

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**  
**February 6, 2012**  
**Policy Committee Meeting**  
**Council Chambers**

The Policy Committee Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on February 6, 2012. The meeting was called to order by Chairman M. Toni Paine, Vice Chairman of the Board of Education and Policy Committee Chairman at 6:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**POLICY COIMMITTEE**

**MEMBERS ATTENDING:**

M. Toni Paine, Chairman  
Betsy Davis  
Patricia Libero  
Robert Guthrie

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**ABSENT:**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools  
David Cappetta, Director of Finance

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
PRESENT:**

Chairman Paine welcomed everyone to the February 6, 2012 Policy Meeting and stated that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss policies for the School Climate Policy and to repeal old policies that are duplicative of the new policy.

Chairman Paine introduced Attorney Carolyn Dugas and stated that Attorney Dugas is here to answer any questions any board member may have.

Toni Paine stated the policies below should be repealed and replaced with the new policy (once numbered and accepted by the Board). The following existing policies are duplicative of the new policy.

Student Policies:

5131.911(c) Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

5145.4 Nondiscrimination

5145.5 (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f) and Form 5145.5 Sexual Harassment Formal  
Complaint/Appeal Forms

5145.6 Grievance Procedures

Personnel Policies:

4118.11 Nondiscrimination/Discrimination Grievance Procedure

4118.11 (a)(b)(c)(d)

4118.113(a) Harassment

The new policy should appear in both the student and personnel sections.

The West Haven Board of Education is considering revising the current attendance policy. Toni Paine stated that Attorney Dugas has learned that pursuant to CT Statute PA11-136 it was mandated that the SDOE define “excused absence” and “unexcused absence” on or before July 1, 2012 for use by boards for the purpose of carrying out provisions of the truancy statutes. While we have our own the definition isn’t very clear, and we will need to adopt the State’s definitions once they have been developed by the State. The SDOE has yet to develop those definitions.

That being said, because our current policy is ambiguous at best, I think we should revise it, and when the state develops their statute we can make sure we conform to it.

Attorney Carolyn Dugas has said her department has developed a model attendance policy and when we are ready to revise our policy she would be happy to share it with us.

Once we finalize the school Climate Policy and Attendance Policies we need to look in to Policies concerning Student Conduct.

Superintendent Cavallaro complimented Toni on all her hard work and said this will be a huge improvement. Families with questions can now go to a special section whereas now it is very confusing. It is difficult for administrators to characterize the offense and now individuals can do this.

Policy Committee Member Betsy Davis said it is a good idea to put everything in one spot.

Toni asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Betsy Davis made a motion to present the policy to the board.

Toni Paine seconded the motion

The recommendation was unanimously approved.

Attorney Dugas said under the previous law the board had to have a bullying policy now they have to have a Safe School Policy. The regulation is the meat and potatoes and the policy is how to implement it.

Superintendent Cavallaro said by July 3, 2012 the state says we have to define excused absence and unexcused absence for use by boards for the purpose of carrying out provisions of the truancy statutes. We are looking for patterns of absences that will define excused and unexcused absences.

Truancy is not the main concern. One concern is that parents come a half an hour early to pick up their children to beat traffic (early dismissal). Attorney Dugas said you will want to align with the state definition. Milford has done away with cuts vs. absences. They don't want penalties to have an academic impact. Neil said three cuts = an absence in West Haven. There were no questions or further discussion.

Betsy Davis made the motion to close.

Pat Libero seconded the motion.

The motion to close was unanimously approved.

The Policy Meeting ended at 6:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola  
Board Secretary