



Summary of the Agriculture and Science Task Force Report – A Plan for the Future

Overview:

The state superintendent announced that Wisconsin will participate in the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the American Diploma Project Network. Both projects emphasize the knowledge and skills students require for the 21st century. State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster's High School Task Force Report recently emphasized rigor, relevance, and partnerships for the state's high schools. In particular Recommendation B stated "give students the opportunity to engage in rigorous, authentic learning experiences that are relevant to their learning needs and future ambitions." Selected strategies for Recommendation B from the high school task force report¹ include;

- + Ensure that all students have access to a variety of options for learning, including the arts, co-curricular activities, work-based learning, service learning, and accelerated offerings, to fully engage all types of learners.***
- + Examine new models and identify best practices in student learning that are both authentic and relevant, and fully assess the rigor and viability of multiple pathways to academic achievement.***
- + Promote instructional practice that includes problem-solving and creativity, and prepares students to solve real-world problems and participate as citizens in a diverse and multi-cultural world.***

Each of these initiatives suggests that districts and the Department of Public Instruction should examine their science and agriculture curriculum to meet these needs so that when our students graduate from high school, they will become valued employees for the 21st century workforce.

Call for Action:

To meet these needs, the state superintendent convened an agriculture and science task force that consisted of science and agriculture educators throughout the state. The task force engaged in two face-to-face meetings and communicated regularly via electronic mailings. An internal work group was established at DPI. This group worked with the task force to develop implementation strategies for each of the task force recommendations.

¹ The entire report can be found at: www.dpi.wi.gov

Recommendations:

The task force advanced recommendations about agriculture courses being counted toward high school graduation credits in science to ensure that all students receive the knowledge and skills that are consistent with the high school task force recommendations and the tenants of the American Diploma Network and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

The task force recommendations call for renewal of the high school graduation equivalency process. As part of the renewed equivalency, the task force developed a crosswalk of the agriculture and science standards. The task force asked that this crosswalk be the foundation for determining content rigor and equivalency for an agriculture course that is either currently being used to meet a high school graduation requirement for science or for one that may be used for equivalency in the future. The task force also called for the Department of Public Instruction to convene a group of educators to examine PI 34 licensing process for obtaining either a science or an agriculture license and to report on the likelihood of developing a new agriculture/science license.

1. Renewal of Wisconsin's equivalency process.

Chapter PI 18.02 defines “equivalent graduation policy” as “a broad policy which meets the credit requirements specified for each subject area, but which permits selected equivalent courses as long as such courses contain the time allotment and substantially the same objectives to develop the knowledge, concepts, and skills of the course for which an equivalent is proposed.”

Implementations strategies –

- ✚ Establish new agriculture/science equivalency procedures for districts in Wisconsin.
- ✚ Establish standards-based foundation for the course equivalency process by developing a crosswalk of the science and agriculture standards.
- ✚ Work collectively with the University of Wisconsin Systems Administration and other institutions of high education in Wisconsin to accept Department of Public Instruction approved student transcribed equivalency courses.

2. Examine science and agriculture licenses under the PI 34 regulations.

Teachers licensed to teach an agriculture course often have taken many science courses during the process of obtaining their agriculture license. Additionally teachers licensed to teach science may also be qualified to teach an agriculture course because of the kind and type of science courses or agriculture courses they took during their licensing process. It is important to note that there are a number of agriculture teachers who are working through the University of Wisconsin System universities to obtain a science license.

Implementation strategies:

- ✚ Convene Wisconsin educators who represent agriculture education and/or science education, K – 16. Their task will be to examine the science and the agriculture licenses to determine if a new agriculture/science license is warranted. Include an analysis of science and agriculture course taking trends at the higher education institutions which offer approved educator programs for either agriculture or science. Report the findings to the State Superintendent.

3. Communicate the recommendations of the task force

The cross curricular work of the agriculture and science task force is unique and will set the state for other curricular equivalency activities. While some of the recommendations of the task force are not new, some are. For example, the use of the standards-based crosswalk is new to educators and districts alike.

Implementation strategies:

- ✚ A letter from the state superintendent should be sent to each district in the state. Included in the letter are the recommendations and implementation strategies for the renewal of the equivalency process.
- ✚ Develop best practices that example the crosswalk and equivalent agriculture courses.
- ✚ Convene an implementation summit that illustrates best practices and examples of the equivalency process.

Supplementary to this report are the various documents that were developed by the department to assist with the equivalency process. Each of those documents are found on the department's website at <http://dpi.wi.gov/ag/2agscieq.html>.

***Agriculture and Science, A Plan for the Future
Task Force Members***

<u><i>Agriculture Teachers</i></u>	<u><i>School District</i></u>	<u><i>Science Teachers</i></u>	<u><i>School District</i></u>
Pam Allen	Mount Horeb High School	Dave Bergerson	Lincoln High School, Wisconsin Rapids
Kevin Champeau	Freedom High School	Christy Charles	Deerfield High School
Glenda Crook	Lodi High School	Rod Dymesich	Phillips Middle School
Jim Favreau	Ithaca High School	Cindy Edlund	Crandon High School
Trisha Follen	Southern Door High School	Candy Jenke	Chippewa Falls High School
Melinda Goplin	Whitehall High School	Sue Johnson	Madison Metropolitan School District
Rick Henningfeld	Big Foot High School	Emmie Kirchner	Ithaca High School
Ralph Johnson	Juda High School	Mark Klawiter	Deerfield High School
Roger King	Holmen High School	Mary LaVick	Rice Lake High School
Rhonda Knapp	Waunakee High School	Bill Martine	Crandon Middle School
Betty Krcma*	Green Bay East High School	Antonio Rodriguez	Milwaukee Public Schools
Mary Nelson	Barron High School	Karyl Rosenburg	Nicolet High School, Glendale
Jeff Ostheimer	Boscobel High School	James Schmitt	Eau Claire Area School District
Larry Plapp	Badger High School	Tracy Swedland	Medford High School
Jodi Rogahn	Burlington High School		
Brenda Scheil	New Auburn High School		
Brad Sirianni	Independence High School		

*WEAC Representative