



# FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Special Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 10, 2023

10:00 AM

501 Kings Highway East

Superintendent's Conference Room

### **In attendance:**

Ms. Jennifer Jacobsen, Ms. Carol Guernsey, Ms. Maxon-Kennelly, Dr. James Zavodjancik, Dr. Greg Hatzis, Ms. Kristen Hardiman

**Call to Order:** Ms. Maxon-Kennelly called meeting to order at 9:59am.

**Approval of June 14, 2023 Special Policy Committee meeting minutes:** Approved with changes by 3-0 vote.

### **Policy:**

#### 6146 Requirements for Graduation

Dr. Zavodjancik reviewed edits to this policy with the committee. Dr. Zavodjancik stated legal council recommended adding the first two paragraphs on page 8 pertaining to a Physical Education exception for certain students. The committee agreed to strike the two paragraphs pertaining to the Physical Education exemption for certain students. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated these paragraphs were not necessary since a student would be exempt from Physical Education due to a 504 plan or disability. Dr. Hatzis stated he was concerned the language in these paragraphs would be interpreted in ways in which they were not intended. Dr. Hatzis supported the elimination of these two paragraphs.

Dr. Zavodjancik also stated language regarding the FAFSA requirement was added to this policy.

After discussion about the edits to this policy, the committee agreed the title of item "I" should read "Credit Requirements". The committee also agreed to eliminate language in paragraph 1 on Page 6. Paragraph 1 would begin with "Students must earn a .....". Language in the second paragraph will be changed from "seventh and eighth grade students" to "middle school students".

On Page 7, Financial Literacy and Personal Financial Management will be removed from the Credits in Humanities section. Under the Humanities section, the “Additional credit in Humanities area, core or elective” credit will increase from 0.5 credit to 1.0 credit. Under the Electives category the word “may” will be changed to “shall” and the language “if not attributed to the Humanities credits” will be removed.

On Page 10, the committee discussed the removal of Assured Skill Experiences from the policy; however, Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated she has concerns about the requirement being met by students. Dr. Zavodjancik explained this was 0.5 credit and the District shifted it to two 0.5 credits equaling 1.0 credit. This shift was made back in the Spring. The committee agreed to revisit this topic at the next meeting.

On Page 11, Ms. Maxon-Kennelly noted the section “Notification: Teachers, Students and Parents” should be removed as it is no longer applicable.

Ms. Jacobsen expressed concern about the class of 2024 being able to fulfill the art requirement since students have already registered for classes. Dr. Hatzis stated he has approximately 137 students and Warde High School has approximately 140 students who have not fulfilled the art requirement. Ms. Jacobsen is also concerned about the communication related to this requirement. Dr. Hatzis acknowledged it will be extremely difficult to get almost 300 students to fulfill this requirement. Dr. Hatzis asked the committee if there is a way this requirement can be waived for the class of 2024. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he does not believe it is possible to get this requirement waived.

Ms. Jacobsen recommended getting creative with classes taught by a certified teacher either before or after school in order to fulfill this requirement. Ms. Guernsey stated she does not think this can be accomplished so that it is fair to the seniors. Dr. Hatzis stated this would be one of the hardest last-minute pivots he has to implement. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly suggested the district email the State, acknowledge the error on the district’s part and request an exemption for the class of 2024 if students have taken classes in technology education, vocational arts, etc. Dr. Zavodjancik stated he does not believe the Commissioner would agree to a waiver. Ms. Maxon-Kennelly stated if the state will not grant us a waiver, then we will have to figure out a way for seniors to fulfill this requirement.

Dr. Zavodjancik provided Dr. Hatzis with a list of classes which might count towards the art requirement. Dr. Hatzis will see how many students took these classes so that the number of students still needing to fulfill the art requirement may be revised.

Ms. Jacobsen stated there is language pertaining to the Program of Studies that she would like to move into policy for the middle school component. Ms. Jacobsen expressed concern about the course selection process versus language in the Program of Studies. She would like to add language to the graduation requirements regarding the Academic Challenging Policy. Ms. Jacobsen will provide Ms. Hardiman with the language to include in Requirements for Graduation.

APPROVED 8/23/2023

6146.1 High School Course Load

Dr. Zavodjancik stated this is not a policy that needs to be part of a policy handbook; however, it should be included in the Program of Studies language. Ms. Jacobsen stated she has concerns about eliminating this language. Ms. Jacobsen recommends the language in this policy be clarified instead of eliminated.

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

**Adjournment:** Ms. Maxon-Kennelly adjourned the meeting at 11:49am.