

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 19

TO: RSU 19 Board of Directors
FR: Robin McNeil / Mike Hammer
DT: April 20, 2021
RE: **Policy Committee Meeting Agenda**



DAY: **Tuesday**
DATE: **April 27, 2021**
TIME: 6:30 PM
PLACE: **ZOOM ONLY**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82957429943?pwd=MmJOT3dWekJHUmk4TU01aTF2ZEZrUT09>

Join by Phone: 1-646-558-8656 ID: 829 5742 9943

AGENDA

I. Public Comment

II. Policy Review

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------|
| A. IKF | Policy Recommendations from Mary Nadeau |
| IKF | Graduation Requirements |
| B. IMB | Teaching About Controversial/Sensitive Issues |
| C. GBEC | Drug Free Workplace |

III. Other

IV. Adjournment

A.D.A. Notice: If you have a special need that must be met to allow you to fully participate in this meeting, please contact the Office of the Superintendent at least two (2) days prior to this meeting.

TO: POLICY COMMITTEE

FROM: MARY NADEAU, PRINCIPAL, NRH

DATE: APRIL 16, 2021

RE: GRADUATION POLICY IKF EDIT

There are four items I am requesting the Policy Committee review in policy IKF, the Graduation Policy. Additionally, I have highlighted the policy with these recommendations

1. General clean up of outdated information that is no longer needed, highlighted in yellow and new language in blue to clarify the policy's intent.
2. Due to academic stresses created by the pandemic, a request to slightly dial back the World Language requirement for graduation. The Class of 2022, this year's juniors, would be expected to have two full years of a language. I am recommending we require one experience for the Class of 2022 and move to two for the Class of 2023 (current sophomores) with the option for students to request a waiver for one experience if they faced a unique, pandemic situation. The full two year requirement would start with the Class of 2023. This language is highlighted in Blue.
3. Review expectation for Home School students transferring in.
4. Historically, we used the term credits but in our shift to a proficiency based system we've transitioned to the word experiences, putting the focus on the learning vs the seat time. In older policies, we've specified a set number of credits required to graduate. The current policy does specify a number of required experiences, if totaled = 19.5 and an expectation students will take a minimum of six courses each year in high school, totally 24 over the four years, but it doesn't specify a required total experiences. The prior policy stipulated 22, which is what we've been using. People have interpreted this in all ways possible---it's still 22, it's 24 or it's just 19.5. I would like to discuss the nuances around this issue and establish a clear number for total experiences.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Before entering high school, students need to know the standards for attaining a high school diploma in order to plan an appropriate, sequential, educational program to meet that goal.

Nokomis Regional High has adopted a proficiency-based system of learning consistent with Maine law, which means that after January 1, 2019, the awarding of a diploma will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas and Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

To be awarded a high school diploma from the RSU #19 schools, students ~~graduating in the Class of 2019 and beyond~~ must demonstrate proficiency in the content areas identified in Maine's system of Learning Results, meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results, and fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the Board.

~~Students graduating in the Classes of 2014-2018 must meet the credit and other graduation requirements specified in this policy.~~

~~A student who would have graduated with the Class of 2018 and have been awarded a diploma at commencement but for his/her failure to earn sufficient credits or meet other requirements set by Board policy will have until December 31, 2018 to fulfill the graduation requirements applicable to the Class of 2018.~~

The Superintendent, through the high school principal or other designee, shall be responsible for making accurate information concerning diploma requirements available to incoming students and their parents prior to the start of their ninth grade school year. A copy of this policy will be disseminated to all incoming ninth grade students at the time of course selection. This policy will also be included in every edition of the high school student handbook.

The Board has approved the following schedule of minimum requirements for graduation, which includes minimum requirements specified by the State of Maine. The Board is aware that current law and regulations are subject to change.

The Board expects the Superintendent/designee to inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any additional State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma.

I. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASSES OF 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, OR 2018

In order to graduate from Nokomis Regional High School, a student must:

A. Meet or exceed the standards in the following content areas and required courses or the equivalent as determined by a review team;

B. Accumulate 22 credits including these required courses (or approved equivalent) and elective courses;

C. Complete state assessment requirements; and

D. Demonstrate meeting the Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results.

Home School students enrolling at Nokomis must be enrolled during their senior year and complete at least 13 of the 17.5 required courses at Nokomis, in addition to meeting all other graduation requirements to be awarded a Nokomis Diploma.

