

Plano ISD Council

PTA[®]

everychild. one voice.[®]

2008-09 Advocacy Project

Mission of National PTA

PTA is:

- ◆ A powerful voice for all children,
- ◆ A relevant resource for families and communities,
- ◆ A strong advocate for the education and well being of every child.

The new Texas high school graduation requirements include:

4 years of 4 classes (4 x 4)

- English
- Social Studies
- Math
- Science

In effect as of 2007-2008 for 9th graders.

No change to English or Social Studies requirements.

Increases Math and Science from 2 years to 4 years for all students.

And there is essentially only one path toward graduation for all students!

**Plano ISD Council of PTAs
has adopted
an advocacy project
to expand the degree choices
offered to high school students**

Advocacy Statement

To secure additional, rigorous high school diploma degree plan choices that recognize individual student's natural talents, interests and abilities and prepare all students for a variety of career and continuing education aspirations.

5 Practical Problems of 4x4

- #1 - Will cause dropout rate to go up further**
- #2 - Students will enroll in less Fine Arts, Athletics, Technology and Vocational education classes**
- #3 - No allowance for natural talents and interests**
- #4 - Not enough certified math or science teachers**
- #5 – No Texas college or university requires 4 years of Math and Science for admission & 4x4 is not essential to the majority of the largest and fastest growing occupations in the U.S.**

#1 - Dropout Rate Goes Up

Already, the drop out rate in Texas is increasing.

2004 3.9%

2005 4.3%

2006 8.8%

2006 Dropout Rate in PISD: 2.8%

What will the effect of dropping out be on the lives of students?

What will the effect be on our community and state?

Source: TEA website, AEIS Report

#2 - Fewer Fine Arts and Non-Core Education

Students will be able to only select one strand of electives throughout their high school career

College admissions officers look for strands (4 years of the same elective) as a way to show student development and commitment.

Electives are often ways that students can explore interests that lead to future success and employment. Many AP classes are electives!

Burden to Continue Elective Programs

Students seeking to take electives beyond a 4-year strand or who wish to have two 4-year strands, can:

1. Pay for **summer school** to complete required credits (will they be able to have an employment experience and academic break as well?)
2. Pay for **e-school or concurrent enrollment at community college** to complete required credits (will they add this additional class to their already full fall or spring course load and can they handle the stress and academic load?)

Do students have the resources to pay for these classes?

Do students have the motivation to enroll and succeed in the classes?

#3 - Natural Talents & Student Interest

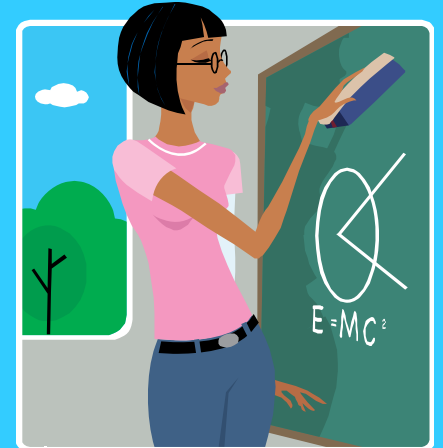
- Not all students excel at math and sciences, but have needed and important talents and abilities
- Students should pursue an education that will prepare them for their future – and **not every future involves further education in math or science**

And Good News!

High school students are taking more math/science without 4x4

#4 - Not enough certified math or science teachers

- 28,445 Teaching certificates granted last year in Texas
- 1,654 in math (6%)
- 1,373 in science (5%)
- Since 2004, the average percentage of Texas high school teachers teaching “out of field” in math is 15%, for science it is 27%.



Who will be teaching 4x4 required high school math and science classes?

#5 - 4x4 is not compulsory for admission to any Texas college or university

Of the Top 5 Universities listed by US News and World Report last year, only **Harvard** requires 4 years of Math and 4 years of Science!

**4x4 is not essential to the majority
of occupations projected to
comprise the future job market**

Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Jobs with fastest, largest or highest rate
of growth between 2004 and 2014**

more than 60% of those new jobs will not
require college.

**Only four of those 44 occupations have
substantial mathematical requirements
(requiring college level math).**

We would like to see the following expansion:

Additional Degree Plans:

- Keep Recommended degree plan, but change name to STEM track (science, technology, engineering and math)
- Add two additional tracks. One to focus on **Humanities/Fine Arts**, the other to focus on **Career Exploration** These tracks would not require 4 years of math or science.
- Allow students in each of the 3 tracks to voluntarily add the Distinguished degree designation by completing a 3rd year of foreign language and mastering 3 AP/IB course exams.

Natural Talents, Interests and Abilities

- One size does not fit all!
- Recognize research about different aptitudes and abilities.
- There is honor and value in all work, not just math and science.



Prepare for Career or Continuing Education

- Students who have the goal to go to college should have the choice of pursuing high school degree plans that enhance their educational interests and goals and prepare them to perform at the university level.
- Students who wish to pursue other post-high school education and training should have a solid basis of knowledge and exposure to the subjects to be prepared to excel.
- Students who wish to join the workforce immediately should leave high school with valuable certifications to compete in the Texas job market.



Our Goal

- To **INFORM** the 36,000+ PTA members of Plano and 600,000+ PTA members of Texas about the 4x4 requirements
- To **EDUCATE** the PTA members about expanding the degree plan options and the legislators that are working to expand choices for our students
- To **ENGAGE** PTA members to make their voices heard on this issue in the Texas House and Senate