



SS

**LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CURRICULUM COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING**

April 24, 2019

---

Mr. Scifres shared that the committee would be looking at three items:

1. K-5 History-Social Science Curriculum Adoption
2. IB Math at Agoura High School
3. Alternative Education Information

**K-5 History-Social Science Curriculum Adoption**

Mr. Scifres summarized the proposed K-5 History-Social Science curriculum, Studies Weekly.

The positive attributes are:

- Aligns with LVUSD Core Beliefs
- Balanced Literacy
- Hands-on, Interactive
- In the form of a weekly newspaper; no books
- Web-based: Includes interactive and audio supports, which support our EL and special ed populations.

The process began with the team exploring curriculum, writing units, and developing guiding questions. Last January, they determined a need for an established curriculum. Teachers had previous experience with Studies Weekly. All sites, except Mariposa, piloted Studies Weekly last February, and the vote to bring it to the Curriculum Council was 13-1.

The K-5 team that presented to the Council included: George Hees, Kendra Napier, Sarah Fitzgerald, Tiffany Garrison, Khadija Taj, and Amber Juarez. They shared the following about their experience with Studies Weekly:

- Covered standards
- Fits well with current curriculum, Student 360
- Teacher flexibility
- Quick lessons which are easily expanded with online assessments and data.
- Was utilized in both small and large groups
- Articles led to stimulating discussion

- Students liked the newspaper format, the videos and it is very engaging online with character with point system. Students can read or listen to the content.
- Covers the information as well or better than history book.
- Teacher's manual is very easy to follow.
- Students can take home the weekly paper and share it with their families.

The team would like to see improvement in the following areas:

- More varied videos
- Age appropriateness of material
- Primary resources included with program.

Mr. Scifres reported the cost for Studies Weekly would be \$141,480.00. The District is hoping the pilot teachers will teach professional development.

*Question:* Do they update these yearly?

*Answer:* They do change parts of it, but they do not change the main story.

Steve: They do change it from year to year, but there is more of a deep-dive and update every two years.

*Question:* Are you looking to eliminate textbooks completely? If so, what is the plan for the additional years?

*Answer:* Yes. With any adoption, we take the old books and recycle them. There is no ongoing cost. When you purchase six years, the curriculum is covered for each year.

*Question:* Is there anything in the curriculum that helps to cultivate the skills of resilience of these students? How to help them cope with these things?

*Answer:* Mr. Scifres shared the District vision and confirmed that we are seeing that, too. There is pressure and stress on students. Our Student 360 focuses on developing dispositions to support social emotional intelligence. An example of this would be persistence and grit, however there are six dispositions. The teachers commented that there is some of this written into the curriculum but they are also finding that they have to bring more in.

*Question:* How much time are third grade students spending online on this curriculum?

*Answer:* You can choose if you'd like to use it online or on paper. The online can be 30 minutes or less, either by themselves or as a class and can be varied to fit the teachers class and schedule.

*Question:* I am curious about the context of the sources?

*Answer:* Based off of the textbook that we have currently, they are very similar.

Social Studies chair Lisa Hatfield added that there are specific contents and standards that materials have to meet in addition to undergoing a rigorous review process by the state, before it can become an adoptable curriculum.

### **Approval of Studies Weekly K-5 History-Social Science Curriculum**

**Motion to Approve: Jason Rosenthal**

**Second: Kristin Shapiro**

### **IB Math at Agoura High School**

Jenn Kestenbaum, Amy Levin, and Karin Inglis presented the new IB Math course proposals. They shared that IB Curriculum undergoes a review every five years. Feedback is taken from the teachers who are teaching these courses, and updates are made to the curriculum. This year, new math courses have been introduced. One pathway is a more calculus-based (aligns to the existing AHS IB course) and the second pathway is called Applications and Interpretation. In this, there is more emphasis on self-management and international mindedness. AHS would like to offer these courses for this new second pathway:

1. Pre IB Algebra II Applications and Interpretations
2. IB Math Applications and Interpretations SL

These new courses will allow for more technological exploration and cover a different type of rigor, that includes a little bit of statistics and calculus. These will also provide a third or fourth year math option for students who are not ready for the rigors of AP Calculus or AP Statistics.