Minimum Credits Required For A Diploma:

22 Total Credits / 17.5 Required Courses and 4.5 Electives

English 4 Math 3

Science 3 Social Studies 3

Fine Arts 1 Career Pathways 2

Health & Phys. Ed. 1.5 Electives 4.5

Required Course of Study: Below is the course of study required to earn a Nokomis diploma. All students will be expected to complete the courses listed below. Consideration will be made for the following students:

• Students receiving Special Services may be registered in equivalent courses to meet graduation requirements as identified in their Individual Education Program (IEP).

• Transcripts of students transferring to Nokomis will be evaluated by Guidance Counselors and approved by the Principal to identify and verify equivalent courses that match our required courses.

• Under special circumstances, a student may request that an alternative, but

equivalent course, be accepted and recognized as a graduation requirement. The Principal must approve requests.

- Awarding of high school diplomas to Veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict is permitted under Policy IKFD.

Content Area Required Courses:

1. **English Language Arts**, 4 credits: English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12/Applied English
2. **Social Studies**, 3 Credits: 3 semesters (1.5 credits) of World Based Social Study and 3 semesters (1.5 credits) of American Based Social Study to include US History
3. **Mathematics**, 3 Credits: *Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II *Students completing Algebra I prior to high school will not be issued HS credit. Algebra I completion will be noted on the transcript, but students must take a minimum of 3 math credits during their high school career.
4. **Science**, 3 Credits: Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry
5. **Health and Physical Education**, 1.5 Credits: ½ Health and *1 Physical Education, *1 semester of PE will include successful completion of Project Adventure
6. **Visual and Performing Arts**, 1 Credit: See course guide for courses that meet Fine Arts Requirements
7. **Career Pathways**, 2 Credits: .5 credit during Grade 9, 10, 11 of a Pathway course or a pre-approved alternative such as TCTC or JMG and .5 credit for successful completion of Senior Project and documentation of 20 hours of Community Service
8. **Electives**, 4.5 Credits: Students will take a minimum of 4.5 elective credits, which may be additional credits in the core subject areas or any of the available elective credits. See course guide.

Persons who may question or want to challenge a portion of Nokomis curriculum should see Policy IMB-R Procedures For Objection To Curriculum Topic Or Material, Policy IJJ-E, Challenge Of Instructional Materials Form, and/or Policy

IMBB, Exemption From Required Instruction. Policies are available at www.RSU19.org.

The Nokomis Curriculum Supports the Guiding Principles of Maine's Learning Results. It is our goal that each student leave school as a:

1. Clear and Effective Communicator;
2. Self-Directed and Life-Long Learner;
3. Creative and Practical Problem Solver;
4. Responsible and Involved Citizen;
5. Collaborative and Quality Worker; and an
6. Integrative and Informed Thinker.

II. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASS OF 2019 AND BEYOND

In accordance with Maine law and Nokomis Regional High's proficiency-based system of learning, after January 1, 2019, the awarding of a diploma from Nokomis Regional High schools will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas of Maine's system of Learning Results and meeting the cross-content performance standards of the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results. The student must also fulfill any other requirements specified in this policy.

Students who anticipate graduating in the Classes of 2019 and beyond must meet the following requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma:

Demonstrate proficiency in meeting standards in the following content areas of the Learning Results. Meeting the standards entails demonstrating proficiency for each standard within each content areas. The following diploma requirements will be phased in from the 2018–2021 school year to the 2021–2022 school year:

For a student graduating in the graduating class of 2019–2021, certify that the student has demonstrated proficiency in meeting the state standards in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, health education and physical education, visual and performing arts, and career and education development. The World Language requirement will be phased in over two school years. The Class of 2022 will be required to meet standard in one experience, Class of 2023 will be required to meet standard in two experiences and may request a waiver from the school principal of one experience if they can demonstrate a pandemic related hardship. The Class of 2024 will be required to meet the two full experiences.

For a student graduating in the graduating class of 2022, and for each subsequent

graduating class, certify that the student has demonstrated proficiency in meeting the state standards in all content areas.

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science and Technology
Social Studies
Health Education and Physical Education
Visual and Performing Arts
World Languages
Career and Education Development

B. Meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results. A student graduating from RSU 19 schools is expected to be a:

Clear and effective communicator;
Self-directed and life-long learner;
Creative and analytical problem solver;
Responsible and involved citizen; and an
Integrative and informed thinker.

