

Executive Summary

Prepared for Board of Trustees Meeting November 11, 2008

High School Course Changes

Board Goals

The changes to the high school course offerings for the 2009-2010 school year outlined below support the following Board goals:

Vision - Goal I B - remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on every campus

Teaching & Learning - Goal II A – cultivate a consistent, strong, district-wide balanced curriculum based on ongoing needs assessment that supports all students

Climate - Goal III D – instill in students a love of life-long learning.

Purpose of Report

The Secondary Curriculum, Instruction, and Staff Development Department received several requests from the campuses for changes in the high school course offerings for the 2009-2010 school year. Once the campuses initiated a request for the addition or deletion of a course, the Director of the Secondary Curriculum Department worked directly with all campus principals, associate principals, the Academic Leadership Team (department chairs in the four core content areas), and other Directors and program specialists to evaluate the requests. The campuses in turn got appropriate and additional input and worked with the Secondary Curriculum Department to determine the best course of action. In addition, the CTE Department is requesting the renewal of one course and the addition of one course for the 2009-2010 school year. The purpose of this report is to outline all of these requests for Board approval.

Objectives

- To add *Pre-AP Studio Art*
- To add *University Experience – S.T.E.M.*, a new CTE course
- To renew the current CTE course, *Ready, Set, Teach I & II*

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Operational Impact

Pre-AP Studio Art: The current Pre-AP Art I course is primarily for 9th grade students. It is a foundation course rather than a media specific course. There are no other Pre-AP art courses available for students beyond the Art 1 level and prior to taking AP Studio Art. With the new 4x4 requirements, students are now less able to fit additional elective art courses into their schedule which would otherwise allow them adequate time to develop the skills needed to complete their AP Studio Art portfolio. This new course would provide opportunities for students to begin working on their portfolio, thus improving overall scores and increasing interest, enrollment, and student achievement in the program. (See attachment for the complete course proposal form and further information). There is no anticipated fiscal or facilities impact.

University Experience – S.T.E.M.: This new CTE course is designed to prepare seniors for the transition to a university degree program targeting a high demand occupation. The goal is to provide seniors with a “real time” relevant university experience. The course will model the university learning environment for degrees in the critical need areas identified by the State of Texas. This innovative process has been developed in partnership with the Texas Woman’s University and the Advanced Technology Complex, and dual credit is pending with TWU. (See attachment for the complete course proposal form and further information). There is no anticipated fiscal or facilities impact.

Ready, Set, Teach I & II: The CTE staff is very excited about the progress of Ready, Set, Teach. This course started out with roughly seventy- seven interns. Current enrollment is over one hundred. The interns are placed in ten elementary and three middle-schools within the Denton ISD district. While enrolled in RST I, students are exposed to the foundations of teaching. In addition to teaching large groups, they tutor individual students, teach small groups, prepare bulletin boards and develop lesson materials as well as have other hands-on performance based experiences working with students and teachers. Performing these tasks firmly builds leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills needed for a successful teaching career. RST II encompasses everything presented in RST I with the addition of college readiness and current industry and school technology standards. Helping to guide the standards of this program are local University education programs. To date, partnerships have been formed with Texas Woman’s University, University of North Texas, and North Central Texas College. The CTE staff is also pleased to announce that over 98% of students enrolled in RST indicated college in their career plans. (See attachments for the further information). There is no anticipated fiscal or facilities impact.

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Results

Pre-AP Studio Art: The goal of this course is to offer students a rigorous visual art course that would bring them up to speed before they are enrolled in AP Studio Art. By adding this course, the instructional gap between Pre-AP Art 1 and AP Studio Art would be filled supporting the district goal of “cultivating a consistent, strong, district-wide balanced curriculum based on ongoing needs assessment”. In addition, students that do not have the means or opportunity to take private art lessons would be enrolled in a media specific course with higher expectations than current offerings, thus supporting the district goal to “remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on every campus”. It would allow students the opportunity to begin developing their portfolio, establish higher expectations for art work, engage in idea development, and critique which will be expected of them upon entering AP Studio Art. With this course preceding the year students are in AP Studio Art, it is probable that student achievement and retention will improve significantly.

University Experience – S.T.E.M.: Students taking this course will: (1) recognize that the transition to college-level learning involves change, (2) develop educational strategies that will impact learning, (3) require less remediation at the university level, (4) more likely complete a university degree, (4) understand the requirements for STEM-related degrees and advanced degrees, and (5) prepare for high demand occupations requiring a degree.

Ready, Set, Teach I & II: Students taking this course will explore the teaching profession, develop an understanding of the learner and learning process, communicate effectively, plan effective instruction, use effective instructional strategies, create an effective learning environment, learn how to assess teaching and learning, understand the relationship between school and society, and develop technology skills. It is expected that students will develop a deep understanding of the teaching profession and hopefully make a commitment to become an effective public education teacher.

Other Options

It is recommended that the Board approve the following changes to the high school course offerings for 2009-2010: (1) the addition of *Pre-AP Studio Art*, (2) the addition of *University Experience – S.T.E.M.*, and (3) the renewal of *Ready, Set, Teach I & II*. The Board has the option of approving all or part of the recommendations.