



Catalina Foothills Unified School District #16
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BOARD AGENDA ITEM

ITEM NO: 5.1

BOARD MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 28, 2025

NEW BUSINESS: Approval of Revisions to High School Courses and Programs for 2025-2026 (second reading)

SUBMITTED BY: Sheryl Castro, Executive Director of Curriculum & Assessment

PRESENTED BY: Sheryl Castro, Executive Director of Curriculum & Assessment

Presented to the governing board are proposed high school course/program revisions for the 2025-2026 school year. Proposed revisions include changes in eligibility procedures for one component of the high school academic awards program and well as changes to the Social Studies, Career and Technical Education, and World Languages programs.

Academic Awards

At the first reading, a board member asked how the changes related to academic awards will be communicated to students and families. The eligibility criteria for this academic award are included in the *Course Guide* each year. Notification about the change will also be provided through a Parent Square post in the summer. Eligible students will receive award letters that delineate the award criteria. Counselors will also remind students about this recognition when they meet individually and in small/large group settings with students during the school year.

No additional changes were made to the section below.

The high school Academic Letter program will change in 2025-2026 as follows:

Academic Recognition

Students in grades 9, 10, and 11 who meet the eligibility requirements outlined below will receive the following academic awards:

- Silver Award: 4.0 or above weighted GPA
- Blue Award: 3.75-3.99 weighted GPA

Students in grades 9, 10, and 11 must be enrolled in at least six classes that determine GPA. (A "P" grade is not used to determine grade point average.) Eligibility will be determined by averaging the student's first and second semester GPAs within a given academic year. A student may earn this distinction in each of grades 9, 10, and 11. Eligible students will be notified of their achievement over the summer and will be invited to a celebratory ceremony at the beginning of the school year.

Seniors in grade 12 who have a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or better over their previous seven (7) semesters will be recognized with a Silver or Blue Award at the Senior Honors Ceremony in May.

The changes proposed for this award are meant to reduce the confusion that students and families have about which semesters count for eligibility at a given grade level. Eligibility is currently determined by the spring semester of one grade level and the fall semester of the next grade level. For example, eligibility for freshmen is currently based on second semester of freshman year and first semester of sophomore year. In 2025-2026 students in grades 9, 10, and 11 will earn the distinction for a full academic year at their grade level. The updated parameters for determining eligibility will also allow freshmen to be recognized for academic excellence achieved during first semester of their first year of high school.

Social Studies

At the first reading, the board requested that the prerequisite letter grade and corresponding rubric score be included in the prerequisite section of course descriptions. This change was made in the *Course Guide* for all course descriptions that included letter grades. (Note: The correlation chart for rubric scores and letter grades also appears in the introductory portion of the *Course Guide* each year.)

As a result of board members' inquiries about flexibility surrounding prerequisites, the high school team added the statement in red below to the *Course Guide* so that the existing (yet previously unpublished) practice of waiving prerequisites when appropriate is more explicitly communicated to students and families.

Course Description Information and Notations

Each course description explains the general goals of the course and specific knowledge and skills acquired as a result of the course. Also included are course notations as follows:

Prerequisite: Students must meet noted prerequisites (grade level, class completed, grade earned, other).
Students who wish to seek an exception to a prerequisite course are invited to meet with their counselor to discuss placement.

In light of the change made above, the high school team decided to remove mention of grade thresholds as prerequisites. Instead, phrases such as “B/2.45 or better . . .” will be listed under “*Recommended*” (see changes in red font below).

At the first reading, a board member asked if the high school team had considered adding a prerequisite science course for AP Psychology and a prerequisite math course for AP Microeconomics. The high school team reports that this change is not needed as the skills acquired in previous science/math courses do not translate directly to the skills needed to be successful in AP Psychology and AP Microeconomics. There is, however, a more direct correlation between a student’s level of success in prior social studies courses and their predicted level of success in subsequent AP social studies courses. The team’s goal is to communicate to students that if they have earned a “B”/2.45 or better in the prerequisite courses listed, they are likely to be successful in AP Psychology and/or AP Microeconomics. With this in mind, no additional prerequisites are listed for the social studies AP courses listed below.

AP World History: Modern

Prerequisite: None

Recommended:

For incoming OGMS/ECMS freshmen: A rubric score of 2.45 or better in their second semester 8th-grade social studies class.

