

TASK FORCE REPORT



Graduation Requirements Task Force

JUNE 24, 2021 MEETING SUMMARY

Chair: Jim McNiece, Kansas State Board of Education, District 10

Vice Chair: Jarred Fuhrman, Principal, Basehor-Linwood High School

The first meeting of the newly established Graduation Requirements Task Force was conducted virtually Thursday, June 24, 2021. Task Force Chair Jim McNiece and Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson welcomed participants with an overview of the Task Force's purpose, which is to examine Kansas' current graduation requirements from these three broad areas:

- Identify any courses that should be added or should no longer be required for high school graduation.
- Examine use of competencies and multiple ways for students to show mastery of skills, which allow them to move at their own pace and time.
- Examine potential for value-added assets in addition to the high school diploma (i.e. industry recognized certificate, college credits, etc.)

Mark Tallman, Associate Executive Director of the Kansas Association of School Boards, recapped the national origin of a high school framework, which was driven by college preparation. He also described major developments over the years such use of Carnegie units and changes in university admissions.

Commissioner Watson reviewed the state's current minimum graduation requirements and the definition of a unit of credit awarded to a student for satisfactory completion of a particular course or subject. The Kansas State Board of Education sets minimum graduation requirements; local education agencies determine when the credit is awarded.

Policy researchers and analysts from the Education Commission of the States summarized the national landscape and recent trends on graduation requirements, with the range being 13 to 24 required units. ECS speakers Joel Moore and Bryan Kelley also shared state examples of alternative diploma types and waivers prompted by COVID-19.

Task Force members were divided into smaller groups to discuss what they hope to accomplish through this work. Breakout group facilitators reported back to the entire membership.

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for 9 to 11 a.m. Thursday, July 8.



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