

ON BOARD

BY - THE - MINUTES REPORT

August 2014

Board approves GPA calculation changes

New policy set by the Commerce ISD Board of Trustees will change how grade point average is calculated for this year's freshmen. The reasoning behind the change, according to Director of Curriculum and Instruction Charlie Alderman, was to even the playing field for students wanting to participate in extracurricular activities and still vie for top academic honors.

Only English, math, science and social studies grades will be used in calculating class rank. Therefore, if a student wants to participate in band, athletics, art, theater, agriculture or any other elective course, their GPA will not be lower because they choose not to be in a class with weighted GPA.

"We want our students to choose courses that interest them, not just courses that will advance their GPA. Is it fair to keep someone out of the top ten if their interest in ag and athletics causes a lower GPA? We don't think so," Superintendent Blake Cooper said to the Board during discussion at the CISD Board's regular meeting, August 18.

As Level III courses, all eligible Advanced Placement and dual credit courses receive 5.0 points. Level II courses or pre-AP courses receive 4.5 points and Level I courses are all other eligible courses get 4.0 points. The action lessens the weight grade point scale from 6, 5 and 4 points to 5, 4.5 and 4 points minimizing the available weighted GPA range.

With this change, CISD meets the requirements of House Bill 5 passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature. The law was designed to personalize learning. Students will identify career fields that interest them and will take courses to prepare them for success in college and the job market.

The new policy goes into effect immediately and does not affect sophomores, juniors and seniors who must remain on the plan that was in place when they entered high school. Administrators are planning meetings to explain the new policy to incoming freshmen and their parents such as the Tiger Back-to-School Bash which will be held September 9 at Commerce High School.

For more information, go to www.tea.state.tx.us and search House Bill 5.



The Board recognized participants in a summer book study, which was proposed and led by Dr. LaVelle Hendricks, CISD Board member and professor at Texas A&M University-Commerce. The book chosen, "The Other Wes Moore," told of two men named the same and the different paths their lives took. Participants in the study included (left to right) Dr. Dan Jones, president of A&M-Commerce; Darien Redd; Dr. Tim Letzring, dean of the College of Education; Tristan McGowan; Samuel Rasberry; Dr. Hendricks; Diquedrian Goodson; Dr. Jeff Johnson, pastor of First Baptist Church; DeLance Sharp; CHS Principal David Welch and CISD Superintendent Blake Cooper. The young men are CHS students.



The Texas A&M University-Commerce Writing Center was recognized for tutoring eighth grade students over the summer. Left to right are Center tutors Apryl Lewis, Terri Nugent, Yieje Lee and Director Diana Hines. Superintendent Cooper also recognized CMS students and Principal Patrick Just.



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TIGER BACK-TO-SCHOOL BASH

September 9 • 5 – 7:30 p.m.
Commerce High School

CHS Meet the Teacher
5 – 5:45 • CHS library

- Free hot dogs
- Special college entrance sessions presented by Texas A&M University-Commerce
- Sessions to help parents of all levels of students
- Door prizes

BOARD MEETINGS

7:00 • 3315 Washington

Monday . . . September 15
Monday October 20
Monday . . . November 17
Monday Dec. 15

In other action...

- ▶ The Board certified the 2014 appraisal rolls from Hunt and Delta Counties. Director of Finance John Walker said there was a \$10 million loss in taxable income from what the preliminaries projected. He said the amount meant CISD could expect a loss of \$125,000 in tax revenue.
- ▶ Director of Curriculum and Instruction Charlie Alderman presented the annual accountability results from spring STAAR and EOC testing. All schools and the district received the “Met Standard” rating. He stated he was extremely pleased that CHS received four out of six available distinctions including math, reading/ELA, science and social studies. CMS received distinctions in reading/ELA and top 25 percent student progress. ACW received a distinction in reading/ELA.
- ▶ Cooper said reading had been a focus and he was glad to see positive results. Alderman noted that any deficiencies would be addressed to achieve better scores during the coming school year.
- ▶ Cooper said Meet the Teacher night would be Thursday, August 21. CES teachers will greet families from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. ACW will meet guests from 6 to 7 p.m. and CMS will host students and parents from 5 to 7 p.m. Meet the Tiger will be held at 7:30 p.m. downtown on the square.
- ▶ He mentioned that the Tiger Back-To-School Bash will be held September 9 at CHS.
- ▶ Resignations were accepted from Laura Finley, ACW teacher and Valerie Roberson and Philip Burnett, CHS teachers.
- ▶ Teachers employed include Pat Jackson, CHS; Amin Suleiman, CHS; Patrick McConegly, CHS; Anquetette Whiteman, ACW; Helen Robinson, CHS; Geary Walker, CHS and Carl Terrell, CHS.



CMS students participated in an engineering camp this summer led by Dr. Brent Donham. Camp leaders and Dr. Donham were recognized by the CISD Board Monday. Pictured left to right are Perry Moler, Texas A&M University-Commerce Department of Engineering and Technology; Nathaniel West, camp counselor/mentor; Dr. Donham and Superintendent Blake Cooper.