For new-to-CFSD freshmen: “B” or better in their second semester 8th-grade social studies class

AP U.S. History

PREREQUISITE: World History or AP World History: Modern

RECOMMENDED: “B”/2.45 or better in the second semester of World History or AP World History: Modern

AP Psychology

PREREQUISITE: U.S. History or AP U.S. History

RECOMMENDED: “B”/2.45 or better in the second semester of U.S. History or AP U.S. History

AP United States Government

PREREQUISITE: ~~U.S. History~~, AP Psychology or American Law & Justice and Perspectives on Modern History

RECOMMENDED: “B”/2.45 or better in the second semester of ~~U.S. History~~, AP Psychology or American Law & Justice / Perspectives on Modern History

AP Microeconomics

PREREQUISITE: ~~U.S. History~~, AP Psychology or American Law & Justice and Perspectives on Modern History

RECOMMENDED: “B”/2.45 or better in the second semester of ~~U.S. History~~, AP Psychology or American Law & Justice / Perspectives on Modern History

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

At the first reading, a board member asked if the reduced fee for Digital Photography 1, 2, and 3 would have an impact on fees that students need to pay for certification

exams. As stated at the board meeting, the reduction in course fees has no impact on certification fees. Certification fees are currently funded through the JTED allocation.

During the first reading, a board member also asked about the potential impacts of opening Graphic Design Publication (Yearbook) to students in grades 9-12. Since the course has suffered from low enrollment recently (to the point that it is currently offered in a combined section with Graphic Design), the high school team believes that there will not be a need for a waiting list for students in grades 9-12. The goal is for Graphic Design Publication to once again be a stand-alone class (with multiple sections) that is taught by the two instructors that have traditionally been assigned to this class.

At the first reading, a request was made to add the \$40 vendor fee to each of the course descriptions in the Sports Medicine pathway. The verbiage below was added under “Fee” for each course:

Fee: \$40 lab fee (Students will be given information about purchasing scrubs from a medical vendor. The scrubs will be used on Skills Days and during any work-based learning activities.)

The list below shows changes to CTE courses (in red font) involving course requirements, prerequisites, professional certifications, and Pima Community College (PCC) dual enrollment course titles and numbers.

Physics: Applications of Biotechnology – UA MCB 101

Prerequisite: “C” or better in Chemistry: Intro to Biotech or “B” or better in Honors Chemistry

Advanced Biotechnology – UA MCB 102

Prerequisite: ~~“C”~~ “B” or better in Physics: Applications of Biotechnology and teacher approval with application process

Addition: Advanced Biotech students are expected to participate in the regional SARSEF Fair.

AP Computer Science Principles

Addition: This course will prepare students to take the AP Computer Science Principles and Information Technology Specialist Python Certification exams.

AP Computer Science A

Addition: This course will prepare students to take the AP Computer Science A exam as well as the Information Technology Specialist Java exam.

Digital Photography 1, 2, and 3

The fees for these three courses were reduced from an \$80 lab fee to a \$60 lab fee per course.

Early Childhood Education 1

Addition: This course will prepare students for their Arizona Food Handlers Card, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Mandated Reporting certifications.

Removal: Students will have the opportunity to observe in an early childhood learning center.

Early Childhood Education 2

Change in PCC courses: This is a dual enrollment course and students will have the opportunity to earn college credit through Pima Community College for ~~PCC ECE 118 Foundations of Early Childhood Education (Semester 1) and PCC ECE 125 Nutrition, Health, and Safety for the Young Child (Semester 2)~~. PCC ECE Nutrition, Health, and Safety for the Young Child (Semester 1) and PCC ECE 226 Positive Child Guidance (Semester 2).

Early Childhood Education 3 (New for 2025-2026!)

Prerequisite: Early Childhood Education 2 **and** teacher approval with internship application

Addition: **Students are required to create a professional portfolio.**

Change in PCC courses: This is a dual enrollment course and students will have the opportunity to earn college credit through Pima Community College for ~~PCC ECE 240 Assessment of Young Children (Semester 1) and PCC ECE 248 Early Childhood Curriculum (Semester 2)~~. PCC ECE 226 Positive Child Guidance (Semester 1) and PCC ECE 251 Authentic Assessment and Curriculum Integration for Young Children.

Graphic Design Publication

Addition: **Change in grade levels to include freshman though seniors.** (Previously, this course was available only to juniors and seniors.)

Prerequisites: Graphic Design 1 or Photo 1 **and** or teacher approval **with application**

(This change will allow students to be involved with yearbook publication throughout their high school career.)

Sports Medicine Pathway

Addition: ~~Students in the Sports Medicine pathway will be given information about purchasing scrubs from a medical vendor (approximately \$40). The scrubs will be used on Skills Days and during any work-based learning activities.~~

Fee: \$40 lab fee (Students will be given information about purchasing scrubs from a medical vendor. The scrubs will be used on Skills Days and during any work-based learning activities.)

High School World Languages

At the first reading, board members discussed the rationale for facilitating our high school students' participation in travel abroad opportunities. The format and goals of each travel abroad experience were also discussed. The high school World Languages (WL) team responded as follows:

Although each travel experience has unique outcomes, the WL team believes that the goals for both travel abroad opportunities align with and support students' progress toward attaining the following WL transfer goals:

- Establish and maintain positive relationships in diverse cultural contexts.
- Serve as mediators within and across cultures in order to reach shared goals and understanding.

- Communicate effectively in more than one language, honoring culture and context.
- Collaborate, communicate, and learn with individuals and groups from other cultures to better understand self and others and the world around them.

The high school WL team firmly believes that both travel opportunities benefit students who choose to participate as they allow students to hone their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in ways that often cannot be achieved in the classroom. The team believes that these types of opportunities have profound and transformative impacts on students' understanding of themselves, others, and their world. Offering these programs is a foundational component of a comprehensive, ICC-focused WL program. The high school WL team intends to continue offering both travel abroad experiences to our students.

The World Languages (WL) team began a two-year “revision/refresh” process in 2023-2024. Please note that this work is not part of a typical revision process as the State Board of Education has not adopted new standards for WL. The refresh was initially prompted by the 2017 publication of the *National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Can-Do Statements* which outline goals for intercultural communication. The *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* place greater emphasis on the integration of communication and culture as well as the importance of guiding student progress through the use of proficiency indicators.

Subsequent WL professional learning sessions in 2023 and beyond highlighted the strategic importance of using acquisition driven language instruction to support students' progress toward proficiency. Teachers used what they learned in these sessions to update the WL academic standards and performance scales which will be submitted for board approval at a later date.

There were no changes made to the high school WL course pathway as a result of the revision process. Course descriptions were slightly modified as follows:

- Cultural topics and/or cultural competence are referenced in each course description.
- The descriptions for AP courses were modified to reflect more closely what appears in the College Board course descriptions.
- Adjustments were made to prerequisites and targeted proficiency outcomes for some courses. Changes appear in red font in the course descriptions below.

Spanish 1

This introductory language course is for students who have no previous experience with Spanish or who have not yet acquired the proficiencies addressed in CFHS Spanish 1. Although all areas of communication (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) will be addressed, our approach emphasizes the spoken language. In this course students will begin to develop the skills and cultural competence necessary to communicate with native speakers. Students will build language proficiency while exploring cultural topics such as school, family, and home.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

Targeted Outcome: Novice High (Interpersonal Speaking)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Spanish 2

This course is for students who have acquired Novice High proficiency. Students will further develop the communication skills and cultural competence acquired in Spanish 1. Students will continue to use Spanish in all areas of communication (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) with emphasis on the spoken language. Students will build language proficiency while exploring cultural topics such as daily life, entertainment, and travel.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: Novice High (Interpersonal Speaking)

Targeted Outcome: Intermediate Low (Interpersonal Speaking)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Spanish 3

This course is for students who have acquired Intermediate Low proficiency. Students will enhance the communication skills and cultural competence developed in Spanish 1 and 2. Students will examine and utilize more advanced features of language and will begin to develop greater proficiency in all areas of communication (speaking, listening, reading and writing) while examining cultural topics such as outdoor adventure, storytelling, and art.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: Intermediate Low (Interpersonal Speaking)

Targeted Outcome: Intermediate Mid (Interpersonal Speaking)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Spanish 4: Ancient and Modern Civilizations

