

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ADMISSIONS POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
JUNE 30, 2022

In attendance: Paul Jennings of Westport, Jeffrey Begin of Swansea, Fr. Jay Mello of Fall River

Also in attendance were: Dr. Elvio Ferreira, Superintendent/Director and Andrew Rebello, Assistant Superintendent-Director/Principal, Paul Kitchen, Director of Finance, Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary

The meeting began with a roll call at 4:31 p.m.

Dr. Ferreira provided an overview of the Admissions Policy that was distributed.

Mrs. Miller stated that as part of the current Admissions Policy that was approved for the 2021/2022 school year, two outside recommendations were required to be submitted with an application. Mrs. Miller further stated that the guidance office is having trouble with getting complete applications due to the implementation of the additional recommendations. Mrs. Miller stated that she has received 756 applications for the incoming freshman class and 112 of those applications are outstanding and cannot be considered for admission. Mrs. Miller further stated that this requirement has affected students with higher application scores due to not having the recommendations.

Mrs. Miller stated that the requirement of the two additional recommendations has also added an enormous amount of clerical work which caused the delay in acceptances for the upcoming school year.

Fr. Jay asked how the recommendations are scored.

Mrs. Miller stated that a Google form was used and a rubric was followed. Mrs. Miller further stated that for the most part, recommendations are being received as “recommended or strongly recommended”.

Fr. Jay stated that the purpose of adding the additional recommendations was to help students that may not have received enough points on the application by providing them with additional points.

Mrs. Miller strongly feels that this requirement is hurting students, especially the students within certain populations. Mrs. Miller further stated that students whose parents are not technologically savvy are also affected.

Mr. Begin reiterated that the goal of adding the additional recommendations was to help students and make the application process more inclusive and fair.

Mrs. Miller stated that the application process is a blind process and that we don’t know what the true needs of students are until they walk in the building. Mrs. Miller further stated that all student applicants are given application points based on the course grades they received.

Mrs. Miller stated that the incoming freshman class is very diverse. There has been an increase in ELL and Special Education applicants which it could be because of staff and EL students visiting sending schools.

Fr. Jay asked how does the acceptance process work for the Special Education population.

Mrs. Miller stated that it’s a true blind process. Parents don’t have to disclose if student is receives special education.

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Dr. Ferreira stated that the process that is in place is a blind process. Dr. Ferreira further stated that when an application is submitted and the report card has an A grade, that A grade is the same for everyone.

Mr. Jennings asked if new information is submitted for an applicant, how is that reflected on the student's application.

Mrs. Miller stated that the application is updated. Mrs. Miller also stated that a request is made to the sending schools to submit updated report cards as well as attendance reports.

Fr. Jay asked Mrs. Miller what changes she would like to see made to the admissions policy.

Mrs. Miller stated that she would like to see the two letters of recommendation be removed. She feels that this requirement is a detriment to the students and produce an enormous amount of clerical hours.

Mr. Jennings stated that he would like to further discuss the admissions policy and revisit at the next meeting.

Mr. Rebello requested clarification on the recommendation points. The accepted recommendation will be from the sending school with a maximum of 70 points. The maximum application score will be 316 points.

Fr. Jay asked how can students that submit their complete application by the deadline be rewarded. Would giving extra five points to student be appropriate.

Mrs. Miller stated that it could work but we need to take into account that most of the time the sending schools are not submitting the required documents in order to complete the application.

Fr. Jay asked what the deadline for student applications is.

Mrs. Miller stated that first priority applications are as of December 15th. Applications received after December 15th go into a different pool and are processed after admissions decisions are made for the December 15th applicants.

Dr. Ferreira made the recommendation that Mrs. Miller contact the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that giving a student an extra 5 points for submitting the application by the December 15th deadline is acceptable.

Mr. Jennings stated that a meeting will be scheduled and the admissions policy will be revisited.

It was moved by Fr. Jay, seconded by Mr. Begin, and voted unanimously to adjourn the Sub-Committee meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena Neves

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Materials Included: Proposed Admissions Policy