



Message from the Superintendent

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District

October 24, 2006

Dear Key Communicator:

I need to tell you about a critical issue that has the potential of dramatically affecting our students currently in grades Pre-K—8. You may have read about the new high school graduation requirements imposed by the 79th Legislature: the addition of a fourth year of mathematics and science for those students graduating under the Recommended High School Program (RHSP) and the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP). **Refer to the attached example of a [student schedule](#) that fulfills the RHSP graduation requirements of four years of English, mathematics, science and social studies (4 X 4 plan).** If students do not begin high school coursework in middle school or enroll in summer school, then they will only have room in their four years of high school for a one-year course and a one-semester course of their choosing.

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD supports a rigorous high school curricula that challenges and engages our students while preparing them for college. We do support the State Board of Education's plan that was approved initially in September. Here are critical features of the SBOE's plan that should remain unchanged in the second and final vote on November 17th. Please contact the members of the State Board of Education to communicate your support for the following. [Contact information](#) is attached.

1. **Maintain students' flexibility** about when they will take courses. They should be able to take accelerated courses in middle school and courses for advancement in summer school, for example. Accelerated courses include Algebra I and Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC) in eighth grade.
2. **Provide students with as much choice as possible** about what upper-level mathematics and science courses they will take to satisfy the graduation requirement. Students need to be able to select courses that will match their aptitude and career interests and goals.

Attached is a [list of options](#) demonstrating possible variations in course sequence and selection based on students' career goals. Note that this list reflects the needs of students who will pursue degrees in several professional fields and is not restricted to an option for career paths in math-related professions such as engineering.

3. **Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC), as defined by the state curriculum,** should continue for several years as a part of the required sequence for all students, but be **phased out beginning with students entering Grade 9 in 2012-2013.**
4. **Honor the six-year plans that thousands of students and their parents have developed.** These plans lay out the course of study students will follow in grades 7—12 to meet high school graduation requirements.

CFISD students, like other students across Texas, have diverse interests, talents, aptitudes and skills. All students who graduate from Texas high schools should have the opportunity to design their high school coursework so that it complements their aptitude and talents and allows them to prepare for their career goals.

Please communicate your support to members of the State Board of Education for the 4 X 4 plan that was approved in September, and encourage others within our community to do the same.

Sincerely,

David Anthony, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools