

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
POLICY AND PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
MEETING OF July 6, 2017

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. Susan Hollins (SH) and DA (Don Alexander) were present. Also present: Assistant Superintendent Pratt, Transportation Coordinator, and five Principals. Press.

2. Update of Review of Section G: Personnel Policies

The chair advised that after reviewing all Section G policies, the consensus was that all policies in Section G needed review. Many changes in contracts and laws since 2003-2004. Prioritization opinions:

\*DA recommended GCG Substitute and Part-time Personnel and GBJC and GBJC-1 having to do with Employment safety and Cori /Fingerprinting policies.

The group of Section G policies for "Support Personnel" need review as per new contracts.

Question if union personnel need to be present? Meetings are open to anyone but the committee is not negotiating policy, only seeing where 2003=2004 wording may be unaligned with current contracts. Chair will forward Support Personnel policies to chairman to clarify if input should be from Negotiating or Personnel Subcommittee.

KP (Acting Principal, GHS) recommends GBEB Staff Communications. Need has to do with staff to staff communications through or on social media, SnapChat, and Acceptable Use. Suggestion to ask Carol Holzberg for current, recommended guidelines.

BP: Suggests looking at Policy GCCC Family Medical Leave Act.

Also, the GBEA Ethics policy should refer to the annual employee ethics survey.

NP: Policy GCO Evaluation of Support Personnel. To whom does this apply? Transportation personnel? Personnel who are not covered by union agreements?

SH: Policy GDA Support Staff Positions does not define which personnel are in the "support personnel" category. Administrators acknowledge confusion. Add clarification to policy, e.g. "...Examples of support staff include...." Mention that funding source does not determine if you are GPS support personnel or not.

GT: GCG Substitutes and Part-time Personnel: Needs to be higher priority of getting substitutes set up for use of the GPS computer/internet, particularly long-term substitutes. Also, compensation plan for principals—will there be buy-back of unused days?

3. Remaining Policies of Section B

\*Brief status report. Still a few policies not finished from Section B. SH and DA will share tracking info to see which policies in Section B need review and completion.

\*BG/BGB, and BGC do not mention a one-step process for affirming reviewed policies with no change. Consensus to recommend this revision to review policy by adding statement.

4. Continuation of Policies under Discussion

A. Policy EEAA: Walkers and Riders. Reviewed the current policy draft.

DA likes the wording about exemptions related to unsafe conditions.

SH comments that walking two (2) miles in freezing, dark winter months is a long walk. ncern

That it isn't clear what roads this would include and if they all have sidewalks. Neither DA nor SH recalls having specific information about numbers of students who would be ineligible for transportation if new guideline was implemented or whether or not all the expected walking paths have sidewalks and are safe.

Transportation Director then showed data and diagrams he has brought to the meeting but has not yet shared with the Superintendent. He discusses the 3-tier bus system, information on vehicular traffic, recommendations he has developed for the city re traffic signs, how today's technology allows you to measure walkable paths and not just distance based on radius. He mentions that his rider eligibility numbers do not include students with special education transportation or choice-in students. Discussion begins to conflate many disparate but related issues:

- 1). State reimbursement for transportation is only for students living more than 2 miles from school using "common pathways" measurement. Using the "common pathways" method for the 2.0 mile reimbursement will include the most students for 2.0+ reimbursement.
- 2). Current Walkers and Riders policy measures distance for eligibility to be bussed using a radius method. If the distance for eligibility is more than 1.5 miles, a 1.5 mile circle is drawn on a Greenfield map from the child's assigned school. Anyone inside that 1.5-mile circle is not eligible for free public school transportation. The Superintendent can make exceptions.
- 3) Changing the policy to calculate distance using "common pathways" (measuring streets a student would actually walk to school) would be a change for the school system, parents, and administrators. SH: Would this open up the possibility of parents challenging which path is the best walkable path? How would we staff to address all the questions and/or create all the walkable pathways from every home? Is this a better system than the radius system which is black and white?
- 4) This year's transportation system involves eight and a half (8.5) buses. The school system budget includes only six (6.0) buses.
- 5) A third system for deciding routes is that students are only allowed to be on a bus ride for 45 minutes (Transp. Director info). Kuzmeskus is attentive to the 45-minute guidelines. SH: So the more stops along the route, the more time taken, the less time there is for the route, and does this interfere with filling the buses?
- 6) There is no "bus pass" system in place. Administrators are unsure who is riding buses to and from school.
- 7) If the new policy goes into place, Michael has identified hundreds of youth who would be ineligible for transportation based on the walkable pathways distance calculation. For example: At GHS, 427 students are currently eligible for riding. Under the proposed 2.0-mile guideline, Michael advises eligible students would be 146 and 280 would be walking. With the 1.5 mile guideline for GHS, 234 would be eligible for riding and 193 would be walkers.
- 8) BP mentions that "being eligible" and "using the bus program" are not the same. At the high school students have cars or other ways of getting to school. The impact of changing the walking/riding guideline is unclear.

9) All the principals voiced concerns about fewer students riding buses as this increases vehicular traffic at the schools. All elementary and middle schools have concerns about traffic control and the volume of cars bringing and picking up students. No principal recommended having more students as “walkers.” Principals suggested a 1.0-mile eligibility guideline for elementary schools.

10). With no clarity about 1) does the school committee want to move from a “radius” method to a “common pathways” method for calculating eligibility? The radius method has more students on buses and uses less time explaining who walks or rides. At this time, there is no information with the committee about paths to school having sidewalks/lighting and would these paths be safe in the dark morning for walkers. There is no clarity about how the proposed new system would impact already-congested school transportation. The chair reminds everyone that the policy committee only makes policy recommendations and has to consider policy that does not place students at risk. Whatever this policy states, the superintendent can make exceptions. There is consensus of subcom members DA and SH that it “doesn’t seem prudent to recommend policy change this year without clarifying data on how this change would impact students. The district needs logical parameters for ridership everyone understands.”

Is there is an altogether different approach (other than drawing a radius or creating common paths from every house). Could the system identify which parents want public transportation and have no other way to get children to school?

#### 5. Recommended Policies to go Forward to School Committee

- \*EAAA Walkers and Riders: Discussion. No vote recommended
- \*BGC Policy: Policy Revision and Review
- \*Section D: Revolving Funds
- \*Recommendations for Section G

#### 6. Other

If no pressing issue is at hand, policies which bring people to the meeting will be moved up on the agenda. For July’s second meeting, continue with policies that have come up but have not finished the process and policies on this agenda. SH and DA to get together to review policy tracking.

#### 7. Adjournment

S. Hollins