



**FOREST LAKE AREA SCHOOLS
FOREST LAKE, MN 55025**

November 1, 2012

AGENDA ITEM: 10.4

TOPIC: FIRST READING OF NEW ART APPRECIATION COURSE

BACKGROUND: Students working to earn their high school diploma engage in Guided Studies courses offered through the Forest Lake Area Schools Area Learning Center. Forest Lake Area High School and the ALC worked throughout the 2011-12 school year to explore alternative offerings at both sites for students that were struggling to meet the credit requirements in several areas. Through the course of that work and continuing work this year, discussion arose around being able to provide a wider variety of elective choices for students through the Guided Studies program.

PROCESS: During the 2011-2012 school year Forest Lake Area High School and the Area Learning Center researched and piloted a distance education program offered through Apex Learning Virtual School. Apex Learning is accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Commission.

Teachers examined course offerings available through Apex Learning and also included in our current registration guide for high school students. Teachers compared our current courses with courses offered through Apex for standards alignment and content. Because the identified Apex courses met the standards requirements necessary for graduation, several pilot opportunities took place in math and social studies. The Apex courses offered students a different look at material that had been difficult. The presentation was differentiated in those courses. Through that work, students who had not been successful in our regular Algebra II courses or U. S. History A were able to retake these courses in order to earn the necessary credit.

During the 2012-13 school year, the ALC has chosen to add a few more courses, already approved through our registration guide. These include Creative Writing and Chemistry in the Community. The ALC would like to be able to offer the Apex course entitled Art Appreciation Core as another way for students to earn elective credit towards graduation. At this time, FLAS does not offer an Art Appreciation Course at the secondary level. The Apex course has been discussed in the Art Department and the group is open to exploring this opportunity. This course would only be available through the Guided Studies program at the ALC.

RECOMMENDATION: First reading of the new Art Appreciation Course.