

**Old Rochester Regional School Committee  
Policy Subcommittee  
Superintendent's Conference Room  
135 Marion Road, Mattapoisett, MA 02739**

**December 11, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mary Beauregard, Marion School Committee, Cristin Cowles, Mattapoisett School Committee, Margaret McSweeney, ORR School Committee, Joseph Pires, ORR School Committee and Joshua Trombly, Rochester School Committee (all remote).

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** Frances-Feliz Kearns

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent, Shari Fedorowicz, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Doreen Lopes, Early Education Coordinator, Michael Devoll, High School Principal and Melissa Wilcox, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

**MEETING TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:14pm by Chairperson McSweeney. Chairperson McSweeney stated in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, the Agenda has been set and unless there are any emergencies that need to be added, the Agenda will be followed as outlined. Chairperson McSweeney added that the meeting is being conducted remotely through zoom with the link provided.

**MEETING TO ORDER**

**I. JFAE – Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy (Revision)**

Massachusetts state regulations (603 CMR 4.00) require sending districts to CTE schools and programs to maintain a districtwide Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy that documents how middle school students in the district are made aware of, and gain exposure to, career technical education (CTE) schools and programs available to them in their district, regional, agricultural, and other public high schools. Our administrative team has developed a policy for review by the Policy Subcommittee which was approved, and also approved by the Joint School Committee. This Policy was submitted to the State by November 1<sup>st</sup>. We have received feedback to revise the policy to include how the district will document participation in tours and other elements of the policy.

Superintendent Nelson explained this policy was recently approved by the Joint School Committee and submitted to the state prior to the November deadline. The district has received feedback to revise the policy and added the section entitled Maintenance of Records which states ‘Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will maintain a record of all on-site presentations, assemblies, and student tours to CTE schools, along with other relevant information about collaboration between the district and member CTE/vocational schools. These records will be made available to DESE upon request.’

**Motion** to approve JFAE Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy with the recommended revisions by Margaret McSweeney.

**Seconded** by Cristin Cowles

**Motion Carries** 4-0-1

**Roll Call:** Beauregard (yes), Cowles (yes), McSweeney (yes), Pires (yes), Trombly (abstain –technical difficulties)

**II. IKFE – COMPETENCY DETERMINATION (New) and IKF – GRADUATION REQUIREMENT (New)**

DESE has shared guidance for districts regarding the required Competency Determination policy. The guidance document, which can be found on DESE’s website, requires that all districts submit a Competency Determination policy approved by their committees along with their IKF - Graduation Requirement policy no later than December 31, 2025.

Superintendent Nelson explained that state mandate this year is requiring the addition of these two policies related to graduation and competency determination and they must be submitted by December 31, 2025. Mr. Devoll explained IKF Graduation Requirements are local requirements and mirror the language previously approved in the ORRHS Student Handbook. Action on this policy is to incorporate it into the policy manual for the district as recommended by the state and MASC. IKFE Competency Determination is a new policy related to changes at the state level due to MCAS requirements being voted down in the last major elections in the Commonwealth. He reminded the members that last school year, the district worked on a competency determination for the Class of 2025. Due to anticipated additional guidance from the state by the end of this school year, Mr. Devoll anticipates this policy will likely apply to the Classes of 2026 and 2027 and changes will be forthcoming as the state continues to determine requirements in lieu of MCAS through its Graduation Council. IFKE incorporates state and local requirements in order to position graduates as best as possible and demonstrate how the district will get students where they need to be in order to graduate. There are two pieces, passing the coursework and demonstrating mastery in specific subject areas as defined locally.

**School Committee Feedback:**

Ms. Cowles inquired as to 60% or better to determine mastery of skills in IKFE but IKF states 65%. Mr. Devoll explained that 60% is what the state considers a passing score on a formative or summative assessment but locally, a 65% or higher is set as the requirement for passing a class. Ms. Cowles also inquired about science mastery being demonstrated on MCAS with scores of partially meeting expectations or better, but math and English Language Arts require meeting or exceeding expectations for mastery. Mr. Devoll explained that this aligns with the state and the state set higher requirements for math and English Language Arts. He added the focus for this policy was current students and they anticipate further recommendations from the state later this school year. Ms. Cowles suggested defining the Arts in IFK. Mr. Devoll agreed.

