

TO: Board of Education
FROM: William Huyett, Superintendent
RE: Expanded Course Offerings at Berkeley High School

As a result of the recent controversy regarding Expanded Course Offerings at Berkeley High School, I have met with the principal and six science teacher leaders and we have developed the proposal below. This proposal will be part of the High School Redesign Plan that will be presented to you on February 3, 2010.

Currently, the school receives six (6.0) additional FTE from BSEP Class Size Reduction funds to be used for expanded course offerings. These additional teachers have enabled the school to offer more music classes (1.0 FTE) and to extend science classes (5.0 FTE) from five meetings a week to six meetings for college prep classes, and seven meetings a week for advanced placement and international baccalaureate classes. These extensions of the regular classes are used to conduct science labs in addition to what occurs during the regular day.

On December 2, 2009, the School Governance Council supported a recommendation from the leadership team to no longer use the 5.0 teachers for science but to allow all disciplines and schools to apply for staffing to support students who were struggling. This was given the name of "Equity Grants." This proposal has raised concerns about the support for students in science and the amount of time required to offer a quality college prep and AP/IB program in science.

There is concern that the current practice does not benefit all students. There is evidence that attendance is poor in the before/after school labs, and that achievement is negatively affected for students who cannot or do not attend.

There is a concern that if AP/IB science classes lose the extra time students will not be taught the full curriculum in order to pass the AP and IB tests. For Advanced Placement, the College Board recommends additional time beyond what is allowed for traditional science classes.

This new proposal from the administration and science teacher leaders is as follows:

1. Continue to provide extra time as currently exists for AP and IB Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Discontinue the extra time for AP Environmental Science as the two semester program provides the amount of seat time required

by the College Board. I will be recommending 1.0 FTE from BSEP program support for this purpose.

2. Begin an enhanced science option in College Prep Biology, Chemistry and Physics for any student who requests it. This will be a once a week before or after school lab that will enhance a student's college preparatory program. Each student will get credit for this course. Approximately, 1.0 additional FTE from BSEP program support will be required for this program. The enhanced science option will draw students from all college preparatory classes and will not track existing classes offered during the regular school day.
3. I will recommend that the school be allocated another 4.0 FTE for "Expanded Course Offerings" the use of which will be determined by the high school.