

APPROVED



Foxborough Regional Charter School

Minutes

Governance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday March 18, 2025 at 8:00 AM

Meeting Format

Whether in person or online, the public is welcome to attend Board/Committee Meetings and have access to meeting minutes. Meetings are held once a month and additionally, as determined by the Board/Committee Chair. All meeting Agendas are posted on the school website at least 48 hours in advance of each public meeting.

During the meeting, the Board and its committees follow the published agenda. Gallery members are not part of the formal discussion or deliberations. Those wishing to speak at a meeting are asked to follow our [Privilege of the Floor Policy](#). Meetings start promptly on time as noted on the agenda.

Committee Members Present

Heidi Berkowitz (remote), Karen Calvert (remote), Sergio Martin (remote), Todd Tetreault (remote)

Committee Members Absent

Anissia Vixamar

Guests Present

Christine Barraford (remote), Martine Albama, Toby Romer (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Roll Call Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Todd Tetreault called a meeting of the Governance Committee of Foxborough Regional Charter School to order on Tuesday Mar 18, 2025 at 8:04 AM.

C. Privilege of the Floor

No privilege of the floor.

II. Governance Committee Business

A. Governance

Review of three FRCS policies.

III. Policy Review

A. Discussion Items

Ms. Alabama reviewed the proposed changes to the Staff Handbook including the following highlights on the background check:

- Policy reflects mandatory requirements by law.
- CORI check searches the Massachusetts only database for any legal offenses; if an arrest was made in NH or Rhode Island for instance, information would not be found.
 - CORI service is free of charge to the district.
 - Mandatory requirement for any staff hires as well as any volunteer in the district who may be in presence of students unsupervised; the default is set for any person who will be in campus buildings at any time.
 - CORI checks must be completed and kept on-site in the requesting district; copies from other districts cannot be honored.
 - CORI needs to be done every three years; employee/volunteer is asked to fill out the CORI from again and reflect a sense of ownership in the process.
- Fingerprinting on the other hand searches a nation-wide database for any legal offenses.
 - Fingerprinting service fee is \$55.00 paid by the individual person.
 - If someone has been fingerprinted in last seven years, another check is not required; applicant may request the original “letter of suitability” from a prior district and not have to repeat the fingerprinting.
 - Fingerprinting needs to be completed every seven years.
- An employment offer is contingency on a clear fingerprinting and CORI result.

- If a prospective employee does not pass the CORI check, a letter is sent via registered mail of the results and the candidate is allowed to state a reason why he/she should still be offered the position.
- Any disagreement is appealed to the Executive Director.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Tetreault suggested displaying the information above in the format of a grid for better understanding of the requirements by a prospective employee. Mr. Romer noted that, insofar as the policies are written “by lawyers for lawyers,” the handbook needs to be made more readable and understandable by the employee. However, any changes would risk taking out legal protection and clarity.

Mr. Tetreault also suggested replacing reference to “school committee” to Board of Trustees throughout the policies.

Ms. Berkowitz stated that there are about thirty policies that are foundational that require the Board’s approval. The option of having special meetings of the Board to review a half-dozen at each meeting was suggested.

Mr. Romer will check the status of the repeal of the Massachusetts remote meeting law at the end of March, as special meetings of the Board would be conducted more conveniently in remote sessions. At Mr. Martin’s suggestion, Ms. Berkowitz will attempt to make the review process of changes smoother.

Title IX Non-Discrimination Policy:

The most recent Title IX regulation is as of August 2024 which states that Title IX prevents any harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex and follows Massachusetts General Laws to implement the federal Title IX policy.

- The recent federal administration has added some agencies that do not recognize transgender individuals, which may affect the content of Title IX.
- Revision to the regulations will extend the scope of Title IX which now includes discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation and may extend beyond school.
- Upon notice from DESE and the Attorney General’s office, there will be a revision to Title IX at that time.
- Every district must post the latest Title IX policy in order to be in compliance.

Discussion ensued. At Mr. Romer’s suggestion the first line of the policy will read that the new federal Title IX regulations were issued by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Mr. Martin noted that it would be helpful to add language at the beginning of each policy that states what the purpose of the policy is and whether it is a new policy or revision of an existing policy and the reason for the changes. Ms. Berkowitz will add this clarifying language to the beginning of each policy.

Child abuse and neglect

Mr. Tetreault noted that the first paragraph of the policy is a good example of a clear introduction as discussed above.

- Under the purview of the Department of Children and Families, the law states that anyone in a school setting that provides services to children under the age of eighteen is a mandatory reporter of child abuse and neglect.
- It is incumbent on all staff members to report any abuse or neglect that they witness to DCF, even if they are not sure it rises to the level of abuse and neglect, i.e. "if you see something, say something and do something." It is up to DCF to investigate.
- If the staff member does not report this suspicion, it would qualify as neglect of mandated duties on the part of the staff member.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Berkowitz reported that this policy has not been updated since 2003 and not in compliance with state law. The policy has been completely redrafted to be consistent with current law.

The reference to "principal or designee" gives the principal flexibility to appointing his designee as either the assistant principal, the dean of students, director of HR, etc. as he/she sees fit. Mandatory training of staff is done annually, and part of the training teaches the mandatory reporter the responsibilities for reporting and to involve administrators and school health professional in the reporting. In the event of a significant clear emergency, and in which DCF is called to the district to take immediate custody of the child, the Board of Trustees will be notified of the event. In the event of the involvement of a staff member in the offense, due diligence will be taken to protect the child and give fair due process to the staff member and keep legal exposure to a minimum.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the above three policies are ready to be presented to the Board at its April meeting as a first reading. In order to advance the approval of policies, the Governance Committee will meet again on April 1st to review the next three policies. The goal is to be able to present at least six policies to the Board as having been vetted properly by the Committee with a quick review of revisions and make its recommendation.

IV. Closing Items

A. Approval of Minutes

There were none.

B. Vote to Adjourn

Todd Tetreault made a motion to adjourn.

Sergio Martin seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Karen Calvert Aye
Todd Tetreault Aye
Anissia Vixamar Absent
Sergio Martin Aye
Heidi Berkowitz Aye

C. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Barraford

Documents used during the meeting

- Student Board Member Overview 31825.docx
- Scope Governance Committee_.docx
- Privilege of the Floor (1).pdf
- Board of Trustee Member Conflict of Interest Policy.docx
- Charter Amendments and Renewal Policy.docx
- Reporting Abuse and Neglect Policy 31825.docx
- School Building Administration.docx
- Open Meetings Act Policy 31825.docx
- Annual Budget, Budgeting System, and Planning Policy.docx
- Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, Equal Access to Education, and Non-Discrimination Statement.docx
- Complaint Procedure 31825.docx

The listed matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.