Collaborative for Educational Services  
Policy Committee Meeting  
March 16, 2022 at 9:00am-10:00am  
Minutes (FINAL)

Attendance:

Committee Members: Jennifer Culkeen, Cathy Englehardt, Dan Hayes, Allison LeClair, David Lubbers.

CES Attendees: Todd Gazda, Kathy Levesque, Victoria Lucadello, Cheryl Rogers, Art Scott.

Absent with Notice: Donald Sluter.

Welcome:
The meeting was called to order and a quorum was confirmed at 9:03am.

Video Policy:
Kathy Levesque discussed the history of the policy which was originally created in 2014 and last updated in 2016. Current revisions are focused on ensuring that video materials conform to copyright laws, have appropriate permissions, are posted on appropriate platforms, and are accessible to administrators. The focus of the policy is on the elements of video use, rather than control over content.

Hayes reminded the members that the CES Board will also be reviewing and voting on these policies. The committee’s work focuses on assessing, revising, and recommending policies to the Board as appropriate.

Lubbers motioned to endorse the video policy as presented. Englehardt seconded the motion. There was a show of hands and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed and no abstentions.

Vacation Policy:
The goal of the policy is to move to a standardized four-week vacation allotment for the organization across the board. This supports equity, a family-centered work environment and allows for recognition of work-life balance. Guardrails are in place to minimize financial exposure including payback of unaccrued leave upon departure and allowing only a two-week carryover to the following year. A minimal number of CES staff have a large vacation bank and they will not lose time in this changeover. Language about vacation time payouts is included in conformance with applicable Massachusetts laws.

Culkeen motioned to approve the policy as presented. Lubbers seconded the motion. There was a show of hands and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed and no abstentions.
Bereavement Policy:
The key changes are the addition of the death of a guardian along with close family as an event eligible for bereavement leave. There was also a change to five days of leave, increased from three days. Shorter leave is included in the event of the death of other personal connections. These changes continue to support the belief that staff need to be able to take care of themselves and their families in challenging circumstances.

LeClair motioned to approve the policy as presented. Lubbers seconded the motion. There was a show of hands and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed and no abstentions.

Harassment policy:
This policy represents a clean up of the current policies since there are two in existence, one in collective bargaining and one in the CES employee handbook. Both have the same goals and standards although the language is not identical. The goal with this update was to be more consistent and to minimize the risk of these being viewed as potentially conflicting policies. This version uses the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination as its model policy. They have provided technical assistance to CES.

A question was raised about the need to be more specific than “someone” in section 4 and it was agreed to adjust that language as provided in the policy’s previous section. There were also corrections offered for minor scrivener’s errors.

Englehardt motioned to approve the policy with the agreed upon edits. Culkeen seconded the motion. There was a show of hands and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed and no abstentions.

Public Comment Policy:
This is an important policy for the organization as Board meetings usually have some guests in attendance and it will be helpful to have a document that outlines the role for public comment.

The group discussed changes to tighten up and clarify the language in sections one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven. This ensures that the policy will encourage community engagement while delineating the role of the Board and the Chair during any public comment period at a meeting.

LeClair motioned to approve the policy as amended. Culkeen seconded the motion. There was a show of hands and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed and no abstentions.

Sick Time Accrual Policy:
This policy continues the focus on encouraging employees to take care of themselves and develop a healthy work-life balance. Under the new policy, staff would have their annual sick time balance immediately available to them upon their start date. Organizations are seeing increased need from many employees as COVID continues to create additional burdens of illness and caring for family members. The financial risk is minimal since sick time is not paid out upon separation. There were questions about the possibility of departing staff abusing this
bank of time. The committee discussed the likelihood of this problem, potential responses, and agreed to continue with the policy as presented.

Englehardt motioned to approve the policy as presented. Culkeen seconded the motion. There was a show of hands and the motion carried unanimously with none opposed and no abstentions.

Discussion:
A question was raised regarding creating additional ways for educators to take advantage of the Professional Development opportunities. There was discussion about costs, regional development days, and ways to coordinate more support for PD.

Hayes offered his thanks to everyone for being part of the discussion and improving the policies for presentation to the CES Board.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01am.