

School District of the City of Saginaw
MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING
550 Millard Street, Saginaw, Michigan 48607 (989)399-6500
August 11, 2025 – 5:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 5:16 p.m. by Mrs. Joyce Seals:

1. Committee Members Present:

Mrs. Joyce Seals (Chair)
Mr. Kevin Mark Rooker (Absent)
Mrs. Mattie Thompson (Absent)

Board Members Present:

Mrs. Janet Nash
Dr. Charles Coleman (Absent)
Ms. Ruth Ann Knapp (Absent)
Ms. Jasmine Calhoun

Central Administration Staff:

Dr. Ramont Roberts

2. Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Seals asked Board members if there were any additions or subtractions to the minutes from April 14, 2025. No additions/subtractions made. Mrs. Seals motioned to carry, Mrs. Nash moved to accept and Ms. Calhoun supported.

A voice vote was taken with the following results.

Ayes: 3 Nays: 0 – Motion Carried

3. Presentations

Mrs. Seals turned the meeting over to Dr. Roberts who shared that the district has had significant challenges with attendance of students since returning to a full schedule after COVID. Two truancy officers have been hired as part of the intervention process, and provided with vehicles to pick up students and bring them to school. Dr. Roberts asked Dr. Foley to put together an attendance policy recommendation for review. This is only a recommendation. The number of days can be fluid and can be changed. Dr. Roberts then turned it over to Dr. Foley for the presentation.

A. ATTENDANCE POLICY RECOMMENDATION 25-26

Dr. Foley greeted the board members. The purpose is to preserve the integrity of the academic program and ensure student accountability. A failing grade will be issued and or repeat the school year. Unless extraordinary circumstances exist, that are formally documented and approved. The threshold for automatic failure or retention for secondary will be 15 or more absences per semester, and 30 or more for the entire school year. For elementary, Pre-K through 5 students who incur 30 or more in a school year may be retained in their current grade pending an Attendance Review Committee recommendation.

Exceptions to policy are chronic long term medical conditions documented by licensed health care provider, verifiable mental health concerns or trauma related circumstances, other significant

hardships, and court order absences. Parents can appeal the decision within five days by submitting it in writing an explanation of extenuating circumstances to the building administrator or the attendance review committee. provide supporting documentation, medical notes, court orders, and specific family emergencies. The final decision will be made within ten days in writing. Parents and students will be made aware of this policy at the start of the school year, during parent conferences, and via, social media.

Mrs. Seals said she is going to do some research and backtrack, because she remembers looking at state policies that have to do with the intersection of attendance versus academic performance. She recalls it saying that you cannot impact their academic grade on their attendance. Dr. Roberts responded that SPSD policy 5200, states that a student can't be given a failing grade or credit unconditionally revoked, where lack of attendance is the sole or primary determining factor. This is where the Attendance Review Committee process comes in at. Based on our own policy we can still give the grade, but they can't get the credit because of attendance.

Mrs. Seals said there is a misunderstanding of the amount of time a student has to be in the classroom. Students can take two weeks to make up credit. She wants to make sure that we aren't contradicting ourselves during this process. Dr. Roberts replied and said seat time is what she is talking about to get the grade. We have the authority to issue the grade but will have to retake the course to get credit. Dr. Foley added that students making up work at home is not the same as being present in the classroom when teachers are given instructions on difficult concepts. Students may pass the course but they are two to three years behind. Their NWEA scores are in the zero to one percentile and not passing their M-Step.

Ms. Calhoun asked what are the interventions that happen prior to the letter being sent home? Dr. Foley said the attendance handbook covers what happens. From day one teachers are making calls for students on their roster that haven't shown up, the attendance improvement paraprofessional makes calls, the truancy officer does home visits. Mandatory meetings are held. Ms. Calhoun's second concern is that she doesn't want our policies to penalize children at a certain age when they have no control over getting to school such as an elementary aged student. What partnerships do we have to assist? Dr. Roberts said the only avenue we have to hold an adult accountable is the truancy officer working with the ISD through the prosecutor's office. If the Attendance Review Committee determines it is the parent/guardian fault, we do have the right to prosecute the parent but it's difficult to get to a level to prosecute because the courts are overwhelmed. Part of the process is for the Attendance Review Committee to look at the circumstances surrounding the situation and assist the parents with removing the barriers to attendance.

Mrs. Nash said the courts should be better vested because these same kids become their future customers. She agrees that community partnerships are needed outside the school to help families receive what they need to make sure barriers are removed. She is a little confused looking at the policy in seeing a fifteen day, twenty day, and thirty day. It's not clear what is supposed to be avoided. Dr. Foley replied that it's fifteen days per semester for a total of thirty for the school year. The twenty day is a typo.

Mrs. Nash then asked what counts as an absence in elementary school? Is it one period, one subject, half a day, a full day? Dr. Roberts responded and said that it's four hours. Mrs. Nash then asked when does a tardy become an absence and Dr. Roberts said twenty minutes and is already defined in the truancy handbook. The attendance handbook was requested by Mrs. Nash and Mrs. Seals. Dr. Foley will make sure they receive a copy after the meeting.

