 2022 minutes and approve them, as recorded.

Mr. DiBiasio began the discussion on the proposed Accusation Against a Staff Member policy. Attorney Brilhante stated that the policy was developed by a working group that was comprised of a school committee member, a representative of each of the unions, administration, teacher, SRO, school adjustment counselor, director of diversity, equity and inclusion, legal counsel and the superintendent-director.

Mr. DiBiasio expressed concern regarding the proposed policy's initial report form. He stated that if an accusation is of a sexual manner, the staff member should not interview the victim and they need to bring them to see the SRO. Attorney Brilhante stated that this was discussed in great detail. The initial report is to collect the basic details in order to ensure that all accusations are documented and handled properly. Fr. Jay stated that the intent of the policy is to protect students and staff and to make sure that there's a procedure in place that can be followed. Fr. Jay further stated that the initial report form is to collect minimal facts and bring it to the team for a determination.

There was further discussion on the proposed policy and different scenarios of accusations were presented. 51A reporting, mandated reporter and who is responsible for filing were also discussed.

Mr. DiBiasio suggested adding the following language to the policy: "if the accusation is of a sexual manner it should immediately be referred to the SRO.

Fr. Jay stated that the intent of the policy is to make sure students are safe, staff is protected and administration has a procedure to follow. Attorney Brilhante stated that a past incident put the principal in a position that blamed him for how an accusation was handled. The policy creates a more equitable and fair process. Having a team review the report and making the determination ensures that the process is followed and proper documentation is attained.

Attorney Brilhante stated that union representatives were in agreement with the proposed policy. Mr. Bentley stated that the policy was well received by the members of the working group.

Mr. Bentley stated that the policy will be presented to staff and training will be provided so that they understand the policy and know how to properly complete the form.

It was moved by Mr. Begin, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted to accept the policy and recommend it to the school committee.

2 in favor/1 opposed/0 abstention. Motion Carries

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Attorney Brilhante stated that he met with Mrs. Torres to review the Housebuilding Program rules and regulations (File:IHAQA-R). Paragraph 15 was added stating that provisions can be waived which allows the committee to make decisions based on project.

It was moved by Mr. Begin, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the Housebuilding Program rules and regulations (File:IHAQA-R) and make the recommendation to the school committee for approval.

It was moved by Mr. Begin, seconded by Ms. Menard, and voted unanimously to adjourn the Sub-Committee meeting at 4:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves

Materials Included:

December 8, 2022 Minutes
Accusation Against a Staff Member
Policy IHAQA-R - Housebuilding program