

1 Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SVRTSD)

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3 **Policy Committee Meeting Minutes, Wednesday September 4, 2024**

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5 RGB members present for meeting: Online- A. Edelson and C. Putney; L. Johnson and J.
6 Orzahowski in-person
7 Southwest Tech represented by John Lamson, Assistant Director

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9 Recorder: Sandra Redding, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

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11 Policy Committee meeting was opened at 4:20PM by Asher Edelson who apologized for the
12 connectivity issues. Edelson and Putney connected to the meeting by cellphone speaker. The
13 committee decided it was acceptable to proceed in this manner and that the public could still
14 reach us to phone in if necessary. Both individuals using cell phones to attend this meeting were
15 comfortable with the circumstances. Minutes will be available to anyone interested.

16 Chair Edelson introduced the first topic on the agenda, C5084, Personal Use of Wireless
17 Communication. Johnson read the policy aloud while Lamson sent word copy to Putney.
18 Discussion ensued:

- 19 • **AE** felt the policy seemed fair, but some additions might be needed; perhaps table till
20 next month; need to research language for a strong policy; how does pouch work and
21 will each school district develop its own policy? Use VSBA for assistance and get MH's
22 input;
- 23 • **JL** noted regs are in handbook; as of October, no cell phones may be out and visible
24 during school day classes; rollout planned at MAU/SWT in October of cell phone pouch
25 use; shouldn't leave this issue for individual teachers to decide and police; if phone is off
26 and concealed, that's not a violation; the pouch is a convenience; policy directs the
27 administrator regs for action/discipline to support administrators; policy must be fair and
28 equitable to address all needs
- 29 • **LJ** outside of present policy, cannot support; last paragraph needs language change;
30 what do we do about our other sending schools?
- 31 • **JO**-doesn't matter what other schools do, this would be OUR policy; what is this pouch;
32 need more info; teens are built to break rules, so policy should be strong and detailed;
33 can students use on personal time? What's legal? certain classes require in-depth
34 attention to detail and students could be injured if distracted by phones; our teachers
35 need help and this could be a difficult sell for students and parents; VSBA is a really
36 good resource for a great deal of situations and John would be happy to contact and
37 research;
- 38 • **LJ**-will be meeting w/MAU; all students must be treated equally; must give administration
39 the support they need to enforce; phone must be concealed when student enters tech
40 center; could get sued unless strong policy to back up enforcement; must meet the letter
41 of the law; being concealed just does not work and we already know this; what are the
42 penalties if student refuses to put away or give up phone; must spell out disciplinary
43 actions; teens have attitudes while using cell phones; constantly talking on or about cell
44 phones; causes problems for teachers; makes it very difficult for teachers to do their jobs
45 if they are constantly reminding students to put away their phones; need strong
46 language to give teachers support in their actions; need to fully understand rational and
47 have supportive information;
- 48 • **CP**-1.how much of a problem is this? 2. How many students work and how will this
49 action affect them? Do we need to provide an area where phones can be used at certain
50 times of the day? He has concerns about locking phone in pouch.
- 51 • **JL**-three main problems noted by teachers-1. Students skipping classes; 2. Impulse
52 control; 3. Cell phone use. There is not a good policy to model concerning this issue;
53 look at policy C6141 for substance;
- 54 • **AE**- Bring more info to October policy meeting and gather input from various interested
55 parties before bringing to full board.

1 Moving on to discussion of a concussion policy:

- 2 • **JL-** the SVSU policy 5120 proposed may be what the tech center should adopt to fit our
3 specific needs; it is about injuries, not just athletic concussions; may not need to modify;
- 4 • **CP-**policy seems overdone for our needs; way too general; should outline each district's
5 responsibilities; communication with all parties involved very necessary;
- 6 • **AE-** tech center has high risk programs; as we have no athletics here, but we do have
7 athletes, do we need to modify language?
- 8 • **JO-** how specific do we need to be or is a boiler plate policy good enough coverage?
- 9 • **LJ-** everyone is responsible to recognize concussion issues; VPA has strict guidelines
10 which we may access as to all aspects of concussion policy responsibilities; took a long
11 time to get the wording just right for the SU policy; students must be monitored for
12 expected return to classrooms; the language is standard and legal at this time; read the
13 policy again for greater understanding; the SU policy had strong legal advice and we do
14 have a school nurse available for consult if needed; VSBA and VPA were both involved in
15 setting up this policy;

16 Edelson inquired if the committee was ready to recommend the SU policy 5140 to our full board
17 for warning. With motions from Putney and Johnson, the committee voted to present established
18 concussion policy with appropriate SW Tech edits, #5140C to our full board for warning at the
19 October meeting.

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21 Lamson shared with this committee that MAU/SWT planned on implementing the cell phone
22 pouch initiative in October or at least sometime this school year. Comments:

- 23 • If administration puts action in place, there should be a strong policy to support
- 24 • Cannot act outside the policy; no legal support
- 25 • Board chair should have input
- 26 • Where is specific policy? There is a procedure for policies: create or edit, introduce to
27 committee, goes to board for warning, public has chance to weigh in, then adoption.
28 Administrative regs may be added. If established procedures not followed, legal issues
29 could ensue. Can't do anything that's not in place properly and legally

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31 With no other business, the committee adjourned at 5:35PM with motions from Orzehowski and
32 Putney. Unanimous approval.

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