

School Board Meeting Date:

May 23, 2016

Subject:

Minnesota Transfer Curriculum

Presenter:

Mark Mischke

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

None – a report will be presented at Monday's Board meeting.

DESCRIPTION:

For more than a decade, Buffalo High School (BHS) has been offering College in the Schools (CIS) courses for students. The courses offer students access to college level curriculum without leaving BHS and allows students to earn college credits free of charge. The curriculum is currently offered by way of a partnership with three state universities; University of MN-Twin Cities, St. Cloud State University, and SouthWest Minnesota State University. The college courses offered have been determined by teacher and student interest and the availability of course offerings by the universities. This is the typical way in which school districts offer concurrent courses for students. While the CIS courses offer students access to college level classes, there has been no pathway established for students to earn an Associates of Art (AA) degree. This has been the norm across the state of Minnesota, but the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose (BHM) School District has changed that for BHS students.

Initially, BHS was going to offer an AA degree plan to high school students, but after researching the possibility, it was determined to offer the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) to BHS students. The MnTC is the curriculum required to satisfy the general education requirements for college students (the first two years of general education classes before moving into a major field of study). There are ten goal areas to satisfy in order to complete the MnTC and BHS has aligned its curriculum to comply with the requirements.

The recommendation to change to the MnTC came to BHS from the Mounds View School District. Mounds View realized that students would not be able to complete the AA requirements while remaining on the school campus; rather students would have to leave campus for the final credits and attend the partnering university/college. Additionally, they found that students did not need an AA degree to enter their major field of study in college. Therefore, it was determined that students would be best served by offering the MnTC instead of the AA degree.

The focus on the MnTC will ensure students that all of their credits will satisfy the general education requirements before entering a major field of study. Additionally, the new partnership with North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) and Hennepin Technical College (HTC) will allow BHS to offer more classes to more students because

of the increased access students will have to college level courses. Currently students have to satisfy entry criteria determined by the partnering college/university. So, depending upon the university's criteria, some classes are only available to the top ten percent of the junior or senior class, some are only available to the top twenty-five percent of the class and some classes are available to the top fifty percent of the grade level. The new partnership with NHCC (8 new courses) and HTC (9 new courses) will allow BHS students in the top seventy percent of their class to have access to college level courses. A continued benefit is that students are earning college credits while in high school without having to pay the cost of tuition.

Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, BHS students will have unprecedented access to college level courses thanks to our unique partnership with NHCC and HTC. The increased access to college level courses for students at BHS is unique to the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District. NHCC and HTC course offerings will allow BHS to provide a variety of educational pathways for all students to succeed in a college or career setting. No other school district in the area will be able to offer the level of access and the number of college level courses that BHS will offer next year.

ATTACHMENT(S):