

Minutes for MHS Site Council
December 18, 2008
2:30 to 4:00pm
Room 212

Eligibility Committee

The Eligibility Committee is proposing a recommendation to the MPS School Committee and MHS Administration to raise the current 1.66 minimum GPA to 2.0 to permit students to participate in extra-curricular and athletic activities.

Mrs. Eng reiterated in short version the evidence collected that brought the committee to consensus.

Mrs. Daughan also submitted in writing how the committee voted toward their decision .

The committee discovered that raising the GPA requirement to 2.0 was what the committee knew we could do at this time with the intent to look forward into the surrounding issues toward student achievement.

Mr. Zahm made an open request to have discussions within the school community at the time of implementation to improving to enhancing the communication process.

Mr. Steele asked if the principal would then have the discretion to install an enhancement to the policy to decide if an "f" would be prohibited or accepted. Mr. Ruscito answered that he would not and that the policy if accepted would stand as it is.

Mr. Savastano shared a prepared statement with Council. He illustrated that it would be possible for a student to engage in an athletic or extra-curricular activity with 2 'F's (Algebra– F Physics – C Eng 9 – F World History – C Phys Ed –A Photography – A Spanish I- C) He felt that no student should be able to engage in these activities with this scenario.

Mrs. Eng responded that although she agreed with Mr. Savastano's concern but that the committee's intention was to set a standard that the majority of students could rise to.

Mrs. Daughan thought it fortuitous that the example chosen was that of a freshman was being considered. She went on to discuss that the committee found in their work that the transition from Gaudet to MHS was of tremendous concern.

Mrs. Larson asked the committee to qualify that the RIIL standards for athletics would still allow this student of example to participate.

Mr. Ruscito questioned the weight of all of the classes listed. It was decided that the numbers did not change.

Mr. McDevitt would like to see that eligibility would be considered on quarterly grades only.

Mrs. Daughan called to vote on the current recommendation. Mr. Zahm seconded. The motion was decline at a vote of 8 yea to 9 nay. Mr. Steele added the specific policies of RIIL regarding eligibility.

Discussion continued with Mrs. Larson who was concerned about the dissemination of all of the elements in the policy that also require consideration. Mr. Ruscito demonstrated to the Council the example for calculating the GPA. He discovered that the methodology was correct but that the example in the handbook is not. (Mrs. Larson took notice for the handbook committee). After recalculating Mr. Savastano's example, the formula realized that the student with 2 "F"s in Algebra and English would not be eligible to play. Mr. McDevitt argued that this formulaic method would be incorrect on a quarterly basis.

At this point in the meeting a quorum dissolved and no vote could be taken.

Mrs. Eng added that if we took Mr. Savastano's example this same student with an A in Algebra and English and an "F" in photography and physical education would also be ineligible to play.

Mr. Steele added a point of information that he was concerned that we send the wrong message to our constituency that having an F and playing would be okay. He is concerned for those kids who have worked so hard to avoid this issue.

Mrs. DeBloise reminded that group that considering the students circumstances are not taken into consideration. Mr. Zahm asked us to remember that we want out students to succeed and that we cannot worry about the program but the student themselves.

For the record Mrs. Geer formally agreed with Mr. Zahm's statement that raising the bar in the name of student achievement is beneficial to our student body and that he would agree to move forward in that direction.

We adjourned at 3:50pm.