Mrs. Nash then asked where does the suspension count in the absences? Dr. Roberts said it counts but it comes up in the Attendance Review Committee process. They recognize it's not an attendance issue but a discipline issue. Mrs. Nash asked if a student who had been suspended with four, ten day suspensions would still be able to earn credit? Dr. Robert said technically, yes. She then said that it is beneficial for the parents to have an understanding of this right away and if they know that the grading rubric is based on classroom participation it would encourage attendance.

Mrs. Nash then asked if there is a system in place for documentation of intervention to be collected? Dr. Foley responded there is a system in place across the board of dates and times of calls, meetings and letters sent. Part of the process is bringing in Ms. Inez with her connections and resources.

Mrs. Seals mentioned there could be mandated counseling, special sessions and attending summer school. We have to make sure everyone knows about this. Parents need to sign stating that they received the updated policy. Maybe it could be a class that goes through it and the parents and students have to sign it.

Mrs. Nash shared that when she was an administrator they surveyed the students and they found out that it was the parents that often made the students late. They implemented a policy that the parent had to walk them in the building to the counseling center and sign their child in, and then walk them to their first hour class. It went from four hundred kids late a morning to thirty.

Mrs. Seals, thanked Dr. Roberts and Dr. Foley for all of their hard work. Dr. Roberts said they'll keep it in draft form, take the feedback and make changes and bring it back to the briefing session on Wednesday.

B. CLEAR BOOK BAG

Dr. Roberts shared Saginaw United H.S. did it last year and it worked really well with the flow into the building and getting them through the security line and to class on time. There were no incidents and this year will be expanding to the middle schools. Brought Dr. Foley up to present.

Dr. Foley said the main goal is to enhance student safety and security on campus, reduce the risk of prohibited items brought into the school, and support a safe learning environment. All students grades six through twelve must use a clear backpack. They are fully transparent. Females can have a small non-transparent pouch for personal hygiene items. SPSP is providing the backpacks. The first one is free and if lost they will have to purchase the second one. Implementation of the timeline will be the first day of school. The second cost is around ten dollars. There are some accommodations: if there is a medical need a doctor's note will be required, sports gear, wrestling gear, instruments, and disability accommodations as per ADA.

Mrs. Seals' question if we are just introducing them to middle school? Which was correct. She then asked if SASA had them too? Dr. Roberts responded no, and said that prior to SASA moving into their new facility at AHHS, they did not have metal detectors or follow the same security protocols. They didn't feel that it was necessary but will certainly take another look at it but for now the clear book bags will only be at Saginaw United, Willie Thompson and Saginaw Middle.

Mrs. Nash asked if the policy overview will be edited and Dr. Roberts said yes.

Mrs. Seals asked if there were questions and there were none.

C. BLUE RIBBON PROCESS – SAGINAW UNITED H.S.

Dr. Foley said that the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence program is a proposal for Saginaw United High School. SASA and Handley are already Blue Ribbon Schools. Saginaw United is poised for transformational growth and has had some amazing things happening. There are nine key assessment indicators, online stakeholder survey, and a two day site visit. They also provide professional development and coaching and opportunities for national recognition. Cost is \$7900 and can be supported with Title 1 funds. Some of the anticipated outcomes are: cultivating a culture of excellence, establishing a culture of continuous improvement, promoting shared leadership and accountability, providing external validation for the work being done at Saginaw United, aligns improvement with measurable benchmarks, engages students, families, and staff in the process, supports leadership and professional community development.

Projected Timeline: In the fall initiate the stakeholder surveys, site visit in December. In the spring we will receive reports and the exit presentation. In the summer attend the National Conference. In 26-27 implement the strategic improvement actions and hopefully at that point Saginaw United will be recognized as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

Mrs. Nash asked if Saginaw United still had to do the North Central Accreditation? Dr. Foley said yes. SUHS is already accredited with them. The process was completed virtually. Dr. Roberts added that North Central is not as prominent as it used to be. She then asked if you can apply year after year if you aren't accredited the first time. Dr. Roberts said he isn't sure. Dr. Foley said that we will have a personal consultant working with us.

Mrs. Seals said they know that it will be a process of upward mobility and there may be points of recognition.

Mrs. Nash said we don't want to settle for less and to celebrate our success along the way. She liked the Aristotle quote, "Excellence is not an act but a habit."

Dr. Roberts asked if we wanted to bring back all three presentations on Wednesday. Mrs. Seals said yes, and the most important one is policy A.

D. POLICY UPDATE

Mrs. Seals said we are still waiting on clarity from Don Schelke on the three policies from April.

4. Public/Union Comments

No public comments.

No union comments.

5. Final Board Comments

Mrs. Nash is excited to see the Blue Ribbon School initiative.

Mrs. Calhoun: No comments.

Mrs. Seals is interested to see how the conversation goes on Wednesday regarding attendance.

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6.16 p.m.

Submitted by: Jessica Patman