

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Future-Ready High School Core Curriculum Framework

Type of Executive Summary:

- Action
- Action on First Reading
- Discussion
- Information

Policy Implications:

- Constitution _____
- General Statute # _____
- SBE Policy
- SBE Policy Amendment
- SBE Policy (New)
- APA # _____
- APA Amendment
- APA (New)
- Other _____

Presenter(s): Dr. Rebecca Garland (Executive Director, Office of the North Carolina State Board of Education) and Dr. Wandra C. Polk (Director, Middle and Secondary Education Division)

Description:

The North Carolina State Board of Education in December 2006 directed Board and Department of Public Instruction staff to conduct a series of regional meetings on the future-ready high school core curriculum framework that the Board adopted. The adoption of this framework carries the Board’s intent to raise standards, increase rigor in all high school courses, and encourage greater use of integrated and interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. The State Board will discuss proposed graduation requirements.

Resources:

N/A

Input Process:

Input received from the eight regional meetings held across the state on the future-ready high school core curriculum framework.

Stakeholders:

Students, parents, teachers, administrators, counselors and other support staff, and universities/colleges statewide.

Timeline for Action:

This item was presented for Information in April 2007, Discussion for May 2007, and is returned for further discussion at the June 2007 meeting.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the State Board of Education review and comment on changes to the policy prior to submission for approval at the July 2007 meeting and, furthermore, to direct staff to convene three geographically representative regional meetings to receive input on the proposed policy.

Audiovisual equipment requested for the presentation:

- Data Projector/Video (Videotape/DVD and/or Computer Data, Internet, Presentations-PowerPoint preferred)
Specify: _____
 - Audio Requirements (computer or other, except for PA system which is provided)
Specify: _____
 - Document Camera (for transparencies or paper documents – white paper preferred)

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Motion By: _____ Seconded By: _____
Vote: Yes _____ No _____ Abstain _____
Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Postponed _____ Revised _____

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Proposed Policy for High School Course Graduation Requirements

Rationale:

In May 2005 the State Board of Education committed to a more rigorous curriculum in order for NC students to graduate from high school globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century. The Future-Ready Core represents the minimum course requirements that the State mandates for graduation. However for students to be prepared for college and work, Local Education Agencies shall add additional requirements that align with current local high school reform efforts and school schedules. The goal is for students during their high school career to have access to college and university coursework that will add relevance, rigor, and opportunity for postsecondary experiences at no cost to the student. Every student in North Carolina should have the option of completing an Associate's Degree, a professional certification, or appropriate university credits before leaving high school.

The Future-Ready Core

Effective with the Freshman Class of 2009-2010, the following units are required for graduation:

4 Mathematics

Algebra I

Algebra II

Geometry (or Integrated Math I, II, III)

4th Math Course - to be aligned with the student's after-high-school plans

{ At the request of a parent and with counseling provided by the school, a student will be able to opt out of this math sequence. He/she would be required to pass Algebra I and Geometry (or Integrated Math I and II), and two other application-based math courses to be developed by DPI. }

4 English

3 Social Studies

World History

US History

Civics and Economics

3 Science

Biology

An environmental Science

A physical science

1 Health and PE

4 electives

(Two electives must be any combination of CTE, Arts Education, or Second Language.)

Total 19 units

The SBE strongly recommends that local school systems require a concentration of four courses developed around student interests. Examples would include the CTE Pathways, JROTC, Arts Education, Academy courses, etc. The Department will develop additional examples of concentrations for school systems to consider when providing options for students.

***Background Information**

Future-Ready High School Core Curriculum Framework

Original Framework

At its December 2006 meeting, the State Board of Education adopted a framework for the Core Course of Study that would require students to take the following 17 units to fulfill high school graduation requirements:

- 4 units of English
- 4 units of Mathematics
- 3 units of Science
- 3 units of Social Studies
- 2 units of a Second Language
- 1 unit of Health/Physical Education

In addition to the 17 units of credit, students would also be required to complete a four course endorsement in one of the following areas:

- Career and Technical Education
- Arts Education
- JROTC
- Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate
- Second Language
- Others customized to tap student interest such as a Communications endorsement:
 - Journalism
 - Creative Writing
 - Technical Writing
 - Public Speaking

The State Board of Education recommended that the Core Course of Study begin with the freshmen class of 2008. The Occupational Course of Study would still be in place for eligible students.

Regional Meetings for Public Input

The following eight regional meetings were conducted to explain the proposed Core Course of Study and to seek feedback from the public:

Date	District	Venue	Attendance	Speakers
Feb. 12	Region 7	Forbush High School, East Bend (Yadkin County)	121	30
Feb. 20	Region 6	Weddington High School, Matthews (Union County)	139	30
Feb. 22	Region 5	Randleman High School, Randleman (Randolph County)	203	30
Feb. 26	Region 2	Southwest High School,	185	21

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		Jacksonville (Onslow County)		
March 5	Region 4	E.E. Smith High School, Fayetteville (Cumberland County)	173	26
March 19	Region 1	Roanoke High School, Robersonville (Martin County)	150	35
March 22	Region 8	Buncombe County School Central Office, Asheville	260	58
March 29	Region 3	Fike High School Wilson, (Wilson County)	231	66
		TOTAL	1462	291
Comments via email at Feedback@dpi.state.nc.us			102	

