

The Regional District 13 Board of Education Student Achievement Committee met in regular session on Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Committee members present: Dr. Darcy (left at 5:54), Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Roraback (arrived at 4:35)

Committee members absent: Mr. Mennone

Other board members present: Mrs. Dahlheimer (remote)

Administration present: Dr. Leggett, Superintendent and Dr. Siegel, Associate Director of Learning and Innovation

Community member: Maureen Hamilton

Lucy Petrella called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to approve the agenda as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda as presented, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. Moore and Mrs. Petrella. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes - June 4, 2025

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2025 meeting as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes from June 4, 2025 as presented: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. Moore and Mrs. Petrella. Motion passed unanimously.

Summer Program Update

Dr. Siegel discussed the special education and general education programs that were held throughout the summer. For special education, Extended School Year (ESY) programs supported continued progress for individual student goals. 70 students participated in ESY: 41 at Brewster, 15 at CRHS, and 14 at MTA.

General education summer enrichment, with a focus on supporting literacy and math achievement, was held at Brewster with 39 student participants.

Additionally, 64 of the 87 incoming kindergarten students attended Kindergarten Academy, which focused on classroom introduction and readiness skills.

Dr. Siegel thanked the dedicated staff who made these programs possible, identifying that their commitment allowed students to have meaningful and supportive learning experiences throughout the summer.

Policy Review

- Graduation Policy 5127 and Graduation Requirement for the Class of 2027 and Beyond

Mrs. Petrella opened discussion regarding updating the Graduation Policy 5127 and the Graduation Requirement for the Class of 2027 and Beyond document.

In their discussion, members identified that the current graduation requirements for seniors of Coginchaug High School is 26 credits, while the new Graduation Requirement from the state requires 25 credits. Members discussed various ways to label course requirements for graduation versus college recommendation courses in the policy, as members expressed concern that students may be limiting their educational growth by only taking 3 required years of a subject, like math or English, when 4 years of either subject may be more beneficial.

However, Dr. Siegel identified that the minimum subject requirements are beneficial for students' individual educational and career goals. Not all students will need 4 years of a subject for their desired career path; additionally, those who are pursuing specific fields after high school will have the opportunity to take classes in that field to support their educational goals. Discussion continued to establish that some students will need these minimum credits to graduate high school and the school counselors are available to assist all students in helping them make the best choices in their class selections.

Mrs. Dahlheimer questioned whether students who followed the course requirements for graduation would be able to switch career goals as juniors and therefore have the opportunities in their schedules to take the courses recommended for college entrance. Dr. Siegel discussed that most students would be able to pivot and would have flexibility in their schedules to earn these credits that would support their new educational goals, as the general education curriculum in subjects like English or science is the same for students in 9th and 10th grade. However, this could be challenging for students who would seek proficiency in World Language, in which juniors may have earned the 1 credit for graduation requirements but would now need to earn 3 credits for college readiness. This led to a wider discussion of accepting middle school World Language credits, in which Dr. Darcy elaborated that if students took an assessment at the end of eighth grade and showed proficiency and mastery, they could earn 1 credit towards World Language. As of now, some students with Individualized Education Plans are not required

to take World Language. At this point, no action was taken. Dr. Leggett said the committee is going to review these considerations before submitting them to the policy committee.

Graduation Policy 5127

Dr. Leggett recommended that under Expectations, language be adjusted from, “Able students may be permitted” to “Students may be permitted...” for more appropriate language.

Additionally, the regulations may change due to the strategic planning and the recent leadership work on the portrait of a graduate. Currently, the district has three unfinished models: portrait of a graduate, portrait of a citizen, and portrait of a learner. The goal is to develop one, concise portrait of a graduate and then update the regulations so they are in alignment with this document.

Dr. Leggett recommended the committee change the language in expectations (noted above), repeal the current regulations, and update the credits, which were agreed upon by committee members.

- **Curriculum 6140**

Dr. Leggett reviewed Curriculum 6140, in which bold and italicized language reflected updates that aligned with legal requirements as well as a clear purpose of curriculum policy.

The committee reviewed proposed changes to the curriculum policy, including aligning it with the approved district's strategic plan (once created) and approving the RSD13 Curriculum Handbook as the administrative regulation. It was recommended that the changes in language be made to Curriculum 6140 and the Curriculum Handbook be presented to the full board of education for approval as a living document to be amended by the administration when necessary.