**Motion** to approve IKF Graduation Requirement and IFKE Competency Determination with the change discussed to define the arts within the policy IKF by Margaret McSweeney.

**Seconded** by Cristin Cowles

**Motion Carries** 5-0

**Roll Call:** Beauregard (yes), Cowles (yes), McSweeney (yes), Pires (yes), Trombly (yes)

**III. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** to adjourn at 12:29pm by Margaret McSweeney.

**Seconded** by Cristin Cowles

**Motion Carries** 5-0

**Roll Call:** Beauregard (yes), Cowles (yes), McSweeney (yes), Pires (yes), Trombly (yes)

*Pursuant to Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General Laws, you are hereby notified of the following meeting:*

**Old Rochester Regional School Committee  
Policy Subcommittee  
Superintendent's Conference Room  
135 Marion Road, Mattapoisett, MA 02739**

**December 11, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.**

**ZOOM LINK:**

<https://oldrochester-org.zoom.us/j/93373812694?pwd=pISzg4wa3LcOkZkbtia0t3EqjGADxa.1>

Meeting ID: 933 7381 2694

Passcode: 162359

*This meeting will be conducted via zoom.*

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Mary Beauregard, Marion School Committee, Cristin Cowles, (Jack LeBrun alternate) Mattapoisett School Committee, Frances-Feliz Kearns, ORR School Committee, Margaret McSweeney, ORR School Committee, Joseph Pires, ORR School Committee and Joshua Trombly, Rochester School Committee.

**MEETING TO ORDER**

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**III. ADJOURNMENT**

The list of agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. If you need more information or reasonable accommodations for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 508-758-2772 ext. 1956. Meeting resources, minutes and recordings are available on the School Committee webpage: <https://www.oldrochester.org/district/sc>

## JFAE - Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy

### Policy Overview

The Old Rochester Regional School District in accordance with Massachusetts state regulations (603 CMR 4.00) and guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is committed to ensuring that all Old Rochester Regional Junior High School students and their parents/guardians are made aware of and gain meaningful exposure to career technical education (CTE) schools, agricultural schools, and career-related programs available to them through district, regional, and other public high schools.

### High School Pathway Options

By October 15th of each school year, the following outreach methods will be planned, scheduled, and communicated with students and their parents/guardians of the Old Rochester Regional Junior High School:

- On-site information sessions at the Old Rochester Regional Junior High School.
- Direct mail and/or email communications to students and parents/guardians.
- Public-facing website updates featuring available CTE and agricultural programs.
- Seventh and eighth grade students may participate in school-day tours of CTE schools, agricultural schools, or career pathway programs.

The following CTE schools, agricultural schools, or career pathway programs are available to students based on the student's town of residence. Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will collaborate with the following institutions and programs to facilitate student awareness and exploration:

- Career Technical Schools:
  - Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School (Mattapoisett and Rochester residents)
  - Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical High School (Marion residents)
- Agricultural School:
  - Bristol County Agricultural High School (Marion, Mattapoisett and Rochester residents)
- District and Regional Career-Related Programs:
  - Old Rochester Regional High School [*Chapter 74 Early Childhood Education Program and Advanced Manufacturing and Business & Finance Career Pathways*] (Marion, Mattapoisett and Rochester residents)

### Junior High School Career Exploration

All students in seventh and eighth grade participate in whole-class presentations as part of college and career exploration. Students receive information on secondary school and career options, and utilize online tools to assess personal interests, abilities, and skills.

Students gain exposure to regional and district pathways, including CTE schools and programs, agricultural schools, and career pathways programs, through communication in newsletters, guidance curriculum, school presentations, school tours, interest surveys, and information sessions.

Students are given the opportunity to meet individually with school counselors for future planning. Resources are provided within a Learning Management System (LMS), which includes access and instruction for utilizing online career exploration tools such as MassCIS, MyCAP, MAFSA, and ONet.

