

Board Special Meeting
High School Grade and Credit Marking During COVID-19 School Closure
April 20, 2020, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Meeting held remotely



Minutes

Call to Order

Director DeWolf called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. Directors DeWolf, Hampson, Harris, Hersey, Mack, Rankin, and Rivera-Smith participated with Microsoft Teams or by phone.

Director DeWolf noted that the meeting was being held remotely consistent with the Governor's Proclamation prohibiting the meeting from being held in person due to COVID-19. Director DeWolf noted that the public had been provided remote access.

Action Item

- Action Item: Suspending provisions of Board Policy No. 2420, High School Grade and Credit Marking

Director Hampson moved to approve this item. Director Rankin seconded.

Superintendent Denise Juneau spoke to the challenges with grading under the current conditions and noted that districts around the state and country were grappling with the same issue without a perfect solution. Superintendent Juneau spoke to work to develop the proposal before the Board, including consideration of impacts to those furthest from educational justice and alignment with the district Strategic Plan. She spoke to the plans for implementation of the proposal.

Chief Academic Officer Dr. Diane DeBacker spoke to the analysis conducted in developing the recommendation before the Board and the alternatives considered. Dr. DeBacker spoke to implementation of the proposal.

Director Hampson asked how the proposed grading policy during the COVID-19 closure would apply to a student previously receiving supports that were not currently available. Dr. DeBacker and Chief of Student Support Services Dr. Concie Pedroza discussed the development of individual learning plans. Director Hampson and Dr. DeBacker discussed the timeline for the revised grading policy and for completing work should a student receive an incomplete.

Director Hersey and Dr. DeBacker discussed the timeline and process for completing work should a student receive an incomplete and the process for a student to appeal an incomplete grade.

Director Mack noted concerns about the proposal and the potential for implicit bias in individual grading decisions. She stated that a plan for other credit earning opportunities, such as competency-based credits or online courses, was needed. Dr. DeBacker noted work to develop district guidelines and procedures to

promote equity and consistency. Directors Mack, DeWolf, and Rankin and Dr. DeBacker discussed the timeline for engaging with students regarding incomplete grades and other credit opportunities.

Director Rankin and Superintendent Juneau discussed the timeframe for the suspension of provisions of Board Policy No. 2420. Director Rankin discussed concerns that had been raised to her regarding running start grading and receiving input from college admissions officers. Director Rankin noted her support for the policy but noted past challenges with implementing policies and the need for consistent communications and expectations in the implementation. Dr. DeBacker spoke to running start grades being awarded by the relevant higher education institution.

Director Rivera-Smith spoke to challenges with awarding A grades and incompletes and ensuring students reticent to divulge their needs are served. Director Rivera-Smith and Dr. DeBacker discussed potential scenarios under which a student might receive an incomplete grade. Director Rivera-Smith noted the timeline feeling rushed and spoke to waiting for recommendations from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Superintendent Juneau spoke to the analysis underlying the proposal and the limitations of various grading scenarios. Superintendent Juneau spoke to the limited circumstances in which an incomplete would be given. Director Rivera-Smith noted questions and concerns about the research and data relied upon for the Board Action Report.

Director Harris spoke to waiting for recommendations from OSPI, the State Board of Education, and Washington State School Directors' Association and incorporating those ideas and conducting additional analysis and engagement.

Director Harris made the following motion "I move that we postpone action on this BAR to a time certain until a more robust discussion, community engagement, fiscal implications, and the OSPI recommendations, State Board of Education and WSSDA input is received and the BAR updated to reflect same and Directors are given ample opportunity to weigh the alternatives and consequences to our students and staff." Chief Legal Counsel Greg Narver clarified procedural aspects of the motion. Director Rivera-Smith seconded.

Directors discussed the motion to postpone action on the Board Action Report. Director Hampson noted that the Board Action Report had been centered in equity and those furthest from educational justice and spoke to acting to give more certainty. Director Mack stated her support for the motion to postpone and suggested it would provide more opportunity to clarify how student incompletes would be addressed. Director Rankin spoke to moving forward and noted that OSPI guidance was unlikely to change the analysis behind the Board Action Report. Director Rivera-Smith spoke to postponing action to review OSPI recommendations and conduct further engagement.

The motion to postpone action on the Board Action Report did not pass with a vote of 3-4 (Directors Harris, Mack, and Rivera-Smith voted yes; Directors DeWolf, Hampson, Hersey, and Rankin voted no).

Directors resumed discussion on the motion on the underlying Board Action Report. Director Harris, Dr. DeBacker, and Executive Director of College and Career Readiness Dr. Caleb Perkins discussed consultation with higher education institutions regarding grading during the COVID-19 closure. Director DeWolf and Dr. Perkins discussed the guiding principles, racial equity analysis, and case studies utilized in developing the proposal. Director DeWolf and Dr. Perkins discussed accountability with respect to the desired outcomes and ongoing work to analyze impacts. Director Rankin and Dr. Perkins discussed support for students receiving special education services.

The motion to approve the underlying Board Action Report passed with a vote of 5-2 (Directors DeWolf, Hampson, Hersey, Rankin, and Rivera-Smith voted yes; Directors Harris and Mack voted no).

Adjourn

This meeting adjourned at 1:47 p.m.