

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

(*Attachments are available upon request from the Superintendent's Office.)

Committee of the Whole

May 20, 2019

A Committee of the Whole of the Groton Board of Education was held on May 20, 2019 in Room 11 of the School Administration Building.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Andrea Ackerman, Vice Chairperson, at 6:05 p.m.

PRESENT

Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson, Chairperson
Dr. Andrea Ackerman, Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Jane Giulini
Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald
Mrs. Gretchen Newsome
Mrs. Rita Volkmann
Mr. Jay Weitlauf
Mrs. Lee White

ABSENT

Mrs. Rosemary Robertson

Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Sam Kilpatrick, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Mr. Ken Knight, Business Manager
Miss Addie Clark, Student Representative

1. Approval of Minutes of May 13, 2019

MOTION: White, Weitlauf: To approve the minutes of May 13, 2019,
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Participation in MCEC National Training Seminar

Mrs. Watson stated that the MCEC National Training Seminar will be held July 22 – 25, 2019. The following Board members noted an interest in attending: Dr. Ackerman, Mrs. Newsome, Mrs. White, Mrs. Watson, and Mrs. Giulini. They will confirm their ability to attend by Friday, May 24, 2019 to the Superintendent.

3. Fitch High School [ATTACHMENT #1]

- a. Update regarding new graduation requirements – Ms. McGuire, Assistant Principal of Fitch High School, gave an overview of the new graduation requirements. The new graduation requirements will take affect with the freshman class beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. It was noted that the two Department Heads covering PE, health, art, business, culinary arts, technology, and music, will no longer be available due to having to teach a class. Therefore, the administration will determine the necessary realignment of duties to cover the Department Head responsibilities.
- b. Update regarding high school guidelines re: cell phones – Mr. Diskin explained that the high school is using guidelines that teachers want regarding cell phones. He explained that teachers set their own guidelines for the use of cell phones in their classrooms.
- c. Discussion of IB and AP students paying for their tests – Mr. Arcarese stated that about half of the students taking AP classes sit for the test. IB students have a project/portfolio requirement and do not take a single exam.
- d. Discussion of the ASL staff proposal – Dr. Graner stated that this would be a half time position and that 60 students have signed up for the course. This would allow for 3 full sections (20 students per class). Dr. Graner will determine where the necessary funds will be found to cover this position.

4. Update re: requested feedback related to closure of an additional elementary school

Mr. Kilpatrick noted that he had spoken with his professional staff as well as reviewed 2 studies, McKissisk Associates and Silver-Petrucci, and as a result the overall recommendation was to close Mary Morrisson Elementary School.

The consensus of the Board was to close Mary Morrisson elementary school.

5. Suggested Future Topics

Mrs. Volkmann suggested discussion of the early dismissal days for students.

Mrs. Fitzgerald suggested discussion of the 30 day grace period for immunizations and confirmation of the percentage of immunizations throughout the district.

6. Adjournment

MOTION: Ackerman, Weitlauf:

To adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

High School Graduation Requirements

Groton Public Schools

Existing Graduation Requirements

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION

The following credits must be earned:

English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
Science	4 credits (1 in Biological and 1 in Physical Science)
Social Studies	3 credits (1 in US History and 0.5 in Civics)
Health	0.5 credit
Physical Education	1 credit
Fine Arts	1 credit
Applied Arts	1 credit
Electives	7.5 credits
Total:	26 credits

P.A. 17-42: An Act Concerning Revisions to the High School Graduation Requirements

This Act, amends C.G.S. 10-221a, and extends the current graduation requirements, which require that students earn at least 20 credits to graduate, for another two school years. Therefore, heightened graduation requirements that require students to earn 25 credits would take effect with the freshman class beginning in the 2019-20 school year instead of in the 2017-18 school year. The Act also makes changes to the heightened requirements established in current law and allows graduation requirements to be met through successful demonstration of subject matter content mastery achieved through educational experiences and opportunities that provide flexible and multiple pathways to learning.

New requirements

Heightened Graduation Requirements

The Act makes the following changes to the heightened requirements established in current law:

1. increases the minimum science, technology, engineering, and mathematics credits from eight to nine;
2. reduces the minimum career and life skills credits from three-and-a-half to one;
3. reduces the minimum world language requirement from two credits to one;
4. adds a one-credit, mastery-based diploma assessment, rather than a senior demonstration project; and removes end-of-year exams for certain math, history, science, and English courses.

