

The Subcommittee on School Committee Policies met on Monday, August 11, 2025, in the Virtual Zoom Meeting. Present were Kathy Bent, Peter Goode, Sara Ahern, Jason Conetta, and Jen Kruczek.

Ms. Bent called the meeting to order at 10:01AM.

Minutes

- Motion by Mr. Goode, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Committee voted, unanimously, to approve the meeting Minutes of July 17, 2025.
- Motion by Mr. Goode, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Committee voted, unanimously, to approve the meeting Minutes of July 22, 2025.

Review Policy JICJ-A (Cell Phones and Personal Electronics)

- Ms. Bent asked if anyone received feedback on this policy.
- The Committee discussed the feedback they received.
- Ms. Bent reached out to School Committee member Andre King since he mentioned he received feedback at the last School Committee meeting. The person that contacted him was concerned about extracurriculars and how the phone policy would impact sports teams. Ms. Bent stated this was a bell to bell policy and extracurriculars would be handled by coaches and advisors.
- Dr. Ahern stated there was a concern from Transportation Director Sandy Gifford about buses being considered an extension of the school. She thought that would be hard to enforce.
- Ms. Bent spoke about Yondr pouches. She wants to wait to see what happens with the policy. Her preference is to figure out the cell phone policy without Yondr pouches.
- Mr. Goode stated Brooke Styche's emailed about giving another policy that teachers have to manage. He thought that was a legitimate concern.
- Ms. Bent stated this will now be a policy for the teachers. Mr. Conetta can let students know that the behavior around the cell phones will determine if Yondr pouches are needed.
- Ms. Bent stated the consequences of cell phone use will need to be swift and severe.
- Dr. Ahern stated School Committee member Jen Cullum also provided input on the policy in an email (attached at the end of these Minutes).

Review Policy IKB (Homework)

- Ms. Bent stated there was feedback from a number of people. There was some concern at the elementary level. She did not think the time amounts were a lot at that level.
- Dr. Ahern stated there is a parent engagement aspect of homework.
- Ms. Bent spoke about the learning skills around having homework. Grades 6 and 7 will need to work their way up to the levels. They do not have the foundation at the elementary level, but they cannot just go to the high school and have two hours of homework a night without learning that skill.
- Ms. Bent stated student handbooks can handle the definition of homework. She added Gateway to a part of the policy. She believes the Special Education students need the reinforcement of the work at home.
- Dr. Ahern stated she is going to mention the policy to the leadership team at the retreat this week.
- Ms. Bent stated there has to be consistency between the K-3 schools.

Review Policy BDB (School Committee Officers)

- The Committee discussed the policy and decided there does not need to be any changes; the policy just needs to be enforced.

Review Policy BEDB (Agenda Format)

- Ms. Bent stated there does not need to be any changes. She believes she is following the policy. She could put informational presentations at the end of the meeting. Ms. Bent stated sometimes questions are asked of the Superintendent during this time. Dr. Ahern stated if there is an easy answer, then she will give it. But if there is a discussion and debate, then there is a line that could be crossed.

Review Policy BEDD (Rules of Order)

- Ms. Bent stated she will revoke the three minutes for the School Committee comments in this section and ask people to be mindful of the time.
- Ms. Bent mentioned that members should wait to be called on before speaking.
- Mr. Goode stated that sometimes the meetings are long. The meetings are run professionally. People want their views to be heard on the Committee. It is part of the process. He does not think anything needs to be done differently.

Discuss Policy IKF (Graduation Requirements and Competency Determination)

- Dr. Ahern stated she is not prepared for proposed language changes. She is meeting with the Cape and Island Superintendent's next week to talk it through. Expectations from the Department of Education came out a couple of weeks ago that spoke to successful course completion, what courses count, the process for appeals, the process for certificates of attainment, and consideration for a diploma. There is work to do before October. In order to receive a diploma, they need to meet graduation requirements and competency.
- Ms. Bent asked if competency should be a separate policy or part of graduation.
- Dr. Ahern wondered if MASC has guidance around that question. There is a difference between successful course completion and competency. The two things need to be true and there needs to be an exam or capstone project.

Next Steps

- The next meeting will be on August 28 to talk about Policy IKF.

Motion by Mr. Goode, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Committee voted, unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:03AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Kruczek
Executive Assistant