



MEMORANDUM

Academic Office

TO: Tammy Prentiss, Superintendent

FROM: Dr. Chris Covino, Assistant Superintendent for Academics

DATE: October 6, 2022

RE: Recommendation of SY 23-24 Program of Studies - First Reading

One of the overarching goals of the District 86 Strategic Plan is coherence in curriculum, course offerings and academic programming. This coherence is no more tangible than in the yearly adoption and publication of the District 86 Program of Studies.

History and Context

For decades each high school building had its own Program of Studies, but this year the academic department is recommending a single District 86 Program of Studies for SY 23-24. This common listing of courses, sequences, academic philosophy (mission and grading) is the result of three years of dedicated work by our curriculum leaders, our department chairs, and our teacher teams.

In October of 2021, the District 86 PTAC and the BOE received extended presentations from all academic departments regarding Program Team work and recommendations. These presentations included the plans for unifying sequences, aligning courses and fees and included a detailed plan to complete their course and curriculum alignment by SY 2025-26. All D86 curriculum alignment teams continue to work on the alignment plans they presented to the Board of Education and that was subsequently memorialized in the 22-23 Program of Studies.

The last Program Team to engage in this process was the Special Education department. While members of this department have provided expertise and advice for all the other teams, their Program Team work began in earnest in the winter of the 21-22 school year. The recommendations from this team were discussed at the September 13 Community Conversation and the September 27 PTAC meeting. Feedback from these two meetings was incorporated into the BOE presentation and used to inform the Program Team recommendations included in the 23-24 Program of Studies.

Updates for the 2023-2024 Program of Studies (POS)

The vast majority of D86 alignment work is currently underway and was presented over the past two years. This year, the common POS includes recommendations from the SPED Program Team focused on the alignment of the Applied and ES (Educational Services) course sequence, Foundations course sequence, and related course work in the continuum of special education services. In addition, the BOE will receive a recommendation to add a single math course to the POS focused on accelerating freshman students who demonstrate yet untapped academic potential in math.

Format Updates

- Greater Curriculum Transparency: This POS includes course descriptions with a digital link to D86 course overview documents. These documents provide students and families a course description, digital and print resources, course standards, units of study and grading practices. All courses will have a digital link at the completion of curriculum alignment work (SY 25-26)
- Single link to Course Fee / Materials document
- Timebound notations for final alignment or replacement in course descriptions (where applicable).

Last year the District 86 administration reported that there were approximately 114 courses unique to one of the two buildings (i.e. 87 courses unique to Central and 27 courses unique to South). As represented in this common D86 POS, our alignment work has made significant progress toward our goals of unity and coherence of curriculum and course offerings. While the work is still underway through SY 24-25, this Program of Studies contains 43 courses unique to one of the two buildings (i.e. 30 courses unique to Central and 13 courses unique to South).

Additions and Revisions

As presented in the 22-23 POS, the following courses have been included and will be available for students to select for SY 23-24:

- Drawing & Painting 1, 2, 3
- Animation & Video Art 1, 2
- Themes in Literature: Women's Literature
- Literature of Science, Technology, and the Individual
- Sophomore PE
- Earth Science Capstone
- Graphic Communication 1
- Graphic Communication 2
- Graphic Communication Capstone

Presented this year for consideration:

- Foundations of Art, Music, Culinary
- Algebra with Geometry Honors

As a result of the ongoing alignment work, the following courses have been removed

from the POS for SY 23-24:

- Biology G
- Earth Science G
- AP Physics 2 (Replaced with AP Physics C-M)
- Algebra 1 Part 2
- Algebra 1 Part 2 / Geometry Block
- Drawing & Design
- Advanced Drawing & Design
- Painting
- Advanced Painting
- Geography

The following course sequences have been aligned for SY 23-24:

This work is the subject of the Special Education Program Team Recommendations

- P.R.E.P (Formerly ES and Applied courses)
- Foundations (Revised with aligned course offerings)

The accompanying slide deck provides detailed information about the work and recommendations of the Special Education Program Team as well as the rationale and data supporting the addition of a new freshman math course.

Next Steps

Our Academic Leadership team seeks feedback from the Board of Education related to the recommended 23-24 Program of Studies. Based on this feedback and subsequent revisions, updates, and clarifications, the 23-24 Program of Studies will be brought for final approval on October 27, 2022. Once approved, D86 Students Services staff and content Department Chairs will engage with our sender schools to begin the course recommendation process for rising freshmen.