Heightened Graduation Requirements (under the Bill) vs Existing Groton Requirements

NEW

Humanities:

- **Nine credits, including civics and the arts (English, Social Studies, Civics, Arts, Electives)**

EXISTING

English - 4 credits

Social Studies - 3 credits

Fine Arts - 1 credit

Electives - 7.5 credits

Continued

NEW

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics:

- Nine credits (Science - Biology, Physical Science, Math - Algebra I, Algebra II/Stats, Geometry, Technology, Engineering, Electives)

EXISTING

Math - 4 credits

Science - 4 credits

Applied Arts (which could include technology or engineering) - 1 credit

Electives - 7.5 credits (potentially Personal Finance)

Continued

NEW

Physical Education and Wellness:

- One credit (If a student is medically exempt - it must be documented and the credit can be earned in other ways)

Health and Safety Education:

- One credit

EXISTING

Physical Education - 1 credit (Freshmen and Sophomore PE)

Health - .5 credit

(We have already planned for the increase in health - Personal Health .5 & Safety and Wellness

.5)

Continued

NEW

World Language:

- One credit

EXISTING

Currently World Language is not a required

With the addition of MYP all current 9th graders and next years 10th graders are taking World Language

Exceptions can be created for students in this area - through an IEP/504 - in addition schools are

creating alternative class options in this category

Continued

NEW

Mastery based diploma assessment:

- One credit
-

Districts in many states, including Connecticut, have started to consider and implement competency-based learning as a secondary school reform in order to increase graduation rates and ensure that students have the skills and knowledge for post-secondary success. At present, over thirty schools and districts in Connecticut have begun to implement practices pertaining to a mastery-based learning environment (MBL).

Mastery-Based Learning

The SDE (State Department of Education) defines a mastery-based learning environment (MBL) as one which consists of state standards and district level competencies which place the focus on students through the compilation of a body of evidence. The competencies that all students are expected to meet are clearly articulated demonstrating what they know and are able to do.

In a MBL environment, students are given multiple pathways to master critical content knowledge and skills. Students who are struggling to demonstrate mastery of a competency receive targeted individualized support and more time to learn and practice, as well as multiple opportunities to demonstrate their progress and mastery. Students who have mastered the competency can move on to a deeper learning task. This increases student engagement and benefits all learners across the continuum. While the learning expectations and evaluation criteria are consistent, teachers can be more flexible in teaching and students have more choice in learning. By demonstrating competency, students meet course expectations and are given credit. Schools and/or districts that make the decision to transition to MBL are still expected to meet the state graduation requirements as legislated under the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-221a.

Mastery Based Diploma Assessment

- Will need to be defined by the district/high school
 - Considerations
 - Vision/Portrait of the Graduate
 - SAT/ACT performance/participation
 - MYP Personal Project
 - FAS
 - Other

Additional components of the updated policy

- **Vision/Portrait of the Graduate**
- **Student Success Plans (currently through lessons on Naviance during advisory, presentations during the year, existing curriculum, etc)**
- **Seal of Biliteracy language/diploma/transcript (added last year)**
- **High School credits earned during Middle School**
- **High School credits through virtual platforms**
- **IB Diploma language**
- **Community service**
- **26 credits vs. 25 credits**

Sample - Class of 2023 Graduation Requirements

To ensure that all students graduate from our schools with the knowledge, skills, and work habits they will need in adult life, the _____ Public Schools has adopted a mastery-(proficiency) based system of teaching, learning, promotion, and graduation. Beginning with the _____ High School Class of 20 ___, all students will need to demonstrate achievement of all cross-curricular and content-area graduation standards before receiving a high school diploma. These new graduation requirements will ensure that each student provides evidence that they have achieved expected learning standards, and acquired the knowledge, skills, and work habits that will prepare them for postsecondary education and modern careers.

Sample - Class of 2023 Graduation Requirements

Commencing with the graduating class of 2023 (beginning with the incoming class of 2019-2020) and for each graduating class thereafter, in order to graduate and be granted a diploma, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) credits, including not fewer than (1) nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education; (5) one credit in world languages and (6) a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment.