

The Subcommittee on School Committee Policies met on Thursday, August 28, 2025, in the Virtual Zoom Meeting. Present were Kathy Bent, Peter Goode, Sara Ahern, Kristen Harmon, and Jen Kruczek.

Ms. Bent called the meeting to order at 4:32PM.

Minutes

- Motion by Mr. Goode, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Committee voted, unanimously, to approve the meeting Minutes of August 11, 2025.

Discuss a New Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy

- Dr. Ahern stated a new policy on Middle School Pathway Exploration is due to DESE by November 1. There is a webinar on the subject that she will attend on September 4. The district will need to review the admissions policy for CTE programs. A new policy middle school pathway exploration will be needed. This is about how middle schools will collaborate with CTE schools and programs about the available opportunities. Students in grades 6-12 will use MyCap. MyCap focuses on career planning and the interests of students. The timeframe is quick turnaround where the School Committee will need to waive the first reading or have a Special School Committee meeting to have two reads. The Policy Subcommittee will need a meeting to prepare a proposed policy prior to the October 1 School Committee meeting.
- Ms. Bent stated the Committee could waive the middle school policy first read, but have two reads for the admissions policy.
- Dr. Ahern thought the policies should be approved at the same time. She believes the intention for the middle school policy is for 8th graders.
- Ms. Bent stated it will have to be clarified if the policy is for 8th grade or middle school.

Discuss Policy IKF (Graduation Requirements)

- Dr. Ahern stated the next two policy discussions are due to new state regulations for competency determination. There will need to be two different policies; one for graduation requirements and one for competency determination. She worked on these policies this week. They now have to be updated by the end of December. Policy IKF would go back to what it was prior to the competency determination items that were added.
- Ms. Bent asked if there was a change in the schedule at the high school, if the 25 credits would still be the appropriate number.
- Dr. Ahern stated if class periods were reduced from 7 to 6 classes per year, then they would need to look at this policy.
- Dr. Ahern stated both of these policies will need to be put on the agenda in October for a first read.

Discuss Policy IKFE (Competency Determination)

- Dr. Ahern stated a policy template was sent to this Committee. She wanted an attorney to look at it for the appeal process.
- Ms. Bent asked if the courses need to be listed or can they be referenced in the Program of Studies.
- Dr. Ahern stated she will ask legal. The School Committee approves the Program of Studies annually, so the School Committee would still be approving those courses if they were referenced there.
- Ms. Bent stated the Program of Studies states where the courses do not meet NCAA eligibility requirements. The same thing could be done for competency determination.
- Dr. Ahern sent a draft copy of this policy to Albert, Carina, Stacey, and Ms. Harmon spoke to the Curriculum Coordinators. They will have further conversations and she will provide feedback.
- Dr. Ahern stated there is a two prong criteria with the courses: successful completion and mastery through a capstone project or an assessment.
- Mr. Goode asked if either the graduation requirements or the competency determination are supposed to be more difficult to achieve.
- Dr. Ahern stated graduation requirements come across as stronger. That would not hold up if a student with special needs take a modified curriculum. They could reach the graduation requirement, but not meet the competency determination.
- Mr. Goode stated there are three pages showing how to determine competency. The graduation requirement is a much better way.
- Ms. Bent stated without the MCAS, they are putting the onus for competency on the district.

- Dr. Ahern stated the district's offerings make it harder with alternative learning programs, Special Education, and ELL.
- Ms. Bent asked about listing competency in the Program of Studies along with the appeals process. Dr. Ahern stated the appeals process should be a Committee of people and/or someone from outside the district.
- Ms. Harmon stated a student might pass a class, but not meet the competency and then they move to the next class. She is hearing that from the Curriculum Coordinators.
- Ms. Bent asked in trying to determine math competency, can the district do the assessment in another language. Dr. Ahern believes the answer is yes if they come in with a transcript from another country. Once they are in the US, the expectation is to have the competency in English.
- Dr. Ahern stated she will need to ask if ESL students can take the test in another language.
- Ms. Bent stated they will get feedback from others and plan another meeting in September.

Next Steps

- The next Policy Subcommittee meeting will be September 26 at 8:00am.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:25PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Kruczek
Executive Assistant