

LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
4111 LAS VIRGENES ROAD
CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA 91302
Telephone: (818) 880-4000
Fax: (818) 880-4200
www.lvusd.org



BOARD OF EDUCATION

ANGELA CUTBILL

DALLAS LAWRENCE

LINDA MENGES

LESLI STEIN

MATHY WASSERMAN

DANIEL STEPENOSKY, Ed. D.
SUPERINTENDENT

CURRICULUM COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

Present: Ann Berry, Ethan Castillo, Darlynn Childress, Vivian Ding, Fran Doucedame, Bella Echols, Sara Exner, Clara Finneran, Mary Hazlett, Tina Johnson, Laila Jorns, Kristen Lapiner, Amy Levy, Thomas Liu, Linda Menges, Jodi Morikawa, Douglas Morrison, Dee Pollard, Emily Ritchey, Mike Roberts, Steve Scifres, Mathy Wasserman

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 pm by Mr. Scifres.

IB History of the Americas I & II - Graduation Requirements

Mr. Ryan Gleason presented a information item to the Curriculum Council, which does not require a vote. that will be presented at the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, February 25, 2020. Because of the Curriculum Council Administrative Regulation, all curricular changes are brought to keep the Curriculum Council apprised.

Mr. Gleason explained that in the state of California, students have a graduation requirement of passing a course in United States Government and Economics (each course is one semester) to receive a high school diploma. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program provides a rigorous standard of curriculum and pedagogy. An IB Diploma student needs to take IB History I and IB History II to fulfill the IB requirements. United States history and overarching systems of government and economics are covered in these courses. Additionally, students need to take United States Government and Economics classes in order to fulfill the high school graduation requirement. This is redundant. Given the rigor and coverage of history, LVUSD has examined how other elite school districts are handling this situation. Based on this information, United States Government and Economics requirements will be waived for students taking IB History I and IB History II after July 1, 2020. Mr. Gleason said we don't want our kids jumping through hoops of redundancy. We care about their mental health. Amening graduation requirements to waive the Government and Economics requirement will provide students with more time in their schedules.

- Question: Are there any downsides to this plan?
Answer: No, students will not have a credit deficit and will be provided more time to work on their IB requirements. This is a positive step for our students.
- Question: Will students receive a waiver if they don't finish the IB program?
Answer: The Board Policy will read that any student who takes the two IB history courses will have the requirement waived. IB Diploma completion is not a requirement in waiving the Government/Economics high school diploma requirement.
- Question: Aren't IB classes harder and only for smart kids?
Answer: IB is an open access program - typically students who complete the IB Diploma have a high-level work ethic and drive, however, all students are able to take IB courses. IB classes are meant to be as accessible as AP classes. The majority of students at Agoura High School will take the traditional Government/Economics courses.

This change will apply to any student graduating in 2021 and beyond. There will be no significant impact on sections or master schedules. This shift will create a shift that creates more access to the IB Diploma program for more students.

Mr. Gleason will present this as an information item at the Board of Education meeting on February 25, 2020, and as an action item at the March 10, 2020 Board of Education meeting.

Mr. Scifres introduced Dr. Stephanie McClay, Agoura High School Principal and Jennifer Kestenbaum, International Baccalaureate Coordinator.

IB Theory of Knowledge

Mr. Scifres shared that IB Theory of Knowledge is an existing course at Agoura High School. A large shift is being proposed in this course, which is why it was brought to the Curriculum Council and Board of Education for approval.

Dr. McClay said It is currently taught over the course of the spring semester of junior year and fall semester of senior year. The proposal is to make it a two-year course over a student's junior and senior years. The course is essentially critical thinking -- knowing why we think what we think and how we think what we think. It brings clarity and awareness to how students think through different situations.

She said that the goal is to make the IB Program more accessible and with fewer obstacles. Removing the Government/Economics requirement frees up time for students to take Theory of Knowledge as a two-year course, which is how it was intended by the IB. It has been truncated into a one-year course spanning two school years, but would be better for students as the intended two-year course. Incoming juniors will have a full year to get up to speed on the IB Program and will have more time to complete the performance tasks and projects that are required for the IB Diploma.

Ms. Kestenbaum said the current class has been condensed. The new model will allow time and space for all students to prepare the necessary projects and assessments.