Regional Meetings for Public Input

Summary of Comments from Regional Meetings:

- Several speakers stated that all students don't need to be prepared for college.
- People do not believe that college and work ready are the same.
- Some university and community college professors were vocal that all students do not need high-level math.
- The policy will raise the drop out rate.
- Teachers will quit if they have to teach students who aren't prepared for these high-level courses.
- Having all students in high-level courses will water down the curriculum for high-level students.
- We already have a shortage of math and second language teachers. This policy will exacerbate the issue.
- Second language for everyone belongs in the K-8 program, not high school.
- Every student should have an arts and a CTE course in their core.
- DPI is not ready to implement this policy - courses and assessments are not ready.
- Observations:
 - There is a pervasive culture of low expectations for some students.
 - Had the Arts and CTE Lobbies not organized their forces, there would have been a handful of folks at the meeting with concerns about the math and second language requirements, and the timeline.
 - Most speakers had been organized and were part of a lobbying effort. They had advance information and had written comments.
 - Superintendents were basically supportive. They think we need time to get ready and that second language needs to be supported K-8.
 - Passions were high.
 - Most speakers were very professional in their presentations.
 - Some were very unprofessional and even made personal attacks.
 - There was a multitude of misinformation, some we felt intentionally sparked by contact with the media. Media didn't correct misinformation when they had been told. Examples:
 - SBE ending Occupation Course of Study, CTE, Agriculture, etc.

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- Students had been organized because of these fears.

Recommendations Based on feedback, the State Board of Education is asked to revise the proposed Core Course of Study in the following ways:

- A. Implementation date: The Core Course of Study will begin with the entering freshman class of 2009-10.
 Rationale: This date would provide time for revision of the K-12 Mathematics Standard Course of Study to include more application in existing courses and the development of more options based on a variety of student outcomes. Moreover, additional time would be used to develop integrated assessments for Integrated Mathematics I, II, III and IV.
- B. Four Mathematics Units: Students will be required to take four units of credit in mathematics. The mathematics courses will be based on the student’s desired graduation outcomes. The following options are provided as examples:

- Math Sequence I:

	Math I	Math II	Math III	Math IV
Workforce	Algebra I - or - Integrated Math I (new test?)	Geometry - or - Integrated Math II (new test?)	Algebra II - or - Integrated Math III (new test?)	New 4th course with a technical/data analysis emphasis (new test?)

- Math Sequence II:

	Math I	Math II	Math III	Math IV
Workforce	Integrated Math I (new test?)	Integrated Math II (new test?)	Application-based Math developed to be aligned with a CTE pathway (new test?)	Application-based Math developed to be aligned with a CTE pathway (new test?)

- Math Sequence III:

	Math I	Math II	Math III	Math IV
Community College	Algebra I - or - Integrated Math I	Geometry -or- Integrated Math II	Algebra II - or - Integrated Math III	Advanced Functions and Modeling -or- Integrated Math IV -or- Newly developed Statistics/data Analysis course (new test?)

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○ Math Sequence IV:

	Math I	Math II	Math III	Math IV
University Liberal Arts	Algebra I - or - Integrated Math I	Geometry - or - Integrated Math II	Algebra II - or - Integrated Math III	Advanced Functions and modeling - or - Integrated Math IV - or - AP Statistics - or - Discrete Math - or - Pre-Calculus

○ Math Sequence V:

	Middle Grade Math	Math I	Math II	Math III	Math IV
UNC STEM	Algebra I (credit— TBD)	Geometry - or - Integrated Math II	Algebra II - or - Integrated Math III	Pre-Calculus - or - Integrated Math IV	AP Calculus (AB or BC) - or - AP Statistics - or - Discrete Math

Rationale: Providing mathematics courses that are based on student goals after graduation allows for flexibility and choice for students. The options provide for the mathematics preparation of all students to a rigorous level, but the options also recognize that all students do not need the same content in their mathematics courses in order to be college and work ready upon graduation.

- C. Expansion of the Core Course of Study Requirements: Require students to take one unit of credit in arts education and one unit of credit in Career and Technical Education.

Rationale: There was considerable public advocacy for the inclusion of these two areas during the public hearings. Based on available data, approximately 75% of students graduating from NC’s high schools in 2006-07 took at least one Career and Technical Education course and approximately 70% of students graduating from North Carolina’s high schools took at least one arts education course.

- D. Second Language Course Requirement: Delay the implementation of the second language requirement until the entering freshman class of 2010*. This

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additional time would provide opportunity for the state staff to revise the Standard Course of Study and to develop professional development that will retool teachers with skills and strategies to teach a variety of students.

Those districts and schools that believe that earlier language instruction is important will also have time to establish a cohesive sequential middle school program to ensure that students have the necessary skills when they reach high school to meet graduation requirements.

Finally, the additional time would also provide opportunity for expansion of the NC Virtual High School's second language course offerings.

* Note: Students whose graduation outcomes include seeking admission to UNC constituent institutions must complete the two course second language requirement.

- E. Opt Out/ Course Substitution Component - Students will be allowed to substitute courses for the required core based on consultation and permission from parents, administrators and teachers. Course substitutions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Rationale: Providing students with the opportunity to substitute courses from the required core will allow flexibility. However, the option must be structured to ensure that students and parents are aware of the consequences of the substitutions from the required core. Professional development with student support staff will be required.