

PITTSFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
AUDIT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

JUNE 11, 2014

Room 410

3:30 p.m.

Those Present: M. Pero, P. Sullivan, I. Narotsky, B. Kecskemety, L. Purcell, D. Kenney, R. Wager.

1. The February 26, 2014, minutes were approved.

2. Mr. Ray Wager was present to highlight the audit process and any changes. A handout was given. Mr. Wager noted that many school districts will be exceeding the tax cap in years to come and it appears that we are in good shape right now. A brief discussion took place on fund balances and reserves. Mr. Wager said that if it is possible - stay at the breakeven point and keep track of reserves. A brief discussion ensued about liabilities.

Mr. Wager noted that an internal audit function is still required and that Booster Clubs are a topic all school boards should be talking about.

Mr. Wager said that the District's preliminary audit went very well with no significant findings to report.

3. Mrs. Laura Purcell, Harris Beach, was present talk about student field trips and excursions. Mr. Kenney set the stage for the Committee with regard to student travel. Mrs. Purcell recommended that we simplify our current policy. The discussion ensued as follows:

- Field trips should fall under the BOE and School District as long as they are an integral part of the curriculum and during the school day. Easy trips are those to museums and the like and usually for elementary schools. They are pretty cut and dry.
- More difficult trips, which are the majority, are private recreational experiences/ curriculum related.
- An overseas trip can be ok, perhaps, but is it an integral part of curriculum? Example: students fund trip except for incidentals that are covered by the District (substitute teacher/bus check before trip). However, because of where trips are now according to our policy, we will be found to be responsible insurance-wise if something goes wrong. Concern is: if in fact, we, as a District, want to keep allowing field trips, should we be thinking about protocols and exercising more controls or are we comfortable with controls now?
- Mike brought up cost and the need for direction associated with kids. To what extent are we permitted to allow trips? What are we obligated to pay for? What about kids who

cannot afford it? Mrs. Purcell noted: Any funding given would have to be available for every student. It was noted that some districts don't allow field trips at all.

- A suggestion was made that we consider a Board policy where we could have a process where we exert control but offer under electives. Students would be charged with fund raising and/or individual payment.
- District cannot pay for chaperones, etc.
- Teachers should price trips to take into account extra costs. We could say no or say do it but it will not fall under the School District.
- Regarding the Middle School Washington trip – all is properly done if it is a school sponsored trip. One ingredient is money. If a trip is already on books in Extraclassroom account – there is control. With another group that is not in an Extraclassroom Account, the oversight is limited.
- We could request all encompassing accountability within two weeks of a field trip to see what the money has gone for.
- Mrs. Purcell said if we are going to continue field trips, we should add some protocols. Also out of state trips should be subject to Board approval. (this is current practice).
- The struggle is with athletic field trips; they don't fall under policy if not under athletic budget.
- Question was asked about funding a Washington trip vs. a Genesee County Museum one.
- Mr. Pero said he would like to build parameters inside of what we have now and where we should be to show good faith efforts to the Commissioner and comply with our audits. This will help to make people think about the worthiness of field trips. He feels there are three buckets: 1. Curricular trips; 2. Co-curricular trips (grey); 3. Non-routine trips.
- It was noted that DECA vs. athletic trips are different because DECA funds its own way, athletics do not.
- Mike said we are attempting to put field trips into the 3 buckets and create regulations for each one. (the District will fund those in the first bucket). We will look at future controls and criteria. He noted that the economy may drive some trips. The District wants to have field trips, but have controls in place. We need to look at if it is okay for kids to pay for some athletic trips, and/or use booster club funding or District funding.
- A discussion ensued on sanctioned Section V games and funding. Mike said he would like Scott Barker to explain athletic trips and the value of out of state trips. What if we don't participate?

- It was mentioned that Booster Clubs must have accountability in writing.
- Maybe a good venue for this topic would be to have training be a focus of PDLT. Administrators could go back and present the information to coaches.

Mike said he would like to have policies and procedures in place by January of 2015. However, there are some field trips on his desk right now where he needs guidance. His thought is to allow the process to go as we know it now until January 2015. It was suggested that trips get in the correct bucket now and see if anything jumps off the page. Mr. Pero asked Mrs. Purcell what she would need from us in order to draft policies and procedures; is there anything we should not be doing? Another question was “What regulations do we need to cover each bucket”?

The following was suggested:

- Place historical trips in buckets. Tease out and categorize (use Mrs. Purcell’s handout as a litmus test).
- Include principal approved trips if possible. Ask principals for any information they may have about trips requiring transportation.
- Place “different” ones in their own pile.
- Take that work to Mrs. Purcell and Mr. Wager. That will bring us to how that study will change our current policy.
- First meet on July 16th from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. to process what we have now. Ask for principals input where appropriate.

4. Mr. Pero presented information about the Rochester Piano Guild’s long term use of the District’s facilities for private music lessons. A lengthy discussion ensued on this topic. Consensus and advice of our attorney, auditor and Audit Oversight Committee: deny the request to continue lessons in our schools.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Walker
School District Clerk