



MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Jason Bearce, CHE, Jenny Berry, IDOE, Peggy Wild, IDOE

DATE: April 1, 2015

RE: Core 40 Subcommittee Update

The Core 40 subcommittee, co-chaired by Superintendent Ritz and Higher Education Commissioner Teresa Lubbers, has been actively engaged with its representatives from the business community, higher education and several secondary school personnel, as well as IDOE and CHE staff to develop recommendations regarding Indiana's Core 40 diploma requirements and other diploma options that should be available to Hoosier students.

Since the November 2014 update provided at the SBOE meeting, the Core 40 subcommittee has met three times. At the November and December meetings, a comprehensive comparison of several other state diploma requirements (i.e., Maryland, North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia,) was presented and reviewed; the Subcommittee is interested in streamlining diploma options and providing flexibility in courses for all students.

Through a resolution established in August of 2014, the Core 40 subcommittee members worked through the large core group as well as three taskforces dedicated to researching different aspects of the diploma: The taskforces included *Math Pathways*, *Diploma Content* and *Diploma Structure*.

At the February meeting, the subcommittee decided to merge taskforces to again become one large group. The subcommittee is considering streamlining Core 40 and General diploma options into one Core 40 diploma. This has resulted in robust conversations around a 'pathways for all' approach, and how to provide flexibility to allow all students opportunities to explore and prepare for college and career readiness through planned and rigorous coursework—that can include both academic and career-related courses. Students will continue to have the opportunity to earn an Honors diploma in addition to achieving any new Core 40 requirements.

The subcommittee has had several discussions around the subject of mathematics. The Math Pathways taskforce has worked with current mathematics instructors, school principals and higher education partners to develop differentiated pathways that include a sequence of courses designed to align with post-secondary coursework,



including the opportunity to earn dual credit and align with career expectations in mathematics. By developing flexible math pathways at the high school level AND aligning these expectations with the comparable college degree maps now required in Indiana at the postsecondary level and career expectations. The subcommittee will continue to examine the possibility of multiple course pathways in other subject areas, such as Science.

Another area of discussion is ensuring students identified in special populations sub-groups (students in special education, English Learners, and students of high ability) are provided meaningful opportunities for success beyond high school. The possibility of utilizing fields within the new e-transcript system (beginning July 2015) to indicate a student's pathway of choice, (e.g. 'STEM' or, or 'Advanced Manufacturing, or 'Health Sciences') even if that student is earning a certificate of completion, has been proposed as a way to support graduation plans and individualized learning plans/IEPs that students revisit and revise each year in coordination with appropriate school personnel.

School guidance and counseling support is another topic that is further being explored by the committee and how critical this component will be with any new diploma changes to all stakeholders, including students, parents and school personnel.

The timeline for the Core 40 subcommittee in making their recommendations to the Council is:

March – May 2015:

Continue to meet monthly as one Core 40 subcommittee group
Share and address any concerns from stakeholder groups

June 2015:

Finalize recommendations with Core 40 Co-chairs

July 2015:

Recommendations presented to Career Council
Address any concerns from Career Council

August 2015:

Recommendations to CHE
Address any concerns from CHE

September 2, 2015:

Recommendations to SBOE
SBOE must take action by December 1, 2015
The next Core 40 Subcommittee meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, March 31, 2015.