This course is for students who have acquired or are approaching Intermediate Mid proficiency. Students will expand their communication skills and will develop a deeper understanding of the historic and modern events that have shaped the Spanish-speaking world. Topics include myths and legends of ancient civilizations, the arrival of the Europeans in the Americas, rights and responsibilities of citizens in a free society, and problems and challenges that exist in the modern world. This course, which is conducted primarily in Spanish, is closely aligned with the six Advanced Placement themes, and is designed to prepare students to be successful in future upper-level Spanish courses.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: Intermediate Mid (Interpersonal Speaking)

Targeted Outcome: Intermediate Mid ~~to Advanced Low~~ (Interpersonal Speaking)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Honors Spanish 5: Hispanic Culture Through Film

This course uses film to enhance students' understanding of Hispanic culture while also serving as a springboard for improving students' speaking, listening, and writing skills. Oral proficiency and listening comprehension are refined through conversation, discussion, and presentations. Writing skills are enhanced through journal topics related to the films viewed and discussed in class. Students will analyze and discuss selected films and segments of films from Latin America, Spain, and the United States on subjects concerning life and culture in the Hispanic world. Students will explore these films in light of their political, cultural, and social contexts. This course will be taught primarily in Spanish. Some written assignments may be completed in Spanish or English, based on the teacher's discretion.

Grades: 11-12 (or 10 with teacher recommendation)

Prerequisite: Intermediate High (Listening), successful completion of Spanish 4 and/or teacher recommendation

Targeted Outcomes: Intermediate High ~~to Advanced Low~~ (Listening), Intermediate Mid (Interpersonal Speaking)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

AP Spanish Language and Culture

This course, which is conducted almost exclusively in Spanish, is the equivalent of an intermediate level college course and will prepare students to demonstrate competence on the Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture exam. Students cultivate their understanding of Spanish language and culture by applying interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication in real-life situations as they explore concepts related to the six AP themes: Family and Communities, Personal and Public Identities, Beauty and Aesthetics, Science and Technology, Contemporary Life, and Global Challenges. *Note: Students who take an AP class are expected to take the AP exam.*

Grades: 11-12 (or 10 with teacher recommendation)

Prerequisites: Intermediate Mid (Interpersonal Speaking), successful completion of Spanish 4 and/or teacher recommendation

Targeted Outcomes: Intermediate Mid ~~to Advanced Low~~ (Interpersonal Speaking)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

AP Spanish Literature and Culture

This course, which is conducted almost exclusively in Spanish, is the equivalent of a college level introductory literature course and will prepare students to demonstrate competence on the Advanced Placement Spanish Literature and Culture Exam. Students continue to develop their interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational skills in Spanish language as well as critical reading and analytical writing as they explore short stories, novels, plays, essays, and poetry from Spain, Latin America, and U.S. Hispanic authors along with other non-required texts. *Note: Students who take an AP class are expected to take the AP exam.*

Grades: 11-12 (or 10 with teacher recommendation)

Prerequisites: Advanced Low (Reading), Intermediate High ~~to Advanced Low~~ (Presentational ~~Interpersonal~~ Speaking), teacher recommendation

Targeted Outcomes: Advanced Low ~~Mid~~ (Presentational ~~Interpersonal~~ Speaking), Advanced Mid (Reading), Intermediate High (Writing)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Community Service Abroad – Spanish

This 4-8 week summer immersion experience is for students who have attained Intermediate-Low proficiency or higher in Spanish. Students will live in a Spanish-speaking country and work on sustainable community service projects while living with a host family. Through the host family program and community involvement,

students are given the opportunity to be totally immersed in the culture as well as the language. This study abroad experience is offered through the *Amigos de las Américas* organization.

Grades: 10-12 Students may participate in the summer after completing 9th, 10th and/or 11th grade.

Application and Fees: ~~Contact Amigos de las Américas.~~ Program fees vary based on the destination and length of stay. Participants engage in fundraising to defray program costs. Contact [Amigos de las Américas](#) for more details about the application process.