Oxford came out with the proposed textbook which covers the content standards, and integrates it into one flow. The text is inquiry based and has good online materials.

*Question:* Why don't you have it to open this program up to every kid?

*Answer:* We don't have it yet. Many schools are waiting to establish this program and then they will turn their SL course into an HL. So the goal is to have an HL option in the future.

*Question:* Will you still be teaching the Pre-IB Geometry?

*Answer:* Yes. There will still be the same pathway, but once a student gets to Algebra II, they will have a choice.

*Question:* What do you think the demand is?

*Answer:* In the IB Geometry course, there are probably 15 that would register for this course. Of those 15, 5 are not currently registered to stay in IB. They are intimidated by the math. If we were to offer this course, they could be interested in it. We can also co-seat the course.

*Question:* What is the financial incentive to have more IB kids in the district?

*Answer:* None.

The AHS parent association will cover the cost of training.

**Approval of the Pre IB Algebra II Applications and Interpretations and IB Math Applications and Interpretations SL Courses**

**Motion to Approve: Deb Bennett**

**Second: Lauren Freedman**

**Passed Unanimously**

**Alternative Education**

Over the last few years, we have been evolving our alternative education plans. We've had a continuation school program and an independent study/hybrid/homeschool program, however, for a range of issues, we've had to sunset those programs. With not offering an alternative placement the last few years, we've seen students who have a need for this model, as well as those who may be struggling with being in a school, go to other districts. Two years ago we began utilizing an online program called FUEL. However, it has brought its own flaws.

We are hoping to introduce an alternative option at CHS and AHS next fall. These Centers will meet the following students' needs:

1. Credit Recovery
2. Students who have special needs (IEPs) are entitled to the least restrictive environment. If they cannot access college prep courses due to our level of rigor, we have to pay for alternative placement and we have no control over quality.
3. We've lost students to other independent programs. Athletes, celebrities, and students with significant medical issues. This would allow us to serve these students.

The centers will utilize APEX, which is a mastery-based program, so students assess in based on where they are. They have a content instructor to help push them through. In the past, APEX courses were not NCAA approved but they've been working with NCAA to develop courses that will meet approval. The Centers will also address Tier II academic and social emotional needs.

Mr. Scifres added that Curriculum Council had already approved the APEX curriculum a few years ago and since the Council had been involved in these adoptions, he wanted to bring this as an information item to the committee.

*Question:* Where will the sections of this come from?

*Answer:* These will come from a supplemental grant funding. In terms of cost, it will pay for itself. In a time of cuts, this is something that will be beneficial to the general fund while also serving more students.

*Question:* How does it compare to FUEL costs?

*Answer:* APEX licenses cost less than FUEL licenses.

Ms. Stein shared that the District had lost a lot of students over the past few years so the hope is this can help with that lost ADA.

*Question:* Is there a program in the District that a child can opt into that is not for any of the three reasons that you mentioned?

*Answer:* I don't think we are there. We need to be clear about what we are and what we aren't.

*Question:* Is there a place to send those parents if they don't fit in these buckets?

*Answer:* Depending on the issues, they may fit into one of those buckets. However, if it is for a life of travel, etc., that will not fit. And we cannot serve all students' needs.

*Question:* Is this something that will eventually push into the middle school level?

*Answer:* In middle school next year, we will have a floating teacher to help with some of those needs. So whereas our answer before was no, it can now be maybe.

*Question:* I want to thank you for bringing this opportunity to students. When does it start?

*Answer:* It will go to the Board in May. Assuming all systems are go, we will start working with our counseling teams to put systems in place and we are converting 2 centers at both high schools over the summer.

*Question:* You mentioned grant funding. Is there a deadline for this or a way it can get lost in the budget?

*Answer:* This is general funding. The supplemental grant that I mentioned is part of LCAP.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45.