

Zionsville Community Schools

Board of School Trustees Meeting “Item for Consideration”

New Business Item 6b • Date: October 5, 2026

Course Addition to High School Program of Studies

Category:

☐ Human Resources, Personnel/Staffing	☒ Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	
☐ Finance, Budgeting, Accounting	☐ Student Services	☐ Board Policy
☐ Facilities, Transportation, Nutrition	☐ Community Relations	☐ Other

Type of Board of Trustees Consideration Sought:

Action	☒
Discussion	☐
Report	☐

Facts of this Matter:

Each school year, ZCHS leaders assess the status of enrollments in each course and the calibration of courses for potential additions to the High School Course Catalog. The potential additions were reviewed by a New Course Proposal Review Team composed of one teacher from each department, one ZEA representative, Assistant Principal of Academic Services, Counseling Director, and Principal. This year we are recommending the following course additions (course descriptions are included at the end of this document):

- English
 - AP Research
 - Critical Thinking and Argumentation
 - Advanced Speech and Communication: P155 Public Oral Communication
 - Advanced English, College Credit: L202 Literary Interpretation
- Science
 - AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based
- Social Studies
 - Law Education

Objective POSITIVES related to this item or approach:

Annual review of the course offerings in relation to new legislative mandates, student need, and student interests keep our course offerings optimally relevant for our students.

Objective NEGATIVES related to this item or approach:

None known.

Opinion/Recommendation:

Approval of the courses as described for inclusion in the 2027-2028 high school program of studies.

Financial Implications, if any:

Student interest will determine the number of sections offered and need for additional staff. We are not currently projecting a staffing increase directly related to the addition of the above mentioned courses.

Suggested Wording for a Motion, if any:

I move to approve all presented courses to the Zionsville Community High School program of studies.

ZCHS New Course Descriptions**Department: English**

We are redesigning the progression of courses in the English department to allow for student choice while also meeting the state standards and new diploma requirement of a semester of communication. This [document](#) outlines the new progression. English 11 and 12 will no longer be offered starting in the 27-28 school year.

State Course Title: AP Research

State Course #: 0551

State Course Description:

AP Research, the second course in the AP Capstone experience, allows students to deeply explore an academic topic, problem, issue, or idea of individual interest. Students design, plan, and implement a yearlong investigation to address a research question. Through this inquiry, they further the skills they acquired in the AP Seminar course by learning research methodology, employing ethical research practices, and accessing, analyzing, and synthesizing information. Students reflect on their skill development, document their processes, and curate the artifacts of their scholarly work through a process and reflection portfolio. The course culminates in an academic paper of 4,000–5,000 words (accompanied by a performance, exhibit, or product where applicable) and a presentation with an oral defense.

Department: English

State Course Title: Critical Thinking and Argumentation

State Course #: 1074

Course Description:

Critical Thinking and Argumentation, a course based on the Indiana Academic Standards for English/Language Arts, is a study of deductive and inductive logic, including logical fallacies, and should challenge students to think critically, analytically, and philosophically. Students learn to formulate thoughtful inquiry questions, connect ideas or concepts, challenge ideas and concepts, and

rephrase ideas when appropriate. Active class participation is essential, including persistent questioning, rational discussion, and reasoned argumentation. Students make comments that reflect the development of logic (a line of reasoning), represent a clear point of view, and involve evidence of support (data, examples, anecdotes, documents, information from a variety of sources). Students use the same Standard English conventions for oral speech that they use in their writing.

Department: English

State Course Title: Advanced Speech and Communication : P155 Public Oral Communication

State Course #: 1078

Course Description:

Advanced Speech and Communication, a course based on the Indiana Academic Standards for English/Language Arts and emphasizing the communication and collaboration standards, is the study and application of skills in listening, oral interpretation, media communications, research methods, and oral debate. Students deliver different types of oral and multimedia presentations, including speeches to inform, to motivate, to entertain, and to persuade through the use of impromptu, extemporaneous, memorized, or manuscript delivery.

Department: English

State Course Title: Advanced English, College Credit: L202 Literary Interpretation

State Course #: 1124

Course Description:

Advanced English/Language Arts, College Credit, is an advanced course based on the Indiana Academic Standards for English/Language Arts in grades 11 and 12. This course title covers any English language and composition advanced course offered for credit by an accredited post-secondary institution through an adjunct agreement with a secondary school.

Department: Science

State Course Title: AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based

State Course #: 3081

Course Description:

AP Physics 2 is a course based on the content established and copyrighted by the College Board. The course is not intended to be used as a dual credit course. AP Physics 2: Algebra-based is an algebra-based introductory college-level physics course. Students cultivate their understanding of physics through inquiry-based investigations as they explore these topics: thermodynamics; electrical force, field, and potential; electric circuits; magnetism and electromagnetic induction; geometric and

physical optics; and quantum, atomic, and nuclear physics. This course requires that 25 percent of instructional time be spent in hands-on laboratory work, with an emphasis on inquiry-based investigations that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the foundational physics principles and apply the science practices.

Department: Social Studies

State Course Title: Law Education

State Course #: 1526

Course Description:

Law Education provides an understanding of the American legal system and its basis in the United States Constitution. The course is designed to promote an understanding of society and its system of laws by indicating how citizens may effectively function within the law. Ways of dealing with interpersonal conflict in order to secure constructive change are included, along with the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills. Case studies, field trips, simulations, and mock trials will be used in this course whenever feasible.