

COVENTRY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Coventry, CT
Minutes
Transportation Committee Meeting
Wednesday November 30, 2011
Administration Building Conference Room

Members Present: Todd Cancelliere, Chair
 Eugene Marchand
 William Oros

Administrators Present: Troy Hopkins, Principal of the G. H. Robertson School

Also Present: Jennifer Beausoleil, BOE Chair (8:05 pm)
 Three community members

I. Call To Order

T. Cancelliere called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Audience of Citizens

There were no speakers at this point.

III. Daycare Stops for Kindergarteners- Discussion and Possible VOTE/Solution

Mr. Hopkins explained the background behind the request for kindergarteners to be dropped off on the opposite side of the street. He said the procedure is to have students dropped off on the same side of the street as they live and there are morning and afternoon kindergarten sessions and bus routes planned for this procedure. He said there is an exception to this policy for one daycare and another request for an exception is being brought to the Committee for review.

W. Oros asked who gave the permission for the exception. Mr. Hopkins said it is not clear who gave the permission. He has discussed this with Stephanie Greenleaf, the bus dispatcher for M & J Bus Company.

E. Marchand asked if there is a policy regarding such a procedure. Mr. Hopkins said **Policy #3541 Transportation** relates to the safety of student transportation in regard to roads with hazards such as a speed limit of 35 mph or higher and current request pertains to such a road (Route 31). The committee and Mr. Hopkins discussed the relevance of Policy 3541 Transportation and agreed that it is a provision for providing transportation and not the safety of the getting to the transportation (bus).

E. Marchand said he does not want to be involved in the commerce of daycare. He suggested adding language to the policy stating that an adult needs to be at the bus stop to cross the children.

Christina Voorvaart of 695 Main Street, Smile Laugh and Giggle Preschool and Childcare, Donna Livingston of 716 Main Street, of Busy Bee Childcare LLC and Heather Zaushny of 2544 Main Street, Honey Bear Child Care explained how their businesses are affected by the restriction of morning versus

afternoon kindergarten assignments based on residency address. They also answered questions posed by the committee regarding the safety of crossing the students across the state highway.

The bus routes and how they are planned were discussed among the members and citizens present.

T. Cancelliere said he is not comfortable making an overall policy change. He said he would like to grandfather the existing exception for the one daycare for the remainder of the year and then work on specifics of a new procedure. He said this would avoid the possibility of more daycares coming to the committee with similar requests and having students changing kindergarten sessions mid-year and additional safety risks. Mr. Hopkins agreed. E. Marchand disagreed.

Mr. Hopkins said the only issue the school administration should be concerned with is safety, not the business of the daycares themselves.

W. Oros said as long as the sight lines are good and an adult is present to walk the student across the street, and if an adult is not present they are returned to school, he supports the street daycare stops.

J. Beausoleil said the role of the Transportation Committee is to establish bus routes and restrictions on bus routes and not establishing policy. She said they can ask the Policy Committee to clarify or establish a policy regarding bus transportation if they see fit.

Mr. Hopkins cautioned the Committee in making a blanket change to the policy when the future structure of all-day kindergarten may be changing in the near future. He suggested the committee deny the current request to allow for opposite side of the road pick-up/drop-off because of safety while honoring the current exception for the remainder of the year.

MOTION: As of January 1, 2012 we allow licensed daycare providers the ability to escort kindergarten students across the street during pick up and/or drop off provided the daycare personnel escort the student across the street and all conditions including sight lines are deemed safe.

By: E. Marchand Seconded: W. Oros

Discussion: W. Oros said this motion clarifies the existing practice and specifies licensed daycare. He said the administration should inform the bus company of this motion.

Mr. Hopkins said he is concerned about who deems the conditions safe. W. Oros said it is usually done by the bus company or police department.

Result: 2-1 (For: E. Marchand, W. Oros; Against: T. Cancelliere)

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the November 30, 2011 Transportation Committee Meeting at 8:30 pm.

By: E. Marchand Seconded by: W. Oros

Result: Motion passes unanimously (3-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara O'Brien, Subcommittee Clerk