Question: What are students currently taking during the other semesters?
Answer: In their junior year, they are taking Government in the fall semester and Theory of Knowledge in spring semester. In their senior year, students take Theory of Knowledge in fall semester and Economics in spring semester. Theory of Knowledge would absorb the extra semesters that are freed by the change in the Government/Economics requirement.

Question: Does this change allow more room in IB students' schedules?
Answer: It gives the gift of time for students to prepare for the IB Diploma requirements.

Question: Does it the same teacher teach all classes?
Answer: There are several different teachers, but students could possibly have the same teacher.

Comment: Giving students more time to be in-depth not rush in their work is outstanding.

Question: Does this fit the A-G requirement?
Answer: Theory of Knowledge is only taken by IB Diploma students and meets the A-G requirement.

Question: Would it behoove the students if Theory of Knowledge was offered earlier in their high school path?
Answer: It would be nice to be able to offer it earlier, but the IB program mandates it starts junior year.

Question: What's your biggest concern with this change?
Answer: I do not have any concerns. It provides more relief than stress. This change doesn't cause a loss of sections or complicate the master schedule. It doesn't deprive students of an opportunity to earn credits.

Question: Are there many tests?
Answer: There are assessments. In addition, students give presentations and write essays about what they've learned.

Ethan Castillo moved to approve the changes to the IB Theory of Knowledge course. The motion was seconded by Douglas Morrison. After a unanimous vote, the course update was passed.

IB Theatre Arts

Mr. Scifres shared that this is a new course proposal. It would serve as an all-encompassing capstone course at Agoura High School for theatre.

Dr. McClay explained that the intention is to remove obstacles for students to work towards the IB Diploma. Fine Arts offerings need to be expanded for IB Diploma students. Students are currently only able to take IB Film. This will offer a new option for students. This is not the addition of a course/section, it is designed to offer current year three or year four students a capstone course through IB. They will build a portfolio for a CTE pathway, while satisfying the IB Diploma requirements.

The course does not just look at the art itself, it also looks at the theory of theatre. Students will apply research and theory to contextualize their work. IB Theatre Arts will be broken down into three segments: theatre in context, theatre processes, and presenting theatre. The course will be available for the junior and/or senior year and provides a certificate which can translate into college credit.

Students are assessed by a solo theatre piece, director's notebook, research presentation, and collaborative project. It is multi-faceted and not solely performance-based.

Question: Why is it spelled t-h-e-a-t-r-e as opposed to t-h-e-a-t-e-r?

Answer: Because IB is an international program, many words have the international spelling. Theatre is one of these words.

Question: For current students who are in theatre, will this give them a chance for "more meat"?

Answer: We currently offer Theater III and IV. This course would eventually replace Theater Three and Four. In the immediate future, they would be co-seated.

Question: Will there be any opportunities for kids who are interested in music?

Answer: Currently, IB Theatre Arts is the only course being added. However, in the future, the next two IB courses being proposed are IB Music and IB Fine Arts. There may even be a proposal for an IB Sports Medicine course.

Question: Does IB give the structure and curriculum for the courses?

Answer: Yes, it is structured and with guidelines provided by IB. How courses are implemented and organized is decided by the teachers.

Question: Will you bring text suggestions to the Board of Education meeting? It is helpful to see sources of materials that will be used.

Answer: The big shift in this course is the performance component - it is self authoring. The shift is what is expected of the students, rather than the actual materials used. In this course they will write their own plays.

Question: Do you envision a scenario will a Theater III or Theater IV student would exit the program because they are not looking for the IB rigor?

Answer: There will always be a place for those students. This course will create a positive shift of what we expect of the students. The spirit is “upping our game” for someone who has made such a big investment of time in the theater pathway. However, a student can choose not to sit for the exams (for both IB and AP).

Question: Is there equalization for time that should be spent by students in each Course?

Answer: IB gives a standard and teachers are constantly evaluated by the IB. There is accountability to keep courses at a consistent level. Courses have different work, but they are continually reviewed and evaluated.

Tina Johnson made motion to approve the IB Theatre course.
The motion was seconded by Ann Berry.
After a unanimous vote, the IB Theatre course was passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:22 pm