

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center, 2229 E. Buck Road, Pennsburg PA 18073

Policy Committee Meeting

May 17, 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

Attendees: Doug Kenwood (Facilities Director), Jenn Malone (Transportation Director), Dana Hipszer (school board member), Bobby Kurzweg (Athletic Director)

Motion to approve April 19, 2021 Committee meeting minutes initiated by Peg and seconded by Melanie. Motion passed and minutes approved.

Policy 818: Dr. Farina explained that the review of this policy is an outgrowth from our most recent audit and Sandy asked that we review it due to some language that was missing, as per the auditors. PSBA Proposed Policy 818-Contracted Services-will add the language that independent contractors shall obtain and submit new certifications every sixty (60) months. Peg asked if adding the new language will bring the policy to where it needs to be. Dr. Farina said she recommends the repeal and replace inclusive with the language to be the new policy. Kyle Somers explained that even though the added statement is already law, adding it to the policy makes it accessible to everyone. Dr. Farina recommends that the PSBA Proposed Policy 818 be moved to a first read. Stephen made a motion to move it to a first read, motion passed.

Policy 707-Use of Facilities: This policy is being revisited to clarify and understand how it is enforced. Dr. Farina explained that this policy is far reaching and the last revision was 2016. Doug Kenwood addressed the concerns/issues that he has experienced since beginning at UPSD approximately 2 years ago.

Doug stated that he has found it challenging at times to administer this policy due to the language. The policy states that groups must be within the borders of the district, and fact checking this has been difficult because several of these groups reach beyond our borders. Some of the organizations have had a history with the district and would like that taken into consideration, but not knowing the history can make it challenging to administer the policy. We are very consistent in some areas of the policy (turf rental fees); but in other areas, such as gym rental, the policy is not consistently applied. The AR has the case system (Case A, Case B, Case C) and it is difficult to apply some of the situations into one of the cases. We are bringing a new system on board that will produce estimates, house certificates of insurance, etc., but the AR language uses the word forms throughout, so adjustments will need to be made there as well.

Dr. Farina stated that there was concern in 2016 with the ambiguity of the language. There was a lot of intertwined concern with who got charged and the thought was that if a group was charging a fee to its members, then they would be charged by the district. It turned into the "Cases" and why the AR is being discussed.

Sandy Kassel stated that there has been a history with some organizations, but we can't continue to operate this way. Other districts that were looked at charge everyone and ask for all or partial payment up front. The district wants to work with the community but not at the expense of the entire community. This has been a difficult policy, but it should be standardized for all community members so that the policy can be administered and be fair to all groups.

Keith asked how other districts handle this and do they have standard policies. He feels that we should be sure we are recouping our costs (clean up, electricity, etc.).

Stephen agrees that further definition needs to be added and wants to make the policy work for us regardless of whose toes are stepped on.

Melanie shared other events, such as ones hosted by PTSF, should be charged as there is wear and tear on the facilities used.

Dana shared that he used to run the basketball league on the outdoor courts and never paid fees for the use of the courts. They always completed a Facilities Use form but never had any school personnel overseeing what they did. The school district didn't use those courts and they didn't make any money off of the league. The money collected went to painting lines, pads around the poles and other things for the courts. Other than using electric, there wasn't any cost to the district.

Dave, a community member, who represents a youth basketball program in which all members are Upper Perk students. He stated that they charge a fee to cover uniforms, insurance and equipment, and don't make a profit. If they have to pay a fee to play, this may cause a hardship and impact the number of scholarships offered to those who cannot afford to play. The coaches do clean up after the games as well. Stephen Cunningham replied that he is looking more to be sure that insurance is provided. Keith McCarrick added that he understands that people will clean up. He also stated that if we were to charge a fee, that we charge the people appropriately if we can. If it's a non-profit, that we don't penalize them, but also be sure that if there is a non-profit that we check to see how much of a non-profit they are.

Peg suggested that historical data be provided for the last few years to the committee to review. Dr. Farina said that events that occur on the weekend, when employees aren't there, those groups should be charged a fee because an employee would need to be present. It was explained by Dave that his organization had members who were able to open the building for the teams. Kyle Somers stated that access to district buildings should be strictly limited as to who has access. Providing keys or access codes should be limited to both employees and non-district employees. Doug stated that we have been good about collecting all of the appropriate forms and entering the information of who is using what building when. Dr. Farina reiterated that the administration is trying to get clarity. If we talk about history and 20 years ago someone donated something so they can never be charged or who had a key from someone so they can get in, those are the types of challenges that have to be navigated. To impose this policy accurately, there has to be clarity, and we aren't trying to disparage history. We can provide more examples of facilities usage, if that would be helpful.

Dave asked if the tax payers will have to incur the cost to repair the outdoor basketball court or will that be incurred by the organization that pays the fee. Stephen replied that taxpayer money does go to maintaining facilities, but the court would be costly to repair so there may have to be a fee incurred. We should define the "Cases" better to make it easier and it will take a while to get through it.

Mary, a community member, asked what it means to be a community partner and why turf fees are charged differently. Dr. Farina explained that a community partner has to be board approved, and approval is renewed annually, and is an organization that can demonstrate a long term relationship with the district where they have a conjoined mission and is reciprocal. The Chamber of Commerce is a community partner. They have done a lot of work with college and career readiness, integrate curricular opportunities and getting business leaders into our schools and our schools into businesses. We don't charge them when they use the multi-purpose room at the Education Center based upon the reciprocal relationship. Bobby Kurzweg addressed the question regarding the turf fields. When the fields were put in about a decade ago, it was a Board decision to charge everyone. Some of the teams that have our own students and coaches get a discounted fee. Sandy added that we looked at other districts and compared fees and our fees were set 10 years ago and haven't been changed. We want to be able to replace the fields when needed so all of those fees go into a fund so we can do that.

Dr. Roche asked how comfortable are we to not have a staff member present at a building on a Saturday. Allowing groups who aren't employees access to buildings is a concern and liability. There are other questions regarding discounted fees and groups who charge fees to members and being sure the fee is being applied appropriately to facilities.

Peg believes it would be helpful to sit down with some of the groups and have conversations about the policy and how we move forward. Keith added that getting background from the groups and perhaps reviewing financial records will provide us with an understanding of their status so that we can work on a fee structure. Concern was also raised about people having keys/access to areas of buildings that shouldn't be accessed.

Dr. Roche questioned whether the policy should be modified before speaking with groups or vice versa. Peg added that she thinks we should look at the policy first. Stephen agreed with Keith that there are groups that have a financial need, but the district has to maintain facilities as well.

Dr. Farina proposed that the Committee and extended Board look at the "Cases" and who is in them, as defined by policy. Also proposed would be to share some language that other districts have used to help guide us with what/how we will modify the policy. Peg said that she would be able to gather policies to review and that we need to look at our AR and develop it so that it is easier to read. Melanie suggested that perhaps when a group is applying, we assign a "Case" or a tier. Peg agreed that would be looked at.

Peg thanked the community members who spoke and other members who had input and stated that the committee would continue to work through this policy and that it would take time. Peg made a motion to adjourn and Stephen seconded it. Meeting adjourned.