

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: J.

Date: May 27, 2010

Topic: First Review of a Proposal to Allow Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus BC to Verify Two Mathematics Credits

Presenter: Mrs. Shelley L. Loving-Ryder, Assistant Superintendent for Student Assessment and School Improvement

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Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by
 State or federal law or regulation
 Board of Education regulation
 Other: Previous Board Action

Action requested at this meeting Action requested at future meeting: June 24, 2010

Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action
date: _____
action: _____

Background Information:

According to Standards of Accreditation at 8 VAC 20-131-110. Standard and verified units of credit.

C. The Board of Education may from time to time approve additional tests for the purpose of awarding verified credit. Such additional tests, which enable students to earn verified units of credit, must, at a minimum, meet the following criteria:

1. The test must be standardized and graded independently of the school or school division in which the test is given;
2. The test must be knowledge based;
3. The test must be administered on a multistate or international basis, or administered as part of another state's accountability

assessment program; and

4. To be counted in a specific academic area, the test must measure content that incorporates or exceeds the SOL content in the course for which verified credit is given.

The Board of Education will set the score that must be achieved to earn a verified unit of credit on the additional test options.

In 2000 the Virginia Board of Education approved AP calculus as a substitute test for the end-of-course mathematics tests (Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II). Based on the cut scores adopted by the Board, students earning a score of 2 on AP calculus are considered to be proficient and those earning 3 or higher are considered to be advanced. Under the current policy, a score of 2 or higher on AP calculus can be used to verify one credit in mathematics.

Summary of Major Elements:

Virginia Department of Education staff have been contacted by a parent of a transfer student asking that the Board reconsider its policy of allowing AP calculus to verify only one credit in mathematics. The rationale for the change is that students who score well on the AP Calculus test have demonstrated proficiency in lower level mathematics classes as a prerequisite to Calculus. Allowing an acceptable score on AP Calculus to verify two credits will benefit transfer students who often have taken Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II before entering the Virginia Public Schools but who may need as many as two verified credits to be eligible for an advanced studies diploma. Fairfax County Public Schools has also indicated support for the proposal to allow AP Calculus to verify two mathematics credits as long as this policy is restricted to AP Calculus BC.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept for first review the proposal to allow Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus BC to verify two mathematics credits.

Impact on Resources:

N/A

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

The proposal will be presented for final review and action at the Board of Education's June 24, 2010 meeting.