

Memorandum

To: Dr. Jeff Turner
CC: Lisa Ganz, Brenda Enlow
From: Shannon Buerk
Date: 2/23/2005
Re: UIL Eligibility Waiver

UIL Eligibility Waiver

As a district, we have a goal to encourage more participation in our excellent Advanced Placement and Pre-AP courses (which is also a component of our goal to increase our number of DAP graduates to 55%). We want more of our students to benefit from the rigorous AP curriculum. We know that participation in higher level high school courses, particularly mathematics and science courses, have the strongest continuing influence on bachelor's degree attainment. We know that greater numbers of students in all ethnic and socioeconomic groups are participating in these courses across the state and the nation due to initiatives that have followed the landmark US Department of Education study that outlined the effects of a rigorous curriculum on student success in higher education. One of these initiatives is a cooperative agreement between UIL, College Board, and TEA to waive eligibility requirements for AP courses in order to encourage more student participation. We feel more of our students in CISD would be encouraged to participate in more AP courses if we take advantage of this waiver for a number of reasons.

.First, we know that many of our CISD UIL participants are not willing to risk trying an AP course when one slip within a three week period could cause them to lose their eligibility. In addition, we find that many students that start in an AP course will drop it within the first or second grading period. Because AP courses are more rigorous, grades tend to be lower in these courses, especially initially, so we want to give them an incentive to continue with the course and try to adjust to the more rigorous curriculum rather than dropping it when the grades dips slightly. We do not believe that our students will take advantage of the waiver to be slack in their work as we know that our students are concerned about their grades. Finally, we have polled area districts and found that all of the districts in Region 10 either take advantage of the waiver or are considering it this year.

We recommend that we adopt the exemption waiver for the 2005-2006 school year according to the attached list of UIL waivable courses. We will develop some administrative guidelines on how that will be implemented including the required average for eligibility.