### **Junior High School CTE Tour Options**

Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will coordinate with regional CTE schools and programs, agricultural schools, and career pathways programs to:

- Arrange school-day tours for Old Rochester Regional Junior High School students.
- Ensure transportation costs are covered by the hosting institution.
- Integrate exploration activities into students' academic and career planning.
- Interview at Old Rochester Regional Junior High School during the school day for vocational schools for those students who have applied.
- Ensure tours will be considered excused absences, provided the hosting institution confirms the student's participation.
- Ensure no school or program withholds access to these tours during the school day.

The Guidance Department at Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will be the primary contact and will collaborate with admission personnel from CTE schools and programs, agricultural schools, and career pathways programs.

### **Providing Records to CTE Schools and Programs**

Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will release the names and addresses of seventh and eighth grade students by October 15th each year.

Parents/guardians and eligible students will receive notice and have the opportunity to request that this information not be released without prior consent.

This demographic information is shared only with authorized personnel from regional CTE schools, agricultural schools, and career pathway programs.

Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will provide relevant information to member regional CTE schools and programs and agricultural schools for students who have applied.

- This may include documentation of student interest, attendance records, and discipline records in accordance with the vocational school's requirements.
- A copy of records sent will be made available in written form upon request to students and parents/guardians.

Annually, the District will sign an attestation that the Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy is implemented. The District will make their Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy available on the district website and provide written copies to students and parents/guardians, upon request.

### **Maintenance of Records**

Old Rochester Regional Junior High School will maintain a record of all on-site presentations, assemblies, and student tours to CTE schools, along with other relevant information about collaboration between the district and member CTE/vocational schools. These records will be made available to DESE upon request.

File: IKFE

## COMPETENCY DETERMINATION

One of the requirements for graduation in Massachusetts is a determination of competency in subjects previously covered by the MCAS. In addition to other requirements for graduation, students must have been determined by the district to have achieved mastery of the common core of skills, competency, and knowledge in said areas, and satisfactorily completed coursework that has been certified by the student's district as showing mastery of the skills, competencies, and knowledge contained in the state academic standards and curriculum frameworks.

### Competency Determination Requirements

A determination of competency shall include:

Demonstrating a **mastery of skills in English language arts, mathematics, and science**; and the **satisfactory completion of relevant coursework** aligned to the standards measured by the high school English language arts, mathematics, and science MCAS assessments administered in 2023.

An additional requirement for **mastery in US History** will apply to the graduating class of 2027, and beyond.

To show mastery, a student must successfully complete, in accordance with the district's grading policy:

1. The final exam for a course; or
2. A capstone or portfolio project; or
3. An equivalent measure identified in the district's CD policy.

### Completion of Relevant Coursework:

A student enrolled at the Old Rochester Regional High School will be determined to have satisfactorily completed coursework and earned full credit in accordance with the district's grading policy and the requirements outlined below:

Content Area	Coursework Requirements	Notes
English Language Arts	English 9 English 10	To satisfy this course requirement, the English Language Arts courses must be taken in grades 9-12.
Mathematics	Algebra 1 Geometry	Algebra 1 and/or Geometry taken in grades 7 or 8 will be certified as meeting the coursework requirement for the mathematics component of the CD as listed in the 2017 Massachusetts

		Mathematics Curriculum Framework.
Science	The equivalent of one year of any one of the following disciplines: Biology, Physics, or Chemistry.	To satisfy this course requirement, the science course must be taken in grades 9-12.
U.S. History (Beginning with the graduating class of 2027)	The equivalent of a one-year United States history course, either U.S. History 1 or U.S. History 2.	To satisfy this course requirement, the U.S. History course must be taken in grades 9-12.

**Mastery of Skills:**

A student enrolled at the Old Rochester Regional High School will be determined to have demonstrated a mastery of skills by successfully completing, with a score of 60% or better, formative and summative assessments that align and show mastery of Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

Mastery in science may also be demonstrated by earning a performance level of Exceeding, Meeting, or Partially Meeting Expectations on the Biology MCAS assessment.

