



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

November 4, 2010

AGENDA ITEM: 10.4

**TOPIC: FIRST READING OF GRADE 8 "AGRISCIENCE"
COURSE FOR 2011-12**

BACKGROUND: The Agricultural Education Advisory Board has, since the last curriculum review, recommended the development of an 8th grade Ag offering.

PROCESS: Currently, students do not have access to Agriculture Department course offerings prior to Grade 9. Agriculture continues to be a growing and progressive career area with opportunities in science, business, entrepreneurship, engineering, and other core STEM goals. The proposed "AgriScience" course would allow the Agriculture department to play a role in improving science learner outcomes while providing increased access and choice to students wishing to engage in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources career pathway. Furthermore, students enrolled in the 8th Grade would then be eligible for career development, personal growth, and leadership opportunities available through FFA membership.

Through the Curriculum Review Cycle, the Agriculture department has worked to align course offerings with requirements dictated by the MN Academic Standards in different curricular areas. The department works to provide elective choice that enhances student learning in a broad range of areas and also provides students connections with real life experiences and application. They would employ the same practice in creating the "AgriScience" course for 8th grade students. Documentation that outlines this process accompanies this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: First reading of a proposal to offer a new 8th grade elective "AgriScience" course, beginning in the fall of 2011.



REQUEST FOR CURRICULUM CHANGE NEW COURSE/CONTENT PROPOSAL

20 10 - 20 11 School Year

Note: To complete this form electronically, you will need to use your mouse to click in the space provided for each response.

Department/Subject: Agricultural Education Date: 10/12/10
Person(s) initiating the request: Robert Marzolf, Veronica Ward, & Mike Miron
School(s): Century & Southwest Junior High Schools
Grades: 8 (Possible Grade 7) Course Title: AgriScience
School year in which course/content will first be offered: 2011-2012

Describe the process that led to the request of this new course/content (attach additional pages if necessary):

See Attached Letter to Jennifer Toizman dated 9/9/10

SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY REQUEST

Learner Outcomes (Elementary) / Course Outlines (Secondary)

Refer to attachment "Learner Outcomes for the 8th Grade Agriscience Course"

Budget Considerations

Textbooks – A textbook will be needed and we are exploring options, once we have determined our need we will fill out and submit the textbook request form.

Curriculum Writing – 40 hours

Software – None

AV Materials - LCD Projector and Screen (Preferred)

Equipment/Hardware – Plant Cart, Digital Blue Microscope, Computer access, Floral Shears,

Staff Development - None

Effects of the Learner Outcomes/New Course Proposal

Does the change affect:

- Current curriculum: No current program in place at 8th (or 7th) grade level
- Programs in other departments/grade levels: This will be part of district wide elective course offerings
- Building, department/district goals:
- Credit requirements: .5 Elective Credit
- Prerequisite requirements: None
- Staffing: Dependent on Enrollment
- Space allocation: Classroom at Century & Southwest Junior Highs. Will seek grants for teaching materials and infrastructure
- Master schedule: Added 8th Grade Offering
- District Technology Impact:
- Other:

Learner Outcomes for the 8th Grade Agriscience Course

~ The below standards will be taught in the context of plant, animal, and natural resource sciences. These standards will be spelled out in our final draft.

Science Standards

8.1.1.1.1
8.1.1.2.1
8.1.3.3.2
8.1.3.3.3
8.1.3.4.2
8.2.1.2.4
8.3.1.2.2
8.3.2.1.1
8.3.2.3.2
7.1.1.1.1
7.1.1.1.2
7.1.1.2.1
7.1.1.2.2
7.1.1.2.3
7.1.1.2.4
7.4.1.1.1
7.4.1.1.2
7.4.1.2.1
7.4.1.2.2
7.4.1.2.3
7.4.2.1.1
7.4.2.1.2
7.4.2.1.3
7.4.2.2.1
7.4.2.2.2
7.4.2.2.3
7.4.3.1.1
7.4.3.1.2
7.4.3.1.3
7.4.4.1.1
7.4.4.1.2
7.4.4.2.1
7.4.4.2.2
7.4.4.2.3
7.4.4.2.4



Agricultural Education Department

Robert Marzolf – Agricultural Education Teacher
Michael Miron – Agricultural Education Teacher
Veronica Ward – Agricultural Education Teacher

Ms Jennifer Tolzman
Director of Teaching & Learning
Forest Lake Area Schools
6100 North 210th Street
Forest Lake, MN 55025

September 9, 2010

Dear Jennifer:

With current proposed changes before the Board of Education in science requirements, and the subsequent credit adjustments for required electives, we are seeking permission to draft a Grade 8 "AgriScience" course offering. We would suggest that this class be offered as an elective of choice, but also believe that we can complement the objectives of the Science Curriculum Review team to enhance science literacy and comprehension. Agriculture provides an applied context by which to teach science standards and we would engage students in practical techniques of the emerging technology taking place in the agricultural industry.

During the last curriculum review cycle, the Agricultural Education department aligned several Grade 10-12 courses to meet elective science graduation requirements. This process was facilitated using the Center for Agricultural and Environmental Research and Training (CAERT) system. Minnesota Agricultural Education teachers have access to the CAERT curriculum which offers an integrated online system to plan, document, deliver, and assess educational instruction. The system includes standards-based lesson plans and PowerPoint Presentations, Student Content E-units, and Assessments. Teachers can select from any or all Minnesota Science Standards and Benchmarks to determine which lessons would meet each area. These lessons are then accompanied by assessments which can also measure competency on each standard or specific benchmark to track improvement and predict future success. As we begin year one of the Curriculum Review Cycle, we would propose that we use the same process in developing an 8th Grade "AgriScience" course.

The Agricultural Education Advisory Board has, since the last curriculum review, recommended the development of an 8th Grade offering. This recommendation was based on evidence collected from other Minnesota Agricultural Education programs which were adding classes at the middle school level. Currently, the Agricultural Education Department does not have access to students prior to Grade 9. Agriculture continues to be a growing and progressive career area with opportunities in science, business, entrepreneurship, engineering, and other core STEM goals. The proposed "AgriScience" course would allow our department to play a role in improving science learner outcomes while providing increased access and choice to students wishing to engage in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources career pathway. Furthermore, students enrolled in the 8th Grade would then be eligible for career development, personal growth and leadership opportunities available through FFA membership.

We would appreciate confirmation of this request and if we can answer any questions or concerns please let us know. We look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you at your earliest convenience and working cooperatively. Thank you for your continued support of the agricultural education program and its students.

Sincerely,

Robert Marzolf

Veronica Ward

Michael Miron

Cc: Dr. Steve Massey, Dr. Ben Lewis, Mr. Marc Peterson, & Agriculture Advisory Board members

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