

Conversation with the Superintendent
Follow Up Questions
Aptos High School

1. **Why have we been disallowed from setting our own preferred grading scale?**

In moving to our new SIS System, Synergy, grade books were configured with district wide settings. After initial implementation we have moved through a process review plan of Synergy, grade book, is one of the areas. Secondary teachers should have received a survey last week. The survey is designed to capture these types of concerns and others. A District Synergy Team has been using the feedback from various front-end user surveys to assist with recommendations and configuration needs. We encourage teachers to respond to the survey.

2. **District policy could be to change no work turned in from “0%” to “50%”—still an “F” but not so devastating. Some teachers do this but not all. A uniform policy on this would be great!**

The discussion of grades meets an intersection of Ed Codes, demonstration of mastery, and research regarding re-entry points for students. Specifically, the connection of teacher's rights related to determining the pupils grades, Ed Code 49066 (a), and Ed Code 49066 (b) which prevents us from ordering the issuance of specific grade. The "F" traditionally has been from 0%-50% and defining that differently is a conversation that the district has interest in. Bringing together multiple district stakeholders to review the research and potentially bring forward a recommendation to the Board of Education would be the method established to adopt a local education agency policy. This however, does not currently stop any progress that a site, department, or teacher would have in discussing and moving into agreements at those levels. Ed code, demonstration of mastery, and re-entry points for students should all be factors in discussions of the Power of Zero.

3. **Many of us are concerned about the use of paper for our attendance sheets (the ones we sign each week). Any way to move to electronic signatures to be more eco-conscious?**

Thank you for bringing up this issue. We worked with our auditors and CDE and found that the State does allow for electronic signatures but lays out a 1-6 step guidance piece in order to obtain approval. Some of the steps include; a district manual, provisions lined out to account for power outages, and one of the last steps is getting a letter from our auditor in approval. The 1-6 steps must be established and sent to CDE for approved prior to using electronic signatures. The auditor would have to do an audit of the process, verifying the following:

- a way to track teachers who did not take attendance and a way for clerks to make changes the day after

- the district has password security
- there are backups of the system
- there are written policies and procedures

We plan to be ready for full implementation for next year, therefore, the audit will need to be done before the end of the school year.

Next steps:

- verify the systems capability
- review board policies for inclusion
- set up a time for auditor to audit

4. Why can't we have a pre-math 1 class at AHS?

We want to ensure PVUSD students are College and Career Ready to begin postsecondary education. Our district's goal is to have high expectations for our students and provide supports so that all students can reach the college and career ready line. Remedial courses which leave students uninspired to learn, unable to catch up to their peers and unready for success in postsecondary courses or for entry into many skilled professions upon graduation from high school are neither necessary nor desirable. As stated on [Appendix A of the CCSS](#), "Allowing low-achieving students to take low-level mathematics courses has not supported student academic success" and our district experienced this. CSUs and community colleges agree with these findings and have begun the process of removing remedial math course offerings as well. We know that some students progress more slowly than others and to support students who are not prepared to start in Math 1, we will continue to offer the Pre-Math 1 course during summer school, as well as each high school having the option to offer a concurrent Math Support class with Math 1 class or a Math 1 Combo class (Pre-Math 1 and Math 1 in one school year). In addition to these initiatives, schools also have the option to offer a one-week Winter Session where students who might be failing first semester of Math 1 receive intensive instruction to improve their first semester grade.

5. What early interventions are there for math at the elementary and junior highs? CAASPP scores and MAP scores are lower in math than literacy.

For this year, we are focused on using MAP Accelerator as an intervention to help students with gaps in their math knowledge. Mar Vista, Bradly, Valencia, and Aptos Junior our schools in the North Zone who are using MAP Accelerator in the classrooms and so far have seen positive outcomes from this program. Additionally, curriculum coaches and math coordinator are working with teachers to set up small group instruction so that more individual teaching can happen within the classroom while other students have time to use programs such as ALEKS and MAP Accelerator. The last item is the Elevate math classes that happen during the summer. These classes are offered through a partnership with Silicon Valley Education Foundation and are designed as a summer intervention program to elevate student achievement in

math. This program front-loads curriculum designed to align with students' next year math classes and targets middle of the road to below grade level students.

6. How does CTE fit into graduation requirements?

Career technical education in combination with core subject areas such as Science, Art, Math, English as well as in historically elective courses provide an integrated, real-world, practical application within core subject areas. Our new graduation requires the students to take ten credits or one year of CTE courses. Within those courses, students apply learning in project-based, hands-on environments, acquiring what used to be called “soft skills” and are now called “career skills.” These are at the heart of the PVUSD target for success as well. For example, the sequence where Biology is contextualized within Biotechnology, students have an opportunity to choose an integrated course in a potential career field of interest (The Technology of Biology). According to a recent study from the US Department of Education states “Eight years after their expected graduation date, students who focused on career and technical education (CTE) courses while in high school had higher median annual earnings than students who did not focus on CTE.” The data story associated with that quote is found at [LINK](#).

7. Your SPED answer is just not true!! Grad requirements are much more challenging and many of our SPED students are flunking multiple classes with no options. Many of our SPED students are extremely credit deficient and are being forced to Alt. Ed.

There has been a feeling that the special education students are negatively affected with the graduation requirements, however, the data indicates that the D&F rate numbers have not significantly increased and in some cases of where the requirements were increased (VAPA and CTE), the special education students performed well. The issue of equity and access is of great importance to me so we have been tracking the data throughout the District around the changes in graduation requirements. Below you will find the data for Aptos High School special education 9th grade students first semester this year (when the new graduation requirements were added) and last year’s 9th grade students first semester prior to the new graduation requirements. As I mentioned at the meeting, there is a difference between graduation requirements (which did not change for English, math, science) and course sequencing. However, even when we look at the course sequencing, such as changing Earth Science to Biology, the numbers are actually slightly better for Biology with 55% of the 9th grade special education students failing Earth Science last year and 54% of the 9th grade special education students failing Biology this year.

SPED D and F Rates		
Course Title	2018 S1	2019 S1
Pre-Algebraic (ALC)	N/A	0.00%
Applied Algebra A	28.58%	37.50%
Math 1	52.84%	56.66%
Math 1 Support	0.00%	0.00%
Earth and Space Science	55.55%	0.00%
Biology	33.34%	54.06%
Health and Human	43.59%	39.48%
Health and Human Biology A	16.67%	0.00%
Integrated Science A	100.00%	0.00%
Computer Science Essentials	33.33%	N/A
English 1	42.42%	51.61%
English A	57.14%	37.50%
Ethnic Studies	50.00%	25.00%
World History A	0.00%	0.00%
3D Art & Design	50.00%	16.67%
Art 1	42.87%	44.44%
Theater Arts 1	0.00%	0.00%
Foods and Nutrition 1	25.00%	0.00%
Graphic Design 1	0.00%	14.29%
Leadership (ASB)	N/A	0.00%
Learning Skills	5.88%	3.23%
Learning Skills Math 1 Support	30.00%	N/A
Physical Education 1	8.34%	7.14%
Physical Education 1-Football	12.50%	0.00%
Science (MOD)	N/A	0.00%
Social Science (MOD)	N/A	0.00%
Spanish 1	11.11%	22.22%
Spanish 1 SS	0.00%	33.33%

8. Is PVUSD moving to 8:30 start time (per Newsom's law)?

Yes, we will work with a committee of certificated, classified and management staff to carefully plan out the change for the possibly the 2021-2022 school year or at the latest for the 2022-2023 school year as required by SB 328. The committee will begin in the fall of 2020.