C. Successful completion of a senior project.

D. Complete a portfolio to include an Individual Graduation Plan, evidence of learning, and an application to a post-secondary educational institution, training program or other experience that provides an opportunity for further growth.

E. The student must also complete the following non-academic requirements: 20 hours of Community Service.

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO THE AWARDING OF A PROFICIENCY-BASED DIPLOMA

RSU 19's high school educational program is designed to enable students to satisfy graduation requirements in four years through a sequence of educational (learning) experiences/courses providing opportunities to gain and demonstrate proficiency in all of the content areas of the Learning Results and in the cross-content Guiding Principles of the Learning Results. The length of an experience is expected to be a full school year or its equivalent unless specifically noted as a half-year experience.

Students following a traditional pathway will:

A. Engage in educational experiences in the content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology in each year of their high school

program.

[NOTE: The requirement in “A” above is for the purpose of alignment with Maine law and the adoption of Common Core and national science standards.]

- B. Engage in at least three or educational experiences in the content area of social studies during their high school program.
- C. Engage in at least one educational experience in each of the content areas of visual and performing arts during their high school program.
- D. Engage in at least two educational experiences in world languages throughout the 7-12 educational programming in RSU #19. (See phased timeline in Section II for Class of 2022 and 2023)
- E. Engage in at least one half-year health and one full-year or two half-year physical education experiences during their high school program.
- F. Engage in at least three half-year educational experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Learning Results and the senior capstone project.

Students following a traditional pathway must be enrolled in the equivalent of six full year learning experiences/courses or integrated equivalents in each of their high school years.

**Add clarifying language to total experiences required to graduate.*

Students may also opt to demonstrate proficiency toward a high school diploma through multiple additional pathways including:

- Early college/dual enrollment courses
- Career and technical education programming
- Online/virtual learning
- Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work
- Experiential/service learning
- Exchange programs
- Independent study
- Alternative education/“At Risk” programming
- Adult education

Each pathway must provide a quality learning experience comparable in rigor to the school unit's own educational experience (course) offerings.

In order to pursue one or more of the multiple/alternative pathways, a student must develop an Individual Graduation Plan detailing how the pathway will provide exposure to the content standards of the Learning Results and how the student will demonstrate proficiency in meeting the standards. The Individual Graduation Plan must be reviewed by the Guidance Counselor and Department Chair and approved by the Principal.

III. STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Students who achieve proficiency in the content standards of the Learning Results and Guiding Principles, as specified in the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) will be awarded diplomas.

IV. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM NOKOMIS REGIONAL HIGH

This section applies to all students, in all graduation classes.

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Nokomis Regional High from another state or from an educational program that is not required to be aligned with the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the Nokomis Regional High Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards meeting graduation requirements.

B. Home-schooled Students

For home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Nokomis Regional High, the Nokomis Regional High Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation requirements. A home-schooled student must have attended Nokomis Regional High for a minimum of one year in order to receive a Nokomis Regional High diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Nokomis Regional High to attend an accredited, degree-

granting institution of higher education may upon satisfactory completion of the freshman year be awarded a high school diploma, provided that the student has notified the principal at the time of the early admission.

D. Early Awarding of Diplomas

A student who has met the State's and the Board's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma.

E. Extended Study

Students are eligible for extended years of study to complete the requirements of a diploma if they have not reached the age of 20 at the start of the school year. Students eligible for extended years of study may be referred to adult education or other resources suitable to young adult learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

A student must complete all Board requirements for a high school diploma in order to participate in graduation exercises.

Legal Reference: 20-A § 1001 (6); 6208 - 6209

20-A M.R.S.A. § 253, 2902, 4502, 4701, 4704, 4706, 4711,
4722, 4723, 4724, 13016

Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options

IK – Student Achievement

IKFA - Early Graduation

~~CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES POLICY~~
TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL/SENSITIVE ISSUES

American academic tradition stresses the free contest of ideas as a vital element both in the development of curriculum and in classroom teaching.

A **controversial issue** is one which results in dispute and disagreement due to a difference of opinion or religious, moral, political, or ethical values. Examples of controversial issues include (but are not limited to): abortion, gun control, animal rights, free-market capitalism, immigration, minimum wage, transgender rights, marijuana legalization, and universal healthcare.

