

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center

2229 E. Buck Road, Pennsburg PA 18073

Policy Committee Meeting

March 16, 2021

Chair: Peg Pennepacker Ex-Officio: Melanie Cunningham, President

Members: Stephen Cunningham , Keith McCarrick

Superintendent-Dr. Allyn Roche Asst. Superintendent-Dr. Andrea Farina Business Manager-Sandy Kassel

HR Director-Georgiann Fisher

Proposed Policy 227 Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia: This policy was sent back for review after the February meeting. Dr. Farina discussed two proposed changes.

One of the proposed changes is to add, "The principal and/or assistant principal will provide a comprehensive review of the incident to the Superintendent of Schools for the purpose of determining whether the nature of the incident warrants a recommendation for expulsion." The previous statement was vague, and this statement is more of a middle ground.

Another proposed change is: A violation of this policy results in the consideration of expulsion; however, the team can require the following in lieu of an expulsion recommendation: 1. SAP Assessment and participation in SAP recommendation (Teen Intervene, Marijuana Brief Intervention, referral for drug and alcohol treatment). 2. Bi-weekly counseling with a school/student assistance counselor. Both recommendations, 1 and 2, will be combined to provide the support and help the child work their way through the issues.

Peg Pennepacker asked what, if any, are the connections between community leadership and school administration. Dr. Farina replied that we did have a partnership with Project Live. Our PAYS data does provide a picture of how drugs and alcohol are impacting our district.

Committee members agreed to move this policy forward with the proposed changes for a first read at the April meeting. Kyle Somers also agrees with the changes and to move it for a first read.

Keith McCarrick stated that he is looking forward to the re-engagement of Project Live, as the involvement decreased during this past year. He asked about the YMCA and/or churches and their potential involvement. Dr. Farina said the district participated in the Ministerium which involved multiple groups that discussed mental health and all were there to provide supports.

Proposed 233-AR-0-Suspension and Expulsion: The section regarding expulsion has been modified to state: "Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board for a period exceeding ten (10) school days, and may be permanent expulsion from the district schools. No student will be expelled without an opportunity for a formal hearing before { } the Board { } a duly authorized committee of the Board { } a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the Board

If not all Board members can be present, the hearing can be before no less than 3 members. The testimony would be made available to all Board members before a vote.

Peg raised a concern about remaining unbiased as a member sitting in a hearing for someone who may be a neighbor, friend, etc. Melanie also expressed the same concern. Kyle said that there could be trainings on how to remain in a neutral way when participating in a hearing. If there is a personal connection, the Board Member could abstain from participating in the hearing, which would be recommended.

Kyle explained the waiver process. Any student being excluded from school for more than 10 days in a row is an expulsion. A student may only be expelled after a hearing in front of the Board. In a situation where a student has been assigned a suspension for 10 consecutive days, has admitted to the offense, and does not wish to go before the Board and challenge the expulsion recommendation; a waiver is signed indicating that the student knows he/she has a right to go before the Board, but is choosing not to and to accept the consequence. In an expulsion hearing, the administration acts as the prosecutor in that they recommend the length of expulsion and if a hearing is opted, evidence is presented as to why that expulsion is recommended. If a student is of compulsory age, the parent is obligated to provide an education for their child. If the parent has difficulty finding a place for their child to receive their education, they may ask the district to arrange it. As part of the waiver, the district may agree to set up the student in an education program (ex. Cyber program) so there is no lapse in learning. Once the program and the length of the expulsion has been determined, a written agreement is drawn up. Once reviewed and signed by parent and student, it is presented to the Board for approval. There can be issues with the parents still requesting that the Board decide to make the offense/consequence be removed from the student's record even though the waiver was signed.

Concerns were raised by Peg and Melanie about parents understanding that the waiver is not a "plea bargain". Kyle stated that it is important for everyone to understand due process so that misconceptions about expulsion procedures don't occur. The Superintendent is the administrator involved in the waiver process.

Policy and AR will move to the April board meeting for review.

Proposed Policy 229 Student Fundraising: Some language changes were made. 1. District students are *not obligated* to conduct door-to-door sales for fundraising activities. 2. The Superintendent *or designee* may develop *administrative regulations* to implement this policy.

Peg expressed safety concerns over the fundraiser that the Athletic Department has each fall. Dr. Farina stated that the language now states that students do not have to go door-to-door. Sandy said that the Athletic Department door-to-door fundraiser hasn't been done in a few years through Student Activities. The Booster Club now handles their fundraising.

At the April 19th committee meeting, policies 230, 231, and 232 will be discussed. Motion to adjourn made by Keith and seconded by Melanie.