GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
JUNE 4, 2026

In attendance: Donald DiBiasio of Somerset, Jeffrey Begin of Swansea and Paul Jennings of Westport.

Also in attendance: Joan Menard, School Committee Member, Brian Bentley, Superintendent-Director, Leslie Weckesser, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Jennifer DeMariano, Assistant Principal of Technical Affairs, Joseph Marciszyn, Cooperative Education Coordinator, Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel, and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

The meeting began with a roll call at 4:31 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Begin, and voted unanimously to approve the December 11, 2025 minutes, as submitted.

Mr. Bentley deferred to Mrs. Weckesser for a summary of the proposed revision to Policy KGC: Cooperative Education Program. Mrs. Weckesser reported that a discrepancy was identified in the way co-op grades are calculated, which had the potential to affect the valedictorian determination. She explained that Mr. Marciszyn and Mrs. DeMariano brought the issue to her attention, and she asked them to review the matter and conduct additional research to determine the cause and appropriate resolution.

Mr. Marciszyn explained that the issue was initially brought forward by students and parents who expressed concerns about inequities in the Cooperative Education grading system. Under the current grading policy, the highest grade a co-op student could earn was 96.5%, as the employer evaluation, which accounts for 70% of the overall grade, was capped at 95%. The remaining 30% of the grade consists of 10% based on the Cooperative Education Coordinator's evaluation of students' afternoon sessions and communication throughout the co-op process, and 20% from the department heads and/or shop instructors. As a result, students who remained in traditional academic classes had the opportunity to earn a full 100%, while students participating in cooperative education could not, creating an unintended disincentive for students to participate in valuable real-world work experiences. Mr. Marciszyn stated that the proposed recommendation is to revise the grading language to eliminate this inequity and ensure co-op students have the same opportunity to earn a maximum grade as their peers.

Mr. Marciszyn further explained that the proposed revision would maintain the existing performance categories—Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Approaching Expectations, and Expectations Not Met—while adjusting the associated grading scale to provide greater equity. Under the proposed changes, the maximum score for Exceeding Expectations would increase from 95 to 100, allowing students participating in Cooperative Education to earn the same maximum grade as students in the classroom. The Meeting Expectations category would increase from 85 to 90, while the Approaching Expectations and Expectations Not Met categories would remain at 75 and 65, respectively. He noted that employers would no longer assign numerical grades directly; instead, they would select the appropriate performance category, which would then correspond to the established grading scale.

Mr. DiBiasio asked about the role of the senior shop instructor in evaluating students participating in Cooperative Education. Mr. Marciszyn noted that once students begin co-op the level of ongoing interaction with their shop instructor may vary by program. Mr. Marciszyn explained that practices are not currently consistent across all shops. Some instructors conduct periodic check-ins or require students to complete written reflections on

their co-op experiences. Mr. DiBiasio noted that since students interact more with the Cooperative Education Coordinator, the Coordinator's evaluation should account for 20% of the overall grade.

Mrs. Weckesser noted that if students have limited interaction with their shop instructor while participating in Cooperative Education, the District should establish opportunities for meaningful engagement between the student and the instructor. She further noted that during academic weeks, programs with related instruction have opportunities for shop or related teachers to conduct check-ins with students. However, she expressed concern that equity issues arise in programs that do not have related instruction during the academic week, as those students may not receive the same level of contact with their instructors.

Mr. Marciszyn added that the District is in the process of implementing Job Ready360 for the upcoming school year. He explained that the platform will provide improved communication and allow staff to monitor students' progress and performance while on Cooperative Education through a real-time dashboard, facilitating more timely feedback and ongoing dialogue regarding student achievement.

Mr. Jennings asked whether the proposed revisions needed immediate approval. Mrs. DeMariano stated that the grading process does need to be changed. Mr. Bentley agreed, and explained that, once the Committee approves the policy revisions, the administration can determine the appropriate procedures for implementing the changes and overseeing the grading process. Mr. DiBiasio expressed concern that the portion of the grade assigned by the shop instructor could have a significant impact on a student's overall grade if it is based on limited interaction. He stated that any evaluation resulting in a reduced score should be supported by written comments explaining the rationale.

Mr. Begin stated that he was pleased the District was reviewing the Cooperative Education grading process, noting that concerns regarding inequities had been discussed previously. He explained that employer evaluations can sometimes negatively impact students because employers may not fully understand the expectations for entry-level students.

Mrs. Weckesser added that involving active advisory board members as Cooperative Education employers could provide valuable insight into the program by helping the District better understand the challenges students experience in the workplace. Mr. DiBiasio suggested hosting a luncheon for Cooperative Education employers to provide an overview of the program, explain the evaluation process, and clarify expectations.

There was further discussion regarding the Cooperative Education grading process, including employer evaluations, student attendance, and employer approvals/sign-offs.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Begin, and voted unanimously to recommend to the School Committee the approval of the revised Policy KGC: Cooperative Education Program, as submitted.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mr. Bentley for a summary of the MASC recommended policies: Policy ECAB: Access to Buildings and Grounds; Policy JFBB-1: School Choice; Policy JKAA: Time-out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraint of Students; Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students and Policy KBG: Parent Advisory Councils (PACs). Mr. Bentley provided an overview of the policy updates, including building access procedures, bus driver approvals, School Choice, requirements related to student restraint, seclusion, and medication administration.

Attorney Brilhante questioned the proposed School Choice policy change regarding priority admission for siblings of students already enrolled in the District. He asked how sibling priority would be applied with the lottery. Mr. Bentley stated that the Commissioner's recent guidance regarding School Choice language, noting that it appears to recommend reverting certain lottery provisions. He clarified that the provisions would only apply if the District elected to participate in the School Choice program.

Mr. Jennings asked for clarification regarding medication administration procedures for students attending field trips. Mr. Bentley stated that the preferred approach is to have a nurse accompany students on field trips. Mrs. Weckesser stated that Mrs, Griffin, who is also a nurse, assumed responsibility for the nurse's office as of July 1 and has consulted with other vocational schools regarding how they handle similar situations. She noted that the policy language must be carefully interpreted to determine whether a nurse is required for every off-campus activity and whether students may carry and self-administer medications.

There was further discussion regarding Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines and students who self-carry or self-administer medication while participating in off-campus activities. The District will consult legal counsel for clarification.

Mr. DiBiasio requested that Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students be tabled pending further clarification and legal review. The matter will be revisited at the next meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio, and voted unanimously to approve the MASC recommended policies: Policy ECAB: Access to Buildings and Grounds; Policy JFBB-1: School Choice; Policy JKAA: Time-out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraint of Students; and Policy KBG: Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), as submitted.

Mr. Begin spoke in support of the policy (Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students), noting that it includes important provisions for students who self-carry medications, including diabetes supplies, EpiPens, and inhalers. He added that if the policy is recommended by the MASC and has been reviewed by legal counsel and the school physician, he would support moving forward with it.

Attorney Brilhante stated that he had reviewed the policy and had no concerns and noted that MASC is recommending the policy.

It was moved by Mr. Begin, seconded by Mr. Jennings, and voted unanimously to add Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students to the list of the approved MASC recommended policies.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously to adjourn the Policy Sub-Committee meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves, Executive Secretary

Materials Included:
December 11, 2025 Minutes
Policy KGC: Cooperative Education Program
Policy ECAB: Access to Buildings and Grounds
Policy JFBB-1: School Choice
Policy JKAA: Time-out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraint of Students
Policy JLCD: Administering Medicines to Students
Policy KBG: Parent Advisory Councils (PACs)