

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Tom Hurley (co-chair), Mr. William Blake (ex officio) Mr. Christopher Browe, Ms. Diane Crocco and Ms. Sheila McCreven.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Sue Cohen (co-chair) and Ms. Rita Gedansky,

Staff members present: Mr. Charles Dumais, Dr. Charles Britton and Mr. Jason Tracy.

Also present: Ms. Pat Cardozo and Mrs. Ruth Natzel

A meeting of the Policy Committee of the Amity Regional Board of Education (BOE) was held on Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 5:30 pm in the cafeteria at Amity Regional High School.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Mr. Hurley called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

2. Public comment

Since no members of the public were present and considering that with the recent snowstorm some could still be on their way, Mr. Hurley asked for a motion to move #2 public comment to the end of the agenda.

Motion was made by Ms. Crocco, second by Ms McCreven to move item #2 public comment, to the end of the agenda

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

3. Discussion of Amity Board of Education policy 6146.1, Instruction – Grading/Assessment Systems

A letter from Dr. Russeel Adair with attached information regarding weighted versus nonweighted GPA (27 pages) was entered into the minutes and copies were given to Committee members.

Dr. Britton gave his presentation regarding the proposed changes in GPA/QPA reporting (attached). The presentation gave a history of the changes that have taken place in reporting over the past 5 years at Amity. Mr. Tracy and Mr. Dumais also assisted Dr. Britton in presenting the information and answering the questions posed by those in the attendance, which were numerous.

Mr. Dumain corrected the misconception that PowerSchool could not calculate GPA on a 20-point scale; PowerSchool can, in fact, do this.

There were many questions from those present and there was a lengthy discussion regarding this proposed policy change and what its effect it would have on the students at Amity High School (current and incoming) as well as what would be required for implementation of whatever policy the Committee and then Board would adopt.

Ms. McCreven stated that she would prefer a slower, perhaps incremental implementation of the policy change and asked that the information be well-publicized for students and their parents so that they fully understand the change.

Mr. Blake reminded the Committee that the Board's job is not to manage the school but rather to create policy and leave the management to the Superintendent and the Principal and other administrators.

Mr. Tracy presented information he gathered regarding college admissions procedures. Colleges and universities all have their own "formula" when it comes to admitting students. They really do not rely on the students high school GPA but rather re-calculate their own GPA based on particular subject grades; the conclusion is that the high school GPA, while important, is not a deciding factor in college admissions.

Mr. Dumais said that he called the admissions department at Harvard and Michigan State and asked about their process. The answer he received from both places was essentially the same – “we take the grades on the transcript and calculate our own GPA.”

Mr. Browe stated that the high school GPA could affect a student’s consideration for certain scholarships.

Dr. Britton and Mr. Tracy finished their presentation; discussion continued at length about how to implement the policy change.

Mr. Browe left the meeting at 7:00 p.m. for another commitment.

Mr. Blake asked about starting the new grading system with the incoming freshman class. Dr. Britton stated that he would not have any objection to that and that the current Board policy will be followed until it is changed. Dr. Britton presented three options to the Committee that will be presented to the full Board at their next meeting. These are:

1. A differentiated policy change with one policy for the Class of 2015, 16, 17 and 18, and a new policy phased in with the Class of 2019.
2. Setting the unweighted GPA baseline on level 3 and bumping the level 2, level 1 and AP/Honors weighted points.
3. The final option involved not giving a bump for an A+, nor a deduction for a D- in the unweighted and weighted GPA calculations for students in the Class of 2015, 16, 17 and 18.

3. **Adjournment**

Mr. Hurley spoke to Mr. Dumais and requested that Dr. Britton and Mr. Tracy be present at the next Board meeting to answer any questions about proposed policy change above and that they would have the graphs and charts from their presentation this evening for clarification for the full Board.

Mr. Hurley stated that the meeting could be closed at this point since a quorum was no longer present.

The meeting was closed and adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth E. Natzel, Recording Clerk