



SCHOOL BOARD

LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Discipline Committee Public Meeting
Ms. Debbie Rose, Chairperson

MINUTES

April 25, 2018

5:30 p.m.

Administration Building, 100A

Committee Members Present: Ms. Debbie Rose, Ms. Brenda Sheridan, Ms. Joy Maloney

Staff: Virginia C. Patterson, Ph.D., Mr. Derek Farrey, Ms. Suzanne Fitzgerald

Audience Attendees: Mr. Jeff Adam, Ms. Shena Brown, Mr. John Lody, Dr. Ryan Tyler

Public Present: None

- I. **Public Comment.** None given
- II. **Approval of minutes.** Minutes for the Discipline Committee meeting of February 28, 2018 were approved 3-0-0-0.
- III. **Review: Policy 8205 (Formerly 8-1, Extent of School Authority)**

1. Policy 8205, Discipline Authority, had been returned to staff for changes in language requested by committee members. The committee discussed the doorstep-to-doorstep concept as it relates to the extent of school authority and how that concept relates to a path a student takes to school. This applies to travelling to school as well as returning at the end of the school day.

- Staff provided changes to Section A (3.) with the addition of *any other mode of transportation*.
- At this time, Section A (5.) was removed. Athletes and extracurricular activities will be covered in Policy §8-29.
- Dr. Patterson is presently working across departments to include the various levels within LCPS who are involved with extracurricular activities that will be included when §8-29 is brought before the Discipline Committee.
- School leaders discussed school responsibility; what happens to school authority if the student does not proceed directly to or travel directly home from school.
- The committee suggested that division counsel be consulted to see if there is case

law around the issue of a path to school and determining when there is a departure from the path.

- Staff present indicated that the actual offense determines the disposition and a principal in attendance agreed that the disposition and/or the involvement of law enforcement is determined by the nature of the offense. This is on a case-by-case basis and the school principal related that in his experience as principal, this type of question has generally occurred about four times a year. Additionally, *Student Rights and Responsibilities* also speaks to these occurrences.
- The committee agreed that it is not possible to articulate to every specific case and that proposed Policy 8205, Discipline Authority is intended as an authorizing policy, setting forth School Board authority and encompassing situations where leaders feel discipline is needed.

ACTION: The Committee recommended that proposed Policy 8205, Discipline Authority as amended be sent to the full School Board as a Consent Item for the May 22, 2018 School Board Meeting. Motion passed 3-0-0-0 to move proposed Policy 8205, as amended, to the full School Board.

IV. Discussion regarding vaping

1. The committee had a broad discussion regarding vaping, the prevalence of this new technology state-wide, and the upswing in occurrences within LCPS. Vapes are addressed in Policy 8240 and they are covered under state code due to the electronic component.

- With the new technology, vapes can resemble a thumb drive and may not produce a visible cloud. Different substances can be added to liquid within vapes– the liquid may or not contain drugs or nicotine.
- An educational component is key for the LCPS community regarding the health issues/effects as well as the disciplinary consequences. Vaping isn't harmless; it is covered by School Board policy and disciplinary consequences do exist.
- Dialog is taking place with colleagues in the state around the vaping issue and there is a necessity of an educational component. The School Board as a whole should receive updates regarding vapes and progress with education given to LCPS community.
- The committee members and staff feel strongly that beginning-of-the-year announcements should include a separate, specific screamer pertaining to vapes/vaping.

V. Discussion regarding Athletics, Discipline Guidance and Expectations

1. Ms. Rose introduced the topic of athletes and disciplinary consequences and Mr. Derek Farrey, Supervisor of Athletics provided insight regarding current rules and practices. The committee discussed the current timeline for consequences, how to best implement the appeal process and the need for additional information and continued work by this committee.

- For several years, there has been an annual review of the Student Athletic Handbook and the Coaches Athletic Handbook by principals and athletic directors who make recommendations and form a committee when necessary to look at or adjust rules per §8-29.
- Several principals did have concerns regarding training rule number nine (involving violations of Policy 8240, Alcohol, Drug, Tobacco and Electronic Cigarettes) and a committee was convened - consisting of three principals, three athletic directors and the LCPS Supervisor of Athletics. As a result, Training Rule Number 9 was revised for SY 2017-2018 from suspension of an athlete for the remainder of the season to suspension for 30 days. Now, the athlete may attend practices (to mitigate any health or fitness concerns) and may attend competition but may not wear the team uniform at competition or participate in competition for 30 days. Students are also allowed to try out for other teams during the suspension. Training Rule Number 9 was changed to align our district with the commonwealth. This year, a number of athletes were able to return to their teams during the season.
- The committee and staff then engaged in a discussion regarding the athletic suspension process, the time line and the ability to appeal a suspension. Currently, athletes sign an agreement ahead of time and consequences for violating the agreement are implemented immediately; however, a delay in the implementation of an athletic suspension would allow for an examination of guilt or innocence prior to serving the suspension. Another consideration is that delaying the suspension may keep the student from participating in competition at the end of the season. A committee member put forth that the choice to think about what will happen on the back end and acting upon a sincere desire to appeal should be allowed prior to the onset of the suspension.
- Moving forward, additional data is needed. A committee member requested statistics on how many students are suspended from a team, with an appeal of the suspension followed by a suspension's reversal. How many students are involved? Do trends exist between schools that necessitate clarification of School Board policy? How do we achieve the best result for the greatest number of students?
- Given that the Training Rules are not policy, and the School Board does not adopt regulations, a report to the Discipline Committee is workable. If this committee

does want to pull something out to make it a policy, that can be encompassed in the committee's work on Policy §8-29. In turn, the revised policy would guide regulation.

- VI. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m. The next Open/Public meeting of the Discipline Committee is Wednesday, May 23, 2018 in Conference Room 102A/B. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m.