



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Special Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

4:30 PM

501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room

In attendance:

Ms. Jennifer Jacobsen, Ms. Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Ms. Carol Guernsey, Dr. Zakia Parrish, Dr. James Zavodjancik (arrived at 4:53pm), Ms. Kristen Hardiman

Call to Order: Ms. Maxon-Kennelly called meeting to order at 4:40pm.

Approval of June 5, 2023 Policy Committee meeting minutes: Approved by 3-0 vote.

Policy:

6146.1AR Grading/Assessment Regulations

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly recommended removing “credit bearing courses” language from the first line on page 5 and adding the language, “middle and high school courses”. Ms. Jacobsen agreed to Ms. Maxon-Kennelly’s language change in that line.

Regarding the topic of “zero grading”, Ms. Jacobsen stated zero effort on the part of the student should award them a zero grade. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly agreed with Ms. Jacobsen. Ms. Guernsey asked Dr. Zavodjancik if the language he added was in response to staff feedback. Dr. Parrish reminded the committee that Ms. Shaughnessy attended and spoke at the last Policy meeting and represented the middle school leadership team regarding the “zero grading” issue. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he believes staff would like some leeway on this topic to allow them some discretion for certain situations. Dr. Zavodjancik also stated he has not seen this type of specificity in this policy in other districts.

Ms. Jacobsen stated she likes the language that is being presented to the committee for grades 6-12. Ms. Jacobsen believes it has been tailored to what they want, and she likes it in the regulations. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly recommended adding a bullet point to this section which allows for exceptions.

Ms. Guernsey requested this information be available on the middle and high schools’ websites, similar to Program of Studies. Ms. Guernsey also requested that information be posted instructing parents where to go about grades not being posted. Ms. Guernsey stated parents need directive as to who to contact.

APPROVED 8/10/2023

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Dr. Zavodjancik about the oversight on grading. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Dr. Zavodjancik if administrators are checking teachers' grade books. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he is not aware of any administrator that checks a teacher's grade book or assignment due dates.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Dr. Zavodjancik if he had any interest in increasing the number of summative assessments. Dr. Zavodjancik stated the number of assessments were recommended by staff and they would not like to make any changes to them at this time

On Page 6, Ms. Jacobsen stated the definition of the word "deadline" is confusing and needs to be clarified. Ms. Guernsey agreed with Ms. Jacobsen. Dr. Zavodjancik will change the language in the sentence to clarify the definition of the word "deadline".

On Page 6, under Guidelines, Ms. Maxon-Kennelly recommended removing the words "agreed upon" from the second sentence in the first bullet point.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly recommended adding language to the third bullet point under Guidelines which pertains to excused absences exceptions. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he will develop language around that idea.

Ms. Guernsey recommended adding language that pertains to academic dishonesty for those students who use artificial intelligence to write papers. Ms. Guernsey stated it is not clear to students and teachers what will happen if a student uses artificial intelligence for their work. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly agreed it is a problem and should be addressed. Ms. Jacobsen stated this issue is addressed in our Media Literacy policy. Dr. Parrish stated the high school Head Principals have staff at both schools who are working on adding language to their handbooks which addresses the use of artificial intelligence for report writing.

Regarding the section on "Zeros", Dr. Zavodjancik explained to the committee that if a student gets a grade of "30" on a test, the teacher can record that as a grade of "50". Ms. Guernsey asked Dr. Zavodjancik if it is possible in Infinite Campus to flag situations when grades get changed, for example, from a 30 to a 50. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated as an administrator, she would be interested in seeing that information to see if there are certain teachers or many teachers making grade adjustment changes. Dr. Parrish stated she is not sure if Infinite Campus has that capability. Dr. Parrish asked committee to confirm that she will have the language about the grade of "50" being the floor for homework and reassessments taken out of the school handbooks. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly confirmed that is correct.

Ms. Guernsey stated she feels very good about the working relationship the committee has had with the administrators in developing the grading regulations. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly acknowledged some work is still needed; however, it has been a tremendous accomplishment.

6146 Requirements for Graduation

Ms. Jacobsen asked Dr. Zavodjancik about increasing the number of credits from 3 to 4 for Physical Education, Health and World Language 10 for middle school students.

The committee discussed the number of credits for Financial Literacy which is currently under Humanities. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly recommended moving it to Electives.

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Ms. Jacobsen stated they will need to address the 1.0 Mastery-Based Diploma Assessment since it is no longer required. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly does not recommend taking it out; however, she would agree to changing to a 0.5 credit. Ms. Jacobsen agreed with Ms. Maxon-Kennelly about possibly changing it to a 0.5 credit. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly would like to check with staff before changing the Mastery-Based Diploma Assessment. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly requested input from Mr. Mancusi on this item.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked staff for clarification in Fine Arts/Vocational Arts. Is it inclusive of Civics and the Arts? Ms. Jacobsen recommends putting Fine Arts under the Humanities section.

6146.1 High School Course Load

Ms. Jacobsen explained what is stated in this policy is not our current practice. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated she is curious as to when that change happened. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly asked Dr. Parrish to check with the high schools as to when this change occurred.

Open Discussion/Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Adjournment: Ms. Maxon-Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 7:06pm.