



Torrington Public Schools

**Packet for Policy Meeting**

*November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023*



## Torrington Public Schools

MICHAEL J. WILSON  
SUPERINTENDENT

SUSAN B. FERGUSSON  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

### Policy Committee Meeting Wednesday, November 29, 2023, 7:00 P.M. Torrington School Library Media Center

There will be an opportunity to call in and speak as noted in the body of the agenda during public comment. Those calling in will need to state their name and address for the record and will be subject to the same rules as for in-person participation. Dial-in number: (425) 436-6343 Access Code: 225583

The meeting may be watched live via this link <https://vimeo.com/event/26843> The link is also published in the Board of Education section of the website. If you are participating in public comment, please mute the live stream while you are speaking.

### Agenda

*Comments may be solicited at any time during the meeting as recognized by the Chair.*

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Public Participation: *Members of the public and staff may bring to the committee's attention information, ideas, or matters of concern related to all the duties and responsibilities of this committee. This committee will not allow comments regarding specific staff members or personal grievances. The time for individual remarks will be apportioned according to the number of speakers and will be limited to five minutes per speaker unless extended by the Chair.*
6. Discussion/Next Steps:
  - Plan for Minority Teacher Recruitment TBOE Policy #4062
  - Replace #4062 with: Shipman Model Policy: Increasing Educator Diversity Plan
  - Torrington Public Schools Staff Attendance Policy
7. Topics for Future Meetings
8. Comments for the Good of the Order
9. Adjournment



## Torrington Public Schools

MICHAEL J. WILSON  
SUPERINTENDENT

SUSAN B. FERGUSSON  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

**Policy Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**  
**Vogel-Wetmore School**  
**Library Media Center**

### Minutes

1. Call to Order: 7:15 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Hoehne, Ms. Todor, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Mangelix (Teacher Representative)  
Also Present: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Putnam, Mr. Cronin, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Fergusson, Ms. Schulte, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Scott, Ms. Creedon, Mr. J. Michelson, Dr. Buchanan
3. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Kissko made a motion to amend the agenda to switch the order of the series, 4000 first then 6000, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
4. Approval of Minutes: Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
5. Public Participation: None
6. Discussion/Next Steps:
  - a. Series 4000
    - Shipman Model Policy “Bloodborne Pathogens” – Ms. Schulte we are doing this training annually. The “Director of Facilities” will be added where it is applicable.
    - Shipman Model Policy “Emergency Action Plan for Athletic Events” – Mr. McKenna spoke about the emergency plans that are put in place during games. All varsity sports have a site supervisor. Anyone who is a supervisor is certified in CPR. Mr. McKenna reviews safety protocols with coaches in all the venues. This plan is evaluated every year and if the BOE adopts this policy, then this policy/plan will also be by the Board once a year. Bring this to the full board yearly in August.
    - Shipman Model Policy “Exertional Heat Illness Awareness for Athletics” These are the 3 documents through the CIAC that are required. These are the same documents that are used among the other districts. Every parent reviews the forms, and they sign off on the forms.

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Torrington Board of Education.

Online registration makes everything easier. If every document required is green, then the child is able to play. If there are documents in red, then the parents will receive an email. The online portal sends out a notification of 60 and 30 days before the physical expires. There are many language options on the portal. However, there are paper forms for parents who are not able to use CPU. Ms. Todor made a motion to move this to the full board, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.

b. Series 6000

- Replace TBOE Policy #6010 Aids Exemption Policy with Shipman Model Policy “Curricular Exemptions” The district doesn’t notify in advance in science that they will be dissecting, but parents do have an option to opt out. We don’t have many students who ask to opt out. Parents who are against this, come in very knowledgeable and they are well informed and they opt out immediately. The administration clarified once more that they are not sending out anything stating we are dissecting something at this time. They are made aware in the course syllabus. The administration can start having parents sign the syllabus. Ms. Todor made a motion to move this to the full board, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.

7. Topics for Future Meetings:

- a. Crosswalk - look at policies that haven’t been looked at in awhile.
  - b. Non-Discrimination Policy
8. Comments for the Good of the Order  
John: “Good Meeting.”
9. Adjournment: Ms. Todor made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:47 P.M.



