

EISA Subcommittee Minutes

5/19/21

In attendance: Chair Tammy Mahoney, School Board Subcommittee members Jamie Fitzpatrick and Dawn Dutton, Superintendent Tom Ambrose, Director of Teaching and Learning Patty Haynes, HS Assistant Principal Matt Malila. Called to order by Mahoney at 4:30 pm. Minutes of the 3/31/21 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Mr. Malila presented the recommendations of the Graduation Requirements and Schedule committee, which are designed to maximize instructional time for core subjects like Math and ELA but retain the flexibility of exposure to a variety of elective courses.

1. Reduce the number of credits required for graduation from 28 to 24, and the number of electives from 8 to 5.5
2. Change most electives to a half credit (half year) from the current one credit/full year, excluding band, choir, or languages
3. Shift the bell schedule from 8 to 6 periods
4. Revise the criteria to earn a Diploma with Distinction
5. Eliminate class rank from transcript
6. Make Advisory a one quarter per year credit graduation requirement and shift the focus and content for a more meaningful experience

There was some discussion on prioritizing solutions for students wishing to have 4 years of band and a language and the feeling is that this can be worked out.

The criteria for a Diploma with Distinction are still in process. Some working ideas would be the completion of a capstone project, or a GPA threshold. Mr. Ambrose suggested something multi-faceted, such as a matrix of choices. Ms. Dutton suggested varying the criteria for varying modalities or vocations.

There was some discussion regarding the recommendation on eliminating class rank from transcripts. It appears that this is being used as a preliminary screening tool and may eliminate students somewhat arbitrarily. The committee requested more information from Ms. Leavitt for the next meeting.

There was general agreement that Advisory would benefit from some structural change. The administration plans to pilot an experiential matrix system in the fall, which will allow students to select from several categories of career and college readiness experiences.

Mr. Fitzpatrick moved to adopt this framework with specific focus on the 24-credit graduation requirement and half credit electives for immediate review and implementation by the administration. Seconded by Ms. Dutton and unanimously approved.

Annie Collyer of Newton commented that Southern New Hampshire University accreditations might be incorporated, and that the state legislature is considering a bill which would add a civics requirement for graduation.

The meeting was adjourned by Ms. Mahoney at 5:55pm.