FAIRHAVEN POLICY SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES
September 28, 2026

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCUD 2026 NOV 19 AM8:33

MEMBERS PRESENT: Via Zoom: Nicole Pacheco, Erik Andersen
MEMBERS ABSENT: Erik Baumann
STAFF PRESENT: Assistant Superintendent Mark Balestracci

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Pacheco at 2:31 pm.

The committee reviewed the draft AI policy for the second time, focusing on practical implementation and alignment with district operations rather than immediate policy revisions. Assistant Superintendent Balestracci highlighted a phased approach to AI literacy, noting that elementary students are not currently using AI tools, with gradual exposure planned through middle and high school. To ensure student safety and data privacy with the evolving technology, he agreed to coordinate with the IT Department to review current security protocols and keyword monitoring systems The Committee considered integrating language regarding District roles and responsibilities into the draft policy, with Mr. Balestracci planning to review these suggestions with Mrs. Ware and outline family communication strategies to support transparent, ethical AI education.

Assistant Superintendent Balestracci then asked the Committee to consider enhancing student safety by introducing Sex Offender Registry Inquiry (SORI) checks to the district's current screening process to address potential concerns beyond existing state fingerprinting and CORI requirement that already exist in Policy ADDA and ADDA-R: Background Checks. He explained that while SORI relies on a federal database it is not universally used by all districts, neighboring districts have adopted it. Both Mrs. Pacheco and Mr. Andersen support more coverage. Assistant Superintendent Balestracci explained the use of the SORI would apply starting from policy adoption, aligning with the District's existing three year CORI renewal cycle rather than retroactively. He stated this was a recommendation from the safety team due to a growing number of school based volunteers. He will draft a model policy addendum for their review prior to bringing it before the full Committee.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Massachusetts PROTECT Act, Policy ACL, which mandates strict protocols regarding civil law enforcement presence on school property, including requiring valid judicial warrants and limiting onsite access without district representative oversight. Assistant Superintendent Balestracci presented the MASC model policy. He noted that while procedures are already in place from prior experience with newcomer families, the law codifies these protections across all District property, including school buses and transportation vendors. Under the policy, school staff are trained to immediately notify District leadership upon encountering law enforcement, leaving warrant verification to designated officials to ensure activity remains outside buildings until verified. The Subcommittee agreed to present the PROTECT Act Policy for a first read at the next full Committee meeting to allow thorough consideration and maintain transparency.

Mr. Andersen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Pacheco, passed unanimously (2-0). Adjourned at 3:01 pm.

Sheri Souza
Secretary to the School Committee
Fairhaven Public Schools

Approved, November 12, 2026