Credit: 1.0 (Elective)

Elective credit **may be earned** upon demonstration of improved proficiency by one sub-level; credit cannot be used to fulfill graduation credit requirements for World Languages. **Participants must contact the department chair prior to departure to arrange for proficiency pre- and post-testing.**

Chinese 1

This introductory language course is for students who have no previous experience with Mandarin Chinese or who have not yet acquired the proficiencies addressed in CFHS Chinese 1. Although all areas of communication (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) will be addressed, our approach emphasizes the spoken language. Students will learn the Pinyin transcription system for Chinese pronunciation and begin to learn to recognize and write common Chinese characters. In this course students will begin to develop the skills and cultural competence necessary to communicate with native speakers. Students will build language proficiency while exploring cultural topics such as school, family, and home.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

Targeted Outcomes: Novice Mid (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Novice High (Listening), Novice Low (**Reading**, Writing)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Chinese 2

This course is for students who have acquired Novice Mid proficiency. Students will further develop the communication skills and cultural competence acquired in Chinese 1. Students will continue to use Chinese in all areas of communication (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) with emphasis on the spoken language. Students will continue to improve their pronunciation of the spoken language and expand the number of Chinese characters they can recognize and produce. Students will build language proficiency while exploring cultural topics such as Chinese traditions, customs, and social norms.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisites: Novice Mid (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Novice High (Listening), Novice Low (**Reading**, Writing)

Targeted Outcomes:

Novice High (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Intermediate Low (Listening), Novice Mid: **Reading**, Writing)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Chinese 3

This course is for students who have acquired Novice High proficiency. Students will enhance the communication skills and cultural competence developed in Chinese 1 and 2. Students will examine and utilize more advanced features of language and will begin to develop greater proficiency in all areas of communication (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) while exploring culture in both historical and contemporary contexts.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisites: Novice High (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Intermediate Low (Listening), Novice Mid (**Reading**, Writing)

Targeted Outcomes: Intermediate Low (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Intermediate Mid (Listening), Novice High (**Reading**, Writing)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Chinese 4

This course is for students who have acquired Intermediate Low proficiency. Students will expand the communication skills and cultural competence developed in Chinese 1, 2, and 3. This course, which is conducted primarily in Chinese, is closely aligned with the six Advanced Placement themes (Family and Communities, Personal and Public Identities, Beauty and Aesthetics, Science and Technology, Contemporary Life, and Global Challenges) and is designed to prepare students to be successful in AP Chinese Language and Culture.

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisites: Intermediate Low (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Intermediate Mid (Listening), Novice High (**Reading**, Writing)

Targeted Outcomes: Intermediate Mid (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Intermediate High (Listening), Intermediate Low (**Reading**, Writing)

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

AP Chinese Language & Culture

This course, which is conducted almost exclusively in Chinese, is the equivalent of an intermediate level college course and will prepare students to demonstrate competence on the Advanced Placement Chinese Language and Culture exam. Students cultivate their understanding of Chinese language and culture by applying interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication in real-life situations as they explore concepts related to the six AP themes: Family and Communities, Personal and Public Identities, Beauty and Aesthetics, Science and Technology, Contemporary Life, and Global Challenges. *Note: Students who take an AP class are expected to take the AP exam.*

Grades: 11-12 (or 10 with teacher recommendation)

Prerequisites: Intermediate Mid (Interpersonal Speaking, **Reading**), Intermediate High (Listening), Intermediate Low (**Reading**, Writing)

Targeted Outcomes: **Intermediate Mid** (Interpersonal **Speaking**, **Writing**), Intermediate High (**Reading**, **Listening Speaking**) ~~Advanced Low (Listening), Intermediate Mid (Reading, Writing)~~

Credit: 1 credit, 2 semesters

Summer Experience Abroad - Chinese

This study-abroad experience in China offers students a unique opportunity to deepen their understanding of Chinese culture while also developing their ability to communicate in the Chinese language. Students will participate in a variety of cultural excursions to modern and ancient sites. This study abroad experience is chaperoned by CFSD staff.

Note: A professional tour agency will organize the itinerary and CFSD staff will chaperone the experience. A minimum of 15 student participants is required for this student-only excursion.

Grades: ~~10-12 (with Teacher Recommendation)~~ Students may participate in the summer after completing 9th, 10th and/or 11th grade.

Prerequisite: None. Proficiency in Chinese is not a prerequisite for participation in the program.

Fee: ~~TBD.~~ Cultural immersion travel program fees for China vary significantly based on the cost of flights, itinerary, accommodation level, added excursions, travel dates, length of stay, and number of participants. Details will be shared at an informational meeting.

Credit: No credit

RECOMMENDED MOTION: I move the governing board approve the high school course/program revisions for the academic awards, Social Studies, Career and Technical Education, and World Languages programs, for implementation in the 2025-2026 school year, as presented.