Controversial issues are not issues that promote violence, genocide, hatred of specific groups, or are otherwise classified as hate speech or terrorism, and therefore are not protected by the first amendment.

Teaching Controversial Issues

~~Training in reflective and responsive thinking, may be incorporated in course offerings at all grade levels. This training is impossible, or at least severely hampered, if the community does not respect the principles of freedom and recognize that dissent does not necessarily mean disloyalty. However, one form of dissent which is incompatible with freedom is that which attempts to end freedom. Irrational fears do just this, and thereby may block the school in its efforts to handle controversial issues in an atmosphere of freedom and thoroughness.~~

Rewrite of Paragraph – Option 1

By studying controversial issues students will learn about topics and issues that are relevant to their lives. They will learn to share ideas and viewpoints in a respectful manner with others. They will enhance their understanding of our society. These skills are necessary for them to become responsible, informed citizens.

Rewrite of Paragraph – Option 2

The RSU 19 School Board supports the discussion of controversial issues in an atmosphere of consideration and appreciation of all sides of the issue.

Reflective and critical thinking may be incorporated in course offerings at all grade levels. Critical thinking is severely hampered if the community does not respect the principles of freedom and attempts to stifle academic instruction. People expressing irrational fears may attempt to block the school in its efforts to handle controversial issues in an atmosphere of freedom and thoroughness. While parents may restrict their children

1st Reading: 10/20/09

Adopted: 11/17/09; Revised:

from access to instruction of controversial issues in accordance with this policy, they do not have the right to restrict access to the instruction for other students.

- A. It is the responsibility of the schools to make provision for the study of controversial issues.
1. The policy on controversial issues should be defined in terms of the rights of students rather than in terms of the rights of teachers.
 2. The study should be emphasized in the high school, when most students are mature enough to study the significant controversial issues facing our society. However, all grade level teachers will be guided in acknowledgement and discussion of controversial issues.
 3. The study should be objective and scholarly with a minimum emphasis on opinion and a maximum emphasis on facts and critical thinking including source verification and avoidance of confirmation bias.
- B. In the study of controversial issues, the students have the following rights:
1. The right to study any controversial issue which has political, economic, or social significance and concerning which (at the appropriate level) he/she should begin to have an opinion;
 2. The right to have free access to all relevant information;
 3. The right to form and express opinions on controversial issues without thereby jeopardizing relations with the teacher or the school; and
 4. The right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.
 5. The right to pursue further discussion with other teachers, an administrator or credible resource in order to more fully understand the topic or information surrounding the issue.
- C. The teacher employs the same methods in handling controversial issues as characterize the best teaching at any time. The teacher has access to the best practices as indicated by the Department of Education or vetted resources on the topic

1st Reading: 10/20/09

Adopted: 11/17/09; Revised:

1. The teacher, in selecting both the content and the method of instruction, is mindful of the maturity level of the students.
2. The teacher has assured him/herself that the controversial subject to be discussed belongs within the framework of the curriculum to be covered, that the subject is significant as well as meaningful for the students, and that through the discussion, students will have the opportunity to grow.
3. The teacher handles the classroom presentation in ways that will ensure a wide range of information and interpretation for the students' consideration and strives to present a balance among many points of view.
4. ~~The teacher does not use the classroom as a personal forum. He/she does not employ the techniques of the demagogue or the propagandist for attention, for control, or simply for color. The teacher has the right to identify and express his/her own point of view in the classroom as long as he/she indicates clearly that it is his/her own. Ideally, students would not know the opinion of the teacher when they walk out of the classroom.~~

Rewrite:

Teachers should be aware of how their own opinions and beliefs influence how they approach teaching a subject. They must ensure that their personal opinions do not detract from the educational value of a lesson. They should only share their point of view in a manner that will enhance the educational value of the lesson.

5. The teacher emphasizes keeping an open mind, basing one's judgment on known facts, looking closely at facts to evaluate them in terms of the subject under discussion, and being ready to change one's opinion should new facts come into light. Ideally, students would not know the opinion of the teacher when they walk out of the classroom.
6. The emphasis always is on the method of forming an opinion as much as on the opinion formed.