## PLAN FOR MINORITY EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT

In accordance with Sections 10-4a(3) and Section 10-220(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Torrington Board of Education (the Board) has developed the following written plan for minority educator recruitment:

1. All recruiting sources will be informed in writing of the Board's non-discrimination policy.
2. The Board will develop contacts with local training and educational institutions, including those with high minority enrollments, to publicize job openings within the school district and to solicit referrals of qualified minority candidates.
3. The Board will develop contacts with local minority community organizations to publicize job openings within the school district and to solicit referrals of qualified minority candidates.
4. The Board will maintain, or expand, as appropriate, its help-wanted advertising to include print and/or broadcast media that is targeted to minorities.
5. The Board will participate in local job fairs, including those that are sponsored by the minority community organizations or otherwise targeted toward minorities.
6. The Board, or its designee, will maintain records documenting all actions taken pursuant to this plan, including correspondence with recruitment agencies and other referral sources, job fair brochures and advertising copy.
7. The Board will review on an annual basis the effectiveness of this plan in increasing minority applicant flow and attracting qualified candidates for employment.

### Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes §10-4a (3)  
 Connecticut General Statutes §10-220(a)  
 Public Act 18-34, An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention.

Policy 4062: Adopted August 8, 1999; Revised November 17, 2010. Revised and Approved February 26, 2020.

Series 4000  
Personnel

## INCREASING EDUCATOR DIVERSITY PLAN

***[NOTE TO CLIENT: Effective July 1, 2023, Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-220(a) requires boards of education to develop and implement a written “increasing educator diversity plan,” formerly referred to as a “plan for minority educator recruitment.” Statutory revisions passed in 2023 also change various references from “minority” to “diverse” without redefining the term’s underlying meaning. We have revised our model policy to account for these language adjustments. Boards of education should note that, pursuant to Section 10 of Public Act 23-167, they are now required to submit their “increasing educator diversity plan” to the Commissioner of Education by March 15, 2024 for review and approval and implement such approved plan for the school year commencing July 1, 2024. In customizing and implementing their plans, boards of education should be mindful of their obligations under state and federal law as well as evolving legal developments in the wake of the United States Supreme Court’s decision in [Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College and Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina.](#)]***

In accordance with Sections 10-4a(3), 10-220(a), 10-156ee, and 10-156hh of the Connecticut General Statutes, the [ ] Board of Education (the “Board”) has developed the following written plan for increasing educator diversity:

1. All recruiting sources will be informed in writing of the Board's non-discrimination policy.
2. Each Board employee involved in hiring educators for the \_\_\_\_\_ Public Schools (the “District”) shall successfully complete the video training module relating to implicit bias and anti-bias in the hiring process, developed pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 10-156ee, prior to such employee’s participation in the educator hiring process for the District.
3. The Board will develop contacts with local training and educational institutions, including those with highly diverse enrollments, to publicize job openings within the District and to solicit referrals of diverse and qualified candidates.
4. The Board will develop contacts with local community organizations, including diverse community organizations, to publicize job openings within the District and to solicit referrals of diverse and qualified candidates.
5. The Board will maintain, or expand, as appropriate, its help-wanted advertising to include print and/or broadcast media that is targeted to diverse individuals.

- 6. The Board will participate in local job fairs, including those that are sponsored by diverse community organizations or otherwise targeted toward diverse individuals.
- 7. The Board, or its designee, will maintain records documenting all actions taken pursuant to this plan, including correspondence with recruitment agencies and other referral sources, job fair brochures and advertising copy.
- 8. The Board will review on an annual basis the effectiveness of this plan in increasing diverse applicant flow and attracting qualified candidates for employment.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes §10-4a (3) Educational interests of state identified  
Connecticut General Statutes §10-220(a) Duties of boards of education  
Connecticut General Statutes §10-156ee Duties re minority teacher recruitment  
Connecticut General Statutes §10-156hh Completion of video training module  
re implicit bias and anti-bias in hiring  
process for certain school district  
employees

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

9/27/2023

## **TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS STAFF ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

The employee retains the ultimate responsibility for reporting to work on a consistent basis in order to fulfill the requirements of his or her job. Attendance at work must be reliable, predictable, regular, and prompt. All employees are expected to report to work on time every day they are scheduled to work and to maintain a satisfactory record of attendance. Punctuality and regular attendance are essential to ensure optimal productivity within our schools for the benefit of our students. In order for the District to achieve these goals, all employees are required to maintain a satisfactory record of attendance. The interaction between the teachers/staff and students is the most influential factor affecting student academic success. It is critical that teachers be available to provide continuous high-quality education/support. However, it is understood that there are times when it is necessary to be absent because of illness or personal obligations. In those cases, the teachers must adhere to our absence reporting procedures.

