

CLARENCE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administration

Matthew Frahm, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools

Mary Jo Dunkle

Interim Director of Special Education & Pupil Personnel Services

Patricia Grupka, Ed.D.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

Robert Michel

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Kristin Overholt, Ed.D.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction



Board of Education

James Boglioli

President

Michael Fuchs

Vice President

Tricia Andrews

Kym Cannizzaro

Cindy Magera

Dennis Priore

Dawn Snyder

Policy Committee Meeting

November 1, 2023

4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. in the High School Library

Discussion Topics and Agenda Items

Members Present: James Boglioli, Kym Cannizzaro, Tricia Andrews, Matt Frahm, Jason Lehmbeck, Ken Smith

Speaker in Public Session: Kym Cannizzaro

- 1) Weighting of Regents Exam grades in overall course averages
 - Historically, many public high schools in New York State weighted Regents Exams grades in final course averages
 - Over the past couple years, students and parents have questioned the practice here in Clarence
 - To collect information, Ken Smith surveyed Erie County school districts
 - Since the pandemic, a handful of schools have modified their current practices
 - Currently, some schools have continued to include Regents Exams grades in final course averages, some have reduced the percentage, others have eliminated the practice altogether
 - Concerns have been raised that certain AP/dual enrollment course curricula do not align with what is tested on Regents Exams. Additionally, some students and parents have noted the potential impact the weighting of Regents Exam grades can have on overall course averages
 - Anecdotally, faculty members, as well as administrators in surrounding schools, have suggested that including Regents Exam grades serves as an appropriate motivator so that students take the tests seriously
 - A connection was made between the weighting of Regents Exam scores and the impact of class rank on student well-being
 - After much discussion, Ken Smith will be talking with faculty and student leaders about the practice over the next few weeks

- Including Regents Exam grades in final course averages is a building-level decision, and Ken Smith will share grading changes if they take place in the High School

2) High School lunch / free period practices

- Board member requested to review the practice of allowing students to not take a lunch or a free period in their schedule. The concern has been raised in Student Forums with the BOE as well as a source of unneeded stress, pressure, anxiety, etc.
- Ken Smith shared that the Master Schedule is 100% driven by student preferences. Counselors encourage students to take a lunch and/or a free period, but there are times full schedules are requested. Typically, these requests are made so that students can take advantage of AP/College Coursework or so that they can avoid the Cafeteria. Additionally, there are times when students take full schedules in order to graduate on time or to secure “early release”
- Ken Smith went over data the Guidance Department had collected on the practice. Approximately 20% of sophomores do not take a lunch or a free period, 10% of juniors do not take a lunch or a free period, and only 4 current seniors do not take a lunch or a free period
- Committee agreed that the numbers were lower than anticipated
- Recommendation is to continue monitoring the practice as well as to encourage students/families to include a lunch and/or a free period in their schedules. However, no recommendation to change the practice at this point

3) Current process / policy for 8th grade students participating on High School athletic teams

- Board member requested a review of Policy #7320 as well as the New York State Athletic Participation Process
- Concerns that 7th or 8th graders playing on High School level teams take away athletic opportunities for grades 9-12 students
- Jason Lehmbeck talked about the issue and went over the information he had collected from other Erie County schools
- Districts differ on who can recommend that 7th or 8th graders try out for high school level teams. In some districts, only staff/coaches can recommend, while in other districts (such as Clarence), parents can also recommend
- This past fall, Clarence had 30 7th or 8th grade students play up at the JV or Varsity level
- General guideline is that if a student-athlete is pulled up, they need to be exceptional athletes who will start or contribute on a regular basis
- Other complicating factors—some teams need the numbers, there are “bubbles” of talented student-athletes on some teams during some seasons, etc.

- **Recommendation is to keep the current policy, but to have Jason Lehmbeck review “best practices” at annual programs review and/or annual evaluations. Additionally, Jason Lehmbeck will look at whether rubrics or more objective tools could help decisions about athletic cuts or having students play up on high school level teams**
- 4) **Policy #3420: Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment in the District**
- **Policy changes have been recommended in response to New York State issuing an updated model sexual harassment prevention policy for employers**
 - **Although the modifications focus on addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, the updated model prevention policy also provides methods for reporting and investigating discrimination also applied to protected classes**
 - **Required policy is recommended for adoption because it reflects current legal and/or regulatory changes**
- 5) **Policy #5140: Administration of the Budget**
- **Policy has been revised in response to the expiration of Education Law Section 3614 requiring that districts annually submit to the Commissioner of Education a detailed statement of the total funding allocation for each school in the District for the upcoming school budget year**
 - **Partial policy change is recommended related to the expiring law. However, Committee does not recommend adopting the language on budget transfers because the District just implemented a revised process here in Clarence a year ago**
- 6) **Future Meeting Dates**
- **4:00 p.m. on January 17 in the High School Library**