D. Parents have the following rights for the teaching of their students about controversial issues:

1st Reading: 10/20/09

Adopted: 11/17/09; Revised:

1. The opportunity to review curriculum and/or the material utilized as a part of the curriculum; and
2. The option of limiting their child's participation, in part or whole, in any discussion or course of a controversial nature. However, the wishes of the child's parents to restrict their child's participation in a class discussion will not infringe on other parents' rights to permit their children to participate in such discussion. An appropriate alternate assignment may be recommended by the teacher.

1st Reading: 10/20/09

Adopted: 11/17/09; Revised:

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The School Board recognizes that alcoholism and drug dependency are treatable diseases. Left untreated, they may result in serious personal and family problems. At the same time, the Board is also seriously concerned about the effects of alcohol and drug dependency upon an employee's job performance and ability to serve as a role model for our students. Accordingly, the Board has adopted the following this policy applicable to all school system employees.

- A. The Board believes strongly that all employees and students should be able to work and learn in an environment free from alcohol and drug abuse. Accordingly, the Board expects all employees to report for work and to perform their duties in a manner that does not jeopardize the health, safety and well-being of co-workers and students.
- B. Any employee who suspects that he or she may have an alcohol or drug dependency problem is strongly encouraged to contact his/her supervisor to seek voluntary diagnosis and treatment. ~~The Chemical Health Coordinator will provide any~~ The employee will be provided with confidential referral services to an outside agency upon request; and will assisted the employee in determining the extent to which insurance coverage will to help pay for such services is available. ~~The Chemical Health Coordinator shall keep a~~ All voluntary referrals shall be kept confidential.

(Move to C)

“School system location” means in any school building or on any school premises; in any school-owned vehicle or in any other school-approved vehicle used to transports students to and from school or school activities; off school property at any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school unit; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the school system or otherwise engaged in school unit business.

- C. ~~All employees are strictly prohibited from (1) possessing, furnishing, or selling alcoholic beverages or scheduled drugs (as defined in Title 17-A, Section 1101) at any facility or on any school sponsored activity; (2) being under the influence of or using any such substances at any time or location.~~ No employee shall distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage or fortified wine or other intoxicating liquor. Nor shall an employee unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of “bath salts” or

other synthetic hallucinogen or of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid or any other controlled substance (as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the federal Controlled Substance Act [21 USC § 812]; by regulation at 21 CFR, § 1300.11 through 1300.15; and in 17-A MRSA, § 1101). This applies before, during and after school hours, at school or in any other school system location, defined as follows:

(Moved from B to C)

“School system location” means in any school building or on any school premises; in any school-owned vehicle or in any other school-approved vehicle used to transports students to and from school or school activities; off school property at any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school unit; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the school system or otherwise engaged in school unit business.

Any illegal substance found at any such place or event will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency, and could result in criminal prosecution.

- D. Any violation of the preceding paragraph shall constitute sufficient grounds for employee discipline, up to and including dismissal from employment. Any illegal use, possession, furnishing, selling or provision of assistance in obtaining “bath salts”, alcoholic beverages or scheduled drugs not covered by the preceding paragraph may, depending upon the circumstances, constitute sufficient grounds for discipline, up to and including dismissal. Referrals under foregoing paragraphs of this policy will not preclude disciplinary action under this paragraph, depending on the circumstances.
- E. As provided, ~~in part,~~ in the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, all employees are required to notify the District of any criminal or civil conviction ~~violation~~ for a drug ~~statute-conviction~~ violation, occurring in the workplace, no later than five (5) calendar days after such conviction. In turn, the Superintendent, within ten (10) calendar days of learning of such a conviction, is to give written notification to the U.S. Department of Education and to any other federal agency from which the District receives grant funds.
- F. Appropriate disciplinary sanctions shall be taken against any employee who violates the terms of the District’s drug and alcohol policy, up to and including dismissal.

OR Alternative language:

Any employee who violates the terms of this policy may be allowed to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the Board. If such employee fails to satisfactorily participate in and complete such program, the employee shall have appropriate disciplinary sanctions taken against him/her, up to and including dismissal.

- G. The Superintendent shall be responsible for developing and administering appropriate procedures to implement this policy.
- H. A copy of this policy will be given or mailed to all current employees and any new employees at the time of their employment and posted on the District's website.

Legal Reference: 20 USC § 7101 et seq. (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act)
21 U.S.C. § 812 (Controlled Substances Act)
21 C.F.R. §§ 1300.11-1300.15
Fed. P.L. 101-226
17-A MRSA § 1101
22 MRSA § 2390-2394

Cross Reference: JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students