Zionsville Community Schools

Board of School Trustees Meeting "Item for Consideration"

New Business ● Date: November 9, 2026

Algebra I - Middle School Grading Practices for New Diploma Requirements

Category:

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

Type of Board of Trustees Consideration Sought:

Action	___X___
Discussion	_____
Report	_____

Facts of this Matter:

As Indiana transitions to the new high school diploma requirements, districts continue to receive updated guidance from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). As outlined in IC 20-19-2-21(b), Indiana's current graduation requirements will sunset on October 1, 2028, making the new diploma requirements effective for all students beginning with the Class of 2029.

Under the new diploma, Algebra I is a *required* course for graduation. Additionally, the IDOE recently provided updated guidance stating that all required courses for graduation *must* be included on the high school transcript as a *letter grade*. This guidance differs from the practices have long implemented at ZCS.

Objective POSITIVES related to this item or approach:

This recommendation aligns ZCS practices with Indiana's new graduation requirements and creates consistency with middle school Physical Education and Computer Science. Like Algebra I, these required courses earn high school credit for diploma requirements, and the grades are included on students' high school transcripts and calculated in their GPA.

Objective NEGATIVES related to this item or approach:

This represents a change in practice for ZCS and will require clear communication with families. Approximately 785 students in grades 6-10 (those impacted with the new diploma requirements) are either currently enrolled in or have previously completed Algebra I while a middle school student with the understanding that the course grade would not negatively impact their high school GPA. To honor that expectation and practice, these students will be held harmless by receiving a letter grade on their high school transcript for successful completion of the course while excluding the grade from GPA calculations.

Opinion/Recommendation:
For students who successfully completed Algebra I while in middle school during the 2024-25, 2025-26, or 2026-27 school years:

> Successful completion of Algebra I course standards in middle school will be recorded on the student's high school transcript. This grade will not be included in GPA calculations and will have no impact on the student's cumulative GPA. It will be listed solely to document the Algebra I credits earned and to meet state graduation requirements.

Additionally, middle school students who will enroll in Algebra I beginning with the 2027-28 school year:

> The student's earned Algebra I grade will be listed on the high school transcript and will be included in GPA calculations.

Financial Implications, if any:
Future financial impacts of seals earned by students and accountability implications are largely unknown at this time. Otherwise, there are no financial implications to the district or to individual students/families in making this alignment.

Suggested Wording for a Motion, if any:
I move that the Board of School Trustees approve the recommendation to align Middle School Algebra I grading practices with Indiana's new graduation requirements.