

Personnel/Policy/Transportation Sub-Committee Minutes

December 19, 2016

Meeting called to order at 5:36pm

Present: Mara Saccente, Christian Young, Kim Browe, Ken Ziman, Susan Riccio

Also Present: Superintendent Scarpetti, Dr. Russo, Chairman Kraut, Betty Hadlock, Nurse Wargo,

Amy Wargo related that a state nurses & allergy task force had recently convened regarding schools contending with students with food allergies. Numerous schools and districts were represented where they could share and be polled on how they have been addressing allergies in schools. A formal report from the task force is anticipated.

Discussion then shifted to food celebrations in our schools which is a much debated issue among board members and the town residents. A total ban on all food celebrations, though desired by some, does not seem to be the ready answer at this time. To address part of the concerns raised by parents with food allergic children, it is reported that school nurses have been independently implementing their own "guidelines" banning food allergy children from eating food celebration items that were prepared at any other student's home as a measure of precaution.

One of the concerns regarding school food celebrations is that teachers should not bear the responsibility and liability for "policing" foods

There are currently various food events in schools: birthday celebrations, international days involving representative foods, and, holidays that have traditionally involved foods. These separate circumstances require distinct approaches, or, an option is to entirely ban foods from celebration and curriculum all together. It was commented that other towns have apparently adopted this total ban approach.

Regarding food celebration events, there were two concepts discussed: one is that food celebrations only come from the school's cafeteria from a fixed menu. The other is having the school cafeteria provide the celebration foods from a menu, but also allowing commercially packaged foods with clear ingredient and preparation labels.

It was agreed that community and educator input should be solicited prior to further committing to any policy change.

Mara Saccente raised a concern regarding the school nurses and who appoints them. She presented Connecticut General Statutes 10-212 that provides for the local or regional board appointing nurses in towns over a particular population size. In Orange, the Town has historically hired the nurses. Discussions were had regarding the history of the town's population, the delegable aspect of appointing versus hiring, the budget implications for the Board versus the Town hiring or appointing, and, the criteria for hiring and appointing nurses. Further discussion was tabled for a subsequent meeting and possible legal input.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm