

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Special Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 6, 2022

5:00 PM

501 Kings Highway East

In attendance:

Mr. Michael Cummings (until 6:24pm), Dr. James Zavodjancik, Ms. Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Ms. Carol Guernsey, Ms. Jennifer Jacobsen, Ms. Kristen Hardiman

Call to Order – Ms. Maxon-Kennelly called meeting to order at 5:01pm.

Approval of May 17, 2022 meeting minutes – Approved with changes with 2-0-1 vote. Ms. Jacobsen and Ms. Maxon-Kennelly in favor; Ms. Guernsey abstained.

Policy:

Update on Grading Regulations

Mr. Cummings stated there have been two meetings with the full committee which included representatives from both high schools and middle school leaders. Mr. Cummings stated the committee focused their meetings on two outstanding issues – Guidelines for Reassessments and Guidelines for Late Work. Mr. Cummings explained both high schools dedicated their faculty meeting and the staff professional development day on May 31st for input on those areas.

Mr. Cummings stated another meeting was held on June 2nd to develop the guidelines on those two areas. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Mr. Cummings what format the meetings took. Mr. Cummings stated the committee developed a survey in order to receive feedback on these topics. Mr. Cummings explained the survey included questions about the universality of these regulations.

Ms. Guernsey asked Mr. Cummings which departments were involved in the committee. Mr. Cummings explained the committee worked in smaller groups in both high schools across all departments and came forward with the process for the June 2nd meeting.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Mr. Cummings if all staff are aware of this policy. Mr. Cummings stated all staff are aware of this policy. Mr. Cummings also stated, while staff are aware of this developing policy, they are not all in agreement. However, the administrators have emphasized to their staff the importance of these guidelines as necessary for equity across the two high schools.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Mr. Cummings if staff was told what the next steps would be. Mr. Cummings stated staff are aware that more work will be done and this is just a starting point. Mr. Cummings also stated staff expressed gratitude that they had an opportunity to provide input into this

policy. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly thanked Mr. Cummings for using the staff professional development day and faculty day to discuss this topic.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly recommended adding language to the first line of the regulations to include “middle and high school”.

Ms. Guernsey recommended clearer language for the first bullet under Grading Communication.

In section “Timing for Entry into Infinite Campus”, Ms. Jacobsen asked, “What happens if grades are NOT entered into Infinite Campus?” Ms. Jacobsen recommended language be added to address this topic. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated this topic should be addressed in the policy, not the regulation. Mr. Cummings stated this topic could be written into the bottom of the regulation or it could be included in the letter to parents that will go out at the beginning of the school year. Ms. Jacobsen asked that it be documented in both places. Mr. Cummings will draft language to address this concern.

In section “Grading/Assessment practices”, Ms. Guernsey suggested the language be changed in the first bullet to read, “Assigned work shall be due during scheduled class time”. In reference to the bullet addressing “8 assessments per full year course”, Ms. Jacobsen suggested the language “no fewer than two per quarter” be added to this bullet.

In section “Guidelines for Reassessments”, Ms. Maxon-Kennelly questioned the meaning of the word “term” in the second bullet. Mr. Cummings stated he will look into whether “term” refers to a quarter or a semester. In reference to that same bullet, Ms. Guernsey recommended language be added to include “.....across all departments, at all levels”. Mr. Cummings expressed concern with Ms. Guernsey’s recommended language in that it may be problematic. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he will discuss with staff the language change Ms. Guernsey has recommended.

Regarding bullet number six in this section, Ms. Jacobsen expressed concern about the Request form to be used for reassessments. Ms. Jacobsen is concerned it could be an equity issue since not every student is going to fill out the form. Ms. Jacobsen stated the form may be construed as a barrier and, therefore, does not recommend using the form. Mr. Cummings stated the intent of the form is to discourage a student from “blowing off” the test the first time. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated she is not opposed to using the form. Ms. Jacobsen asked Mr. Cummings if there was any discussion with administrators about the students who take advantage of the reassessment opportunity and those who do not. Mr. Cummings stated there was some discussion in trying to get more students to take advantage of the reassessments. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly questioned the language about the four school days submission requirement. Mr. Cummings stated that language is there so students do not wait until the end of the semester to submit the reassessment Request form. Mr. Cummings will add language to that bullet to include “4 school days after the assessment is returned to the student”.

In section “Guidelines for late work”, Ms. Jacobsen expressed concern about the second bullet and teachers reducing points. Mr. Cummings asked the committee if they felt this bullet was necessary. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated she does think this bullet should remain.

APPROVED 6/28/2022

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated there are still items within this policy that need to be added and addressed including zeros as grades and test corrections. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Dr. Zavodjancik if he would address next steps for the rest of this policy.

Ms. Guernsey asked Mr. Cummings if this draft went to students for feedback. Mr. Cummings confirmed the draft was shown to students and the feedback from students was positive. Ms. Guernsey asked Mr. Cummings how this policy will be communicated to parents. Mr. Cummings responded saying the policy will be communicated to parents by Dr. Zavodjancik and/or the high school Head Principals in August.

Ms. Guernsey requested a clearer definition of a formative assessment. Ms. Guernsey's concern is teachers using a quiz as a formative assessment. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated the reason the definitions are not included in the regulations is because they should be included in the policy.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated these regulations are not ready yet for the full packet to the Board; however, they should be presented to the Board for questions. Mr. Cummings stated he will make the recommended edits tomorrow morning and send it to the principals for feedback. Mr. Cummings stated it will be part of the Superintendent's report.

Discussion – 6141 Advanced Course or Program and Challenging Curriculum

After discussion, the Committee recommended language changes. Dr. Zavodjancik will edit the policy. Printed copies will be provided to the Committee at the June 7th meeting for a final vote.

Discussion – 6172.1 Gifted and Talented Students

After discussion, the Committee recommended language changes. Dr. Zavodjancik will edit the policy. Printed copies will be provided to the Committee at the June 7th meeting for a final vote.

Open Discussion/Public Comment - Meyer Stransky – Student; Freshman, FWHS – would like the district to offer Civics to all freshman and/or as an elective class open to all students.

Adjournment – Ms. Maxon-Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 7:25pm.