

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY  
POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 3, 2020 MEETING**

**EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY ACT DESCRIPTION**

*The following is a full and accurate description of the final actions taken at the meeting and is provided in accordance with the Education Transparency Act, Md. Ed. Code Ann., §3-2B-09(b)(3). If there is a discrepancy between the video and this description, the video, which constitutes the official minutes of the meeting, shall control. The video/audio recordings of the Board of Education are the official record of the meetings and can be viewed at:*

<https://vimeo.com/389491391>

The Policy Review Committee of the Board of Education of Baltimore County met on Monday, February 3, 2020, in Building E, beginning at 4:30 p.m. The following Committee members were present: Kathleen Causey, Chair; John Offerman, Vice Chair; and Cheryl Pasteur, member.

The following staff persons were present: Margaret-Ann F. Howie, Esq., General Counsel; and Patricia Clark, Policy and Compliance Officer.

The following additional staff persons were present: Dr. Mary Boswell-McComas, Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Michael Zarchin, Chief of School Climate and Safety; Dr. Amalio Nieves, Executive Director, Social-Emotional Support; Ms. April Lewis, Executive Director, School Safety; Dr. Renard Adams, Senior Executive Director, Curriculum Operations; Ms. Kimberly Ferguson, Director, Student Support Services; Dr. Kevin Roberts, Coordinator, Pupil Personnel Services and Responsive Student Programming; Ms. Deborah Somerville, Coordinator, Health Services.

Call to order 4:33 p.m.

On motion of Ms. Causey, seconded by Mr. Offerman, that the agenda be amended under *Unfinished Business* to include discussion of Policy 2380, Records Information Management, and to incorporate discussion of student sex offenders during the presentation of Policy 5561, School Use of Reportable Offenses. The motion passed.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

## **I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### 1. Meeting Minutes, December 9, 2019

The minutes of the December 9, 2019, meeting of the Policy Review Committee stood approved as recorded.

## **II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### 2. Cell Phone Policy Update

Dr. McComas and Dr. Zarchin provided an update on the results of the cell phone policy feedback. Dr. McComas advised the Committee that 17 focus group schools were selected based on representation of different geographic areas throughout the county, diversity of student populations, and a variety of current school cell phone usage practices. Staff gathered feedback from questionnaires and from student, parent, teacher, and principal groups.

Staff in the Department of Research Accountability and Assessment gathered feedback on the perception of current cell phone practices, feedback on consistency of practices and teacher discretion, feedback on communication with parents, cell phones as a distraction, and enforcing consequences for cell phone usage.

Based on the feedback received, limited-use cell phone practices may be a good solution for most secondary schools as most stakeholders agreed this compromise was appropriate. Teacher discretion is important in order to allow teachers autonomy and because different classes may have different needs or requirements, but it may be useful to have some general guidelines in place so that practices, enforcement, and consequences are more consistent.

Mr. Offerman also asked that principals be allowed to grant exceptions to the policy.

Mr. Offerman asked about timing of the policy. Dr. Zarchin responded that the timeline is tight, but the goal is to get the policy to first reader on April 14 and second reader on May 5.

Ms. Pasteur stated that clarity in the policy is necessary to ensure no ambiguity from classroom to classroom. Ms. Pasteur also stated that in granting exceptions, there must be uniform procedures from school to school.

### 3. Policy 2380, Records Information Management

Prior to the meeting, staff provided committee members with the latest draft of the policy. Ms. Howie provided an overview of the revisions following the Committee's December meeting. Ms. Howie reviewed the changes made to the policy following comments from

Committee members at its December meeting: (1) position of records officer included/mentioned; (2) standards section from Howard County Public Schools' policy incorporated into the draft; and (3) a definition section included.

Ms. Causey posed a question submitted by Ms. Rowe who was not able to be the meeting asking about digital records and backup systems in general. Ms. Howie stated that she would get more information and provide to the Committee.

Following discussion, Ms. Causey suggested the Committee move the policy forward for first reader without a recommendation to allow time for the full Board to read the draft and to submit questions.

On motion of Ms. Causey, seconded by Ms. Pasteur, that Policy 2380 move forward for first reader without a recommendation, as presented. The motion passed.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

### **III. New BUSINESS**

#### 4. Policy 5530, Student Use and Possession of Tobacco

On motion of Mr. Offerman, seconded by Ms. Pasteur, that Policy 5530 be moved forward for first reader, as presented. The motion passed.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

5. Policy 5540, Alcoholic Beverages, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Intoxicants, Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs

On motion of Ms. Pasteur, seconded by Mr. Offerman, that Policy 5540 be moved forward for first reader, as presented. The motion passed.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

6. Policy 5551, Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior

On motion of Mr. Offerman, seconded by Ms. Pasteur, that Policy 5551 be moved forward for first reader, as presented. The motion passed.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

7. Policy 5561, School Use of Reportable Offenses

Ms. Causey asked that staff address how sex offenders are addressed in this policy. Dr. Zarchin and Ms. Lewis provided the Committee with an overview of process by which students may be charged criminally at school while on school property and outside of school for acts that occur in the community, how the school system is notified of these acts, and of the administrative review and disciplinary process.

Ms. Causey stated that she did not believe the policy as drafted supported the Superintendent's commitment to the safety and security of all students. Due to recent concerns, Ms. Causey asked staff go back and look at the policy to see if additional language should be added. Ms. Causey continued, while we are required by law to provide a free appropriate public education, we need an overarching guideline that would allow the policy to support the Superintendent's stance.

On motion of Mr. Offerman, seconded by Ms. Pasteur, that Policy 5561 be held until the next Policy Review Committee meeting, pending further updates from staff. The motion passed.

Discussion followed and Ms. Causey asked that staff also evaluate Policy 1240 related to visitors in schools to make sure that in every area we are updating our policies to ensure safety of not only our students, but also of staff and other stakeholders in our buildings.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

8. Policy 5580, Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment or Intimidation

Mr. Offerman expressed his concern for the insertion of the word "intentional" in Paragraph II(A), p. 1, line, 28. Ms. Lewis responded that the word was inserted to mirror state law. Following discussion, Ms. Causey asked if the superintendent's rule contained language to help administrators decide whether the behavior was intentional.

Following discussion, the Committee asked that a statement be added to the policy that indicates that students found to have violated the policy would be subject to discipline under Policy 5550.

On motion of Ms. Causey, seconded by Mr. Offerman, that Policy 5580 be moved forward for first reading without a recommendation with additional changes suggested by staff. The motion passed.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained/ Did Not Vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ms. Causey	X			
Mr. Offerman	X			
Ms. Pasteur	X			
Mr. Reshid				X
Ms. Rowe				X

#### **IV. COMMITTEE GENERAL GOOD AND WELFARE**

9. Ms. Pasteur stated that we need to be clear on what our overall policies are and what it means so everyone knows what is expected in the school and what the consequences may be. "We can't teach the children if we can't get their attention."

10. Ms. Causey brought forward concern of Ms. Rowe related to IAC procedures for school facility design for safety. One of the aspects talked about is that child sex abuse is a preventable health problem. In a future meeting, the Committee wishes to understand how these abuses are tracked in BCPS.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

11. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

*Submitted for posting on the Web site on February 5, 2020*