New Course Curriculum Review

- Biomedical Exploration Draft Curriculum
- Sociology Draft Curriculum
- Unified Music in Our Lives Draft Curriculum

Dr. Siegel introduced the curriculum of new courses. Dr. Siegel discussed a new internal review process that was implemented this year. A curriculum review template was developed and the curriculum for each subject was written over the summer. The courses were reviewed by internal staff members: Biomedical Exploration and Sociology were reviewed by staff members outside of these subject areas. Biomedical Exploration and Sociology are expected to run in the spring. However, a section of Unified Music in our Lives is currently running, providing modifications to students with IEPs. Additionally, *Introduction to Foods* is currently being offered with modifications for students with IEPs.

It was recommended these courses be sent to the full board for approval. Additionally, teachers were commended for their efforts in designing and reviewing these courses throughout the summer. It was noted that 30 teachers worked on different projects, and the committee members were appreciative of their work.

Another class that was discussed was an E-Sports class that was purchased as a packaged curriculum. The Board approved the purchase of the class and therefore voted to approve the curriculum of the company.

Committee members discussed curriculum moving forward, in which curriculum documents are being tracked and updated by spreadsheet and working with curriculum development and consultancy. The Board of Education has a partnership with ACES to support curriculum development and auditing. Initial conversations have started and there are plans to utilize PD days for curriculum work with ACES consultants.

Review of 2025 SBAC Data

The performance report indicated a small increase in ELA scores from last year to this year. While there was a small increase in math scores, these scores remained more stagnant. The report also revealed that grade 6 had a lower ELA growth score and grade 4 had a lower growth score in math. However, these declines were attributed to programs that were implemented last year. After a typical implementation dip, it is expected these growth scores will increase. Overall, the implementation dips were expected, so moving forward, the committee would like to see those areas progress, and then pay more attention to the stagnant areas so they can improve as well.

Reviewing SBAC data also brought up discussions of how data can be reviewed, whether it can identify discrepancies in teaching methods between classes of the same grade or even wider peer comparison among the student population.

Mrs. Dahlheimer suggested this may be a discussion to have with the full board so the public could have input heard, as there are parents who are interested in how their students are achieving in comparison to other students.

Dr. Darcy identified that the state is not measuring student growth based on peer comparisons but rather individual achievement. Dr. Siegal continued to discuss how individual achievement is measured through benchmark assessments and the work done throughout the year in PLCs within the school. The district has been utilizing a personalized learning approach, especially in math, to meet the needs of every child.

After review of SBAC data, there was discussion of content-specific actions the district is taking in ELA, mathematics, and science. In ELA, the district is implementing EL education curriculum and utilizing one-to-one coaching for instructional coaches through the RESC. The RESC Science of Reading Affinity Group was used last year with a goal of continuing to use this again this year. Lastly, the district signed

up for the state TNTP, which stands for the New Teacher Project Literacy Partnership. TNTP will be working to improve literacy instruction in grades K-1.

The district has also been taking steps to improve mathematics through a specific Math Professional Learning group, which began last year, in addition to personalized math instruction through playlists and a comprehensive math curriculum review through the partnership with ACES. The IXL platform was implemented in grades six through eight, while students in kindergarten and first grade are benefitting from interview-based assessments and engaging with interdisciplinary activities through play-based learning.

The district has also taken steps to improve science curriculum, including OpenSciEd at the middle school level and exploring the use of the 5E model of instruction.

Discussion of the student achievement report concluded with district wide actions, including restorative practices, data-informed decision making, curriculum design and alignment, and artificial intelligence work that are being implemented to improve teaching and learning.

Annual Meeting Schedule and Topics for Student Achievement Committee Meetings

The Student Achievement Committee will meet again on November 5, 2025 at 4:00. The committee discussed outlining student achievement topics that would be addressed in each of the meetings that would take place in September, November, February, and May. It was determined that the September meeting would focus on summer learning updates and SBAC data review. The topic of the upcoming November meeting would review the proposals for new high school courses and review of student achievement goals. February's meeting would include review of available data and May's meeting would include SAT data review.

Discussion continued regarding why new classes are continuing to be offered. Committee members remarked that new courses provide opportunities for hands-on student engagement that would encourage student intellectual curiosity and desire to continue education in their local education agency. Members questioned if new courses could also be introduced at the middle school level, identifying that the current student population are engaged students who have developed voices and want to be heard, as noted during their involvement with the superintendent search last spring.

Public Comment

Ms. Hamilton spoke about educator interest, course exploration and working around high school scheduling conflicts.

Adjournment

Mrs. Dahlheimer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore to adjourn the meeting.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Roraback. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Meghan Shortell-Fratantonio