Mastery in English Language Arts and mathematics may also be demonstrated by earning a performance level of Exceeding or Meeting Expectations on the ELA and Mathematics MCAS assessments.

**ORRHS Aligned Courses:**

ORRHS offers the following courses in alignment with the state curriculum frameworks that meet the above requirements.

English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
English 9	Algebra 1	Biology	U.S. History 1
Honors English 9	Geometry	Chemistry	Honors U.S. History 1
English 10	Honors Geometry	Honors Chemistry	U.S. History 2
Honors English 10		Physics	Honors U.S. History 2
		Honors Physics	AP U.S. History

## **Additional Considerations:**

### **Students with Disabilities**

The Old Rochester Regional High School must both provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education to students with disabilities and must also determine that the student has met the competency determination and local graduation requirements prior to graduating that student. Students with disabilities who have been placed in out-of-district placements must meet the requirements of the competency determination policy of the placing school district. Discussion of the competency determination must be a part of the IEP Team's transition planning.

### **English Language Learners:**

The Old Rochester Regional High School shall, on a case-by-case basis, determine the appropriate courses necessary for English Language Learners to both achieve language proficiency and meet the competency determination requirements.

### **Late-Enrolling Students:**

Students who enroll in a Massachusetts public high school after their ninth-grade year may be granted a determination of competency by the Old Rochester Regional High School in one or more of the following ways:

- Transcript review by Old Rochester Regional Standing Committee for Graduation Requirements.
- Additional course requirements as determined by Old Rochester Regional Standing Committee for Graduation Requirements.
- A qualifying MCAS score of at least meeting or exceeding expectations achievement levels on the relevant high school MCAS assessment; or by meeting the standard for a substituted equivalent that the sending district certifies satisfies the same academic standards.

### **Appeals Process & Transcript Review**

Students have the right to appeal the district's decision to award or deny a CD. Appeal requests must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent's Office. After receiving such a request, the district will conduct a transcript/course review and respond to the applicant in writing within 30 days.

### **Process for Determining Diploma Eligibility Post Graduation**

Students who were previously enrolled in the Old Rochester Regional School District (Classes of 2003-2024) and did not earn a diploma due to not meeting the state's CD requirement may request a review of their academic record to determine current eligibility for a diploma. Requests must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent's Office. After receiving such a request, the district will conduct a transcript/course review and respond to the applicant in writing within 30 days. If the current graduation

and CD requirements have been met, the final transcript can be updated to include the official year of graduation and a diploma can be issued.

LEGAL REFS:        [DESE Graduation Requirements and Related Guidance](#)  
                          [DESE Graduation and Transition Planning for Students with IEPs](#)  
                          [DESE Competency Determination Guidance and Policy Submission Process](#)  
                          [603 CMR 30.00](#)  
                          [M.G.L. c. 69, § 1D](#)

CROSS REFS:        Student Handbook  
                          IKF Graduation Requirements

SOURCE: MASC - 2025

## **IKF - GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to graduate from Old Rochester Regional High School, a student must have earned at least 120 credits and complied with all state accountability requirements. In order to receive full credit, a student must receive either passing grade of a Pass (P) or a 65 (D) or better and meet the attendance requirements. Full-year courses are worth 5 credits each, half-year courses are worth 2.5 credits each. Credit will be granted upon completion of a course. Within the 120 total credits, the following courses at the college prep, honors, Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment levels are graduation requirements:

Four years of English

Four years of Mathematics, including of Algebra I and Geometry

Two years of lab-based Science, including Biology

Three years of Social Studies including World History, U.S. History 1 and U.S. History 2

Four years of Physical Education\*, or 2 years with an activity waiver

Health 9 and Health 10

One full year or two-half year courses in the Arts

\*consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, §. 3, the school will only excuse a student from participating in Physical Education on the written order of a licensed physician.

Additional credits needed for a graduation may be selected from among elective courses.

Credit for Foreign Study: Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; and (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work. In these instances, the Standing Committee for Graduation Requirements will evaluate the work and assign credit for it according to standards prevailing in Old Rochester Regional High School.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1D](#)

603 CMR [30:00](#)

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2025