

**Columbia Board of Education Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes**

April 27, 2015 - APPROVED

Members Present:

Board:	Mr. Jonathan Sessions (Chair) Ms. Jan Mees Mr. James Whitt
CPS:	Dr. Peter Stiepleman Ms. Melinda Adams (arrived late)
Community Member:	Mr. Ben Trachtenberg
Ex-Officio:	Ms. Susan McClintic/CMNEA Ms. Susie Adams/CMSTA
Guests:	Mr. Kyle Picolla/PROMO

were aware of what transgender was. They're now seeing students recognizing the identification and learning how to live with it earlier than before. MU residence halls are based on sex defined at birth, however, MU has drafted revision for how to address this in the fall of 2015.

Mr. Trachtenberg asked if there are other districts (universities) that have drafted policy and pointed out they may have education they could provide and we could compare what other districts are doing in regard to athletic associations, restroom facilities, and locker rooms. Kyle said he would get information to us. Similar to how organizations would not fire someone for being gay or lesbian, they should neither fire someone for transgender identity. He added that there is reverse fear that transgender persons will be aggressive and it is normally the other way around. In instances where provisions are in place, violent acts decrease.

Dr. Stiepleman asked if Title 7 already protects a transgender in a situation and asked what we can adopt in our policies to educate staff for what to do when someone comes to ask what the district will do for their child when their child's identity has changed (we're already hearing about this).

Mr. Sessions said policy-wise it is an easy direction. Policy AC, and JG-R which is our bullying policy, references punishments and enumerates items in the policy. Our policy AC includes sexual orientation and some areas in JG-R do not align with AC. He asked if they need to be amended, whether we enumerate gender identity and gender expression or not, and believes it may be a procedural issue. Mr. Trachtenberg felt we should do more than what is required, and added the Supreme Court has not yet advised on this to the letter.

Ms. Mees asked if we had spoken to MSBA. Ms. Melinda Adams confirmed we had and shared MSBA does not have specific policy right now, but provided us with procedures from Kansas City. They said Title 7 covers transgender through existing language, but MSBA did not have a lot of input for how to handle locker rooms, etc. Kyle said if we decide to import policy, he can provide information and added it is better to be prepared before any situations occur. Mr. Sessions added City of Columbia has language in their policy.

Kerri provided information from the 2011 Survey of the National Transgender Discrimination to help explain what some of these kids are facing. She directed the committee to the Missouri percentages regarding how many students had experienced harassment and assault and how many left their districts because of it. She said transgender students experience mental health issues from negative experiences. When policies are implemented and a student can begin to live as they see themselves, mental health issues are reduced.

Ms. Susie Adams asked what help we could offer those students who have parents in conflict with their student's identities. Ms. McClintic will request best practice information from MNEA and should have this information within a couple of weeks. Kyle pointed out it is best for transgender individuals to feel protected so they can attend school and focus on learning, adding that success of a student who is protected is comparably different than a transgender student in a district without a policy.

Dr. Stiepleman asked if we should bring this before the Board as 1st read. Ms. McClintic felt it best to gather additional information and background from districts outside CPS. Mr. Session stated we may also want to update JG-R to include transgender identity and expression as well.

Mr. Whitt pointed out there is an educational portion as well as policy portion and encouraged the group that the district needed to be very clear on where we stand and our approach forward. The group discussed adjusting policy, looking into supporting statutes, and gathering information on procedures over the

summer, with the goal of placing this on the committee agenda and possible Board review in the fall to be best prepared on how we would answer questions and handle situations before implementing policy.

Kyle stated 16 other cities had passed ordinances, but said the State has a non-discrimination law that does not include sexual orientation and gender identity, and there is not a bill proposed for this year's session.

Action: Mr. Sessions recommended presenting revised language for two CPS policies including gender identity and gender expression as well as addressing our bullying policy.

Upcoming Policy Committee Meeting Schedule

Group discussed alternate dates for May committee meeting and agreed on May 26th, 2015.

Ms. Mees asked when new committee appointments are made. Mr Whitt said it will be approved in May. Committee chairs will be expected to meet in June to layout mini-dates for upcoming year and will encourage all new committee members to attend.

Mr. Trachtenberg moved we adjourn. Ms. Mees seconded. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.