The Torrington School District has established an Attendance system for all employees and the sole method for arranging substitute coverage. All employees are mandated to report absences to the system, whether or not substitute coverage is required. Timely reporting is essential.

### **PURPOSE**

This policy establishes attendance guidelines and procedures, and describes the responsibility of all staff in maintaining an effective attendance program. The ability to best serve our students, faculty, staff and the overall Torrington community requires regular attendance. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for all employees which define acceptable attendance expectations. Each employee has the responsibility to maintain good attendance and is expected to use good judgment in managing absences from work. Regular and punctual attendance is essential to the best performance of employees and the District. Excessive or habitual absenteeism and tardiness affects costs, efficiency and competitiveness, and creates a heavy burden on fellow coworkers. The occasional need to be absent due to illness, medical appointments, etc., is understood, and for the large majority of employees, absenteeism is legitimate, occurs infrequently, and presents few problems. These guidelines are intended to address the majority of instances in which sick leave is typically used, but they do not preclude individual assessments on a case-by-case basis.



## **ATTENDANCE STANDARDS & PROCEDURES**

### **Definitions:**

#### **Absence**

An "absence" is defined as any unscheduled absence from work during scheduled working hours (including failing to report for scheduled or unscheduled overtime) or failure to remain at work as scheduled. The use of the term scheduled is significant to this definition because it automatically excludes vacation, personal leave or other forms of approved and scheduled time off. An absence excludes any work-related injury, or a reoccurrence of such an injury, approved by the School district's Worker's Compensation Administrator.

An unscheduled consecutive absence in excess of one day shall be considered as only one absence against the employee, regardless of its length (Example: An employee is absent for four consecutive workdays with the flu which is considered one absence for purposes of this policy).

#### **Chronic Absenteeism for a staff member**

Corrective counseling may be warranted when any staff member has:

- An administrator will have a conversation with any staff member who has absent patterns (i.e taking the same day) or that has four (4) absences within any two (2) month period about the importance of them being here as an integral participant in the learning process.
- An administrator will have a conversation with any staff member who has seven (7) absences within any Ten (10) month school calendar period and issue a **verbal warning** to the staff member. The administrator will have a conversation with the staff member about the importance of them being here as an integral member of the learning process and issue a verbal warning. The administrator will also discuss with the employee contributing problems and possible corrective measures. The administrator should also advise the employee that an additional absence could result in a written warning.
- An administrator will have a conversation with any staff member who has nine (9) absences within any Ten (10) month school calendar period and issue a **written reprimand** to the staff member. The administrator may consult with the Office of Human Resources, prior to issuing the written warning. In determining whether to issue a written warning, the administrator may consider the number of absences, any pattern of absences, the employee's past record and any other extenuating circumstances.
- More stringent discipline may be imposed, in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources, if a staff member has reached ten (10) absences within any 10 month school calendar period. Any discipline imposed pursuant to this policy is subject to the just cause standard described within each bargaining unit's respective contracts.

**Physician's Documentation**

Documentation for an illness is required per the employee's respective bargaining unit's contract language. In the event that a specific bargaining unit's contract does not specify, then any absence for five (5) school days, or for three (3) days or more in a holiday or vacation week will need to be validated by a doctor's certificate.

A doctor's statement(s) and any other medical records for a staff member shall be maintained in the staff member's medical file. The information in this file shall be maintained as confidential unless disclosure is necessary for the health and/or safety of other personnel (such as issues of dangerous contagious disease) or for purposes of disciplinary or any other action taken pursuant to this policy.

**Policy Application**

This policy does not supersede the terms of any collective bargaining agreement. The objectives of this policy are in general, to communicate the attendance expectations of the District and to establish guidelines for the effective and fair administration of sick leave usage. Please realize that unpredictable attendance, habitual tardiness, and absenteeism are particularly detrimental to planning, organizational efficiency and employee morale. They are considerations when evaluating performance and are cause for corrective action up to and including dismissal.