

# TASK FORCE REPORT



## Graduation Requirements Task Force

JULY 8, 2021 MEETING SUMMARY

Chair: Jim McNiece, Kansas State Board of Education, District 10  
Vice Chair: Jarred Fuhrman, Principal, Basehor-Linwood High School

The Graduation Requirements Task Force met via Zoom on Thursday, July 8, 2021. The update from Dr. Cynthia Lane on work of both the Governor's Education Council and Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council did not occur. This presentation will be rescheduled.

State Board of Education member Melanie Haas, who serves on the Task Force, summarized data by identifying themes that surfaced during small group discussions collected at the first meeting. In general, comments centered on the variety of approaches other states take, such as offering alternative diploma options; a personalized, student-centric system is desired; stakeholder input – including insight from higher education and business/industry – will help determine what students need in post-secondary preparation.

Members next received a report from individuals who helped examine Ohio's graduation requirements and the process to shift the state's structure for attaining a high school diploma. Speakers were Graham Wood with the Ohio Department of Education and Sarah Wilson, a former staff member there. Together, they explained the rationale toward more personalization and less standardization. Considerations included determining a minimum level of proficiency, but expanding options for flexibility and to encompass students' interests/passions. The resulting product is a menu of 12 diploma seals students may select from, coupled with core classes and additional competency options. Categories of diploma seals allow students to demonstrate academic, technical / professional skills, and knowledge that align to their interests and postsecondary next steps. Examples include military enlistment, community service, technology and job readiness.

At the conclusion, Task Force members divided into small groups to discuss gathering more information and potential next steps. Facilitators then reported to the entire membership. An upcoming project is to seek responses from a minimum of two students, either a recent graduate or current student, about their perceptions, realities or concerns about graduation requirements.

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for 9 to 11 a.m. Thursday, July 22. There is no meeting in August.



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