



**GOVERNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM
AMPHITHEATER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10**

DATE OF MEETING: **May 3, 2016**

TITLE: **Study/Approval of Proposed Changes to Governing Board Policy IKF
(Graduation Requirements) and Related Administrative Regulations**

BACKGROUND:

Policy IKF (Graduation Requirements) was last presented for the Board's discussion at its April 5th meeting. Although discussed, the Board directed that this Policy be presented again to permit further discussion.

Last year, the Governing Board considered an appeal from the parents of a student who was initially denied high school credit for mathematics coursework taken during middle school at a non-district middle school. The initial denial of credit was made consistent with long-standing district practice at the high school level to only extend credit for high school courses taught at the middle school level by secondary certificated teachers who are highly qualified in the given content area (Mathematics or Spanish). This standard was in place to ensure that students enrolling in high school (and receiving credit for middle school work) are sufficiently prepared to move on to higher level content in high school.

The District, of course, ensures that its own middle school students are appropriately prepared by requiring that any high school course taught for high school credit in middle school is taught by its own qualifying personnel who also follow district curriculum that scaffolds in appropriate scope and sequence with the higher level high school courses in the content areas.

In the situation of external middle schools, however, the District has no control over the professional preparation, ability and content knowledge of the teacher who provides the high school content in middle school. And, anecdotally, the District consistently sees many transferring students from external middle schools struggle in higher level content after taking high school courses in middle school, as well as *fail* the end-of-course assessment for the course for which high school credit is sought.

The changes primarily presented by this item, in Administrative Regulation IKF-RC, incorporates site level practices that have been effective in assuring student success in high school for many years by assessing student readiness for higher level content. This revision is consistent with state law on the matter of awarding credit for external/transfer credit.

While anecdotal information has been offered to suggest that high school courses taken during middle school should only be recorded as pass or fail on the high school transcript, the weight of information indicates that students who pursue the accelerated option are not disadvantaged and generally continue to excel throughout their high school careers.

Also included in this presentation is the incorporation of the Governing Board's action to adjust the physical education and elective course credit requirements for graduation.

Finally, the Arizona School Boards Association Policy Advisory recommends the following revision that has been incorporated into the draft presented with this Item.

Competency requirements. Any student who is placed in special education classes, grades nine (9) through twelve (12), is eligible to receive a high school diploma without meeting state competency requirements, ~~but reference to special education placement may be placed on the student's transcript or permanent file.~~

RECOMMENDATION:

This is presented for the Board's study and potential approval. The School Operations Department will be able to provide some additional information and rationale for the revisions presented.

INITIATED BY:



Todd A. Jaeger, Associate to the Superintendent

Date: April 25, 2016



Patrick Nelson, Superintendent