10-27-07

Science in Tempe Union High School District

A Question and Answer Session with Dr. Cecilia Johnson,
Director of Curriculum for Tempe Union High School District

Her responses in **blue**.
KPN added some information in **green.**

1. What are the science requirements for TUHSD?
The TUHSD science requirements are one credit of physical science and one credit of a life science and the requirements are the same for all schools.

2. What are some of the "elective" science classes offered?
A handout was distributed for those attending KPN's October meeting; however the following website will also provide a list:
(http://www.tuhsd.k12.az.us/departments/curriculum/CourseCatalog2007-08.pdf)

Of the 32 classes, the areas of study are Chemistry, Physics, Living World, Physical Science, Biology, Earth Science, Botany, Biotechnology, Human Anatomy and Physiology, and Exercise Physiology.

3. Do schools have different classes they offer in this area?
Schools choose any courses from the Governing Board approved courses to offer on the individual campuses.

Not all courses are offered a each school site. See each school website for information on their course catalog.

4. Do you know of any outside enrichment opportunities for high school students in the area of Science?
Our students have a variety of options. Two that allow them to earn TUHSD credit are:

- Advanced Studies - students work on a research project, usually entailing university coursework. (This course receives weighted class rank points and may be repeated for credit.)
- Honors Professional Internship Program - this course is for gifted students only and they work as an intern under a professional mentor in a variety of fields.

Note: Both of the above receives weighted class rank points and may be repeated for credit.

5. What are the new graduation requirements for Science that begin next year? How is this going yo affect TUHSD and do you know yet how you will respond to this requirement?
There are no new graduation requirements in Science being proposed for next year.

There is a proposal at the state level to increase the Science requirement for education but would not be in for a couple years.

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6. Do you have any points of interest you would like to discuss?

- We have rewritten our Biotechnology course and purchased equipment. It is a very expensive course to offer and we are seeking funding sources to underwrite the cost.
- We have science teachers participating in various partnerships:
  - Project Pathways is a partnership with ASU, linking math and science
  - CISIP (Communication in Science Inquiry Project) is a partnership with Maricopa Community College, focusing in literacy in Science, linking English, Science and ESL.
  - Biotech Academy is a biotechnology project with Mesa Public Schools and ASU.
  - South Mountain is also in partnership with Corona in a biotechnology project.

7. How are the concepts/lessons connected or built upon grade by grade? How exactly do they coordinate between the districts?

Courses are aligned with state standards. We write our curriculum with scope and sequence in mind from course level to the next course level. Our course curriculum can be viewed in our district website: http://www.tuhsd.k12.az.us/view.php?page=20,13,1 Our math/science literacy specialists work closely together. We have articulation meetings between middle school and high school science teachers.

8. When will students be tested for AIMS in Science and what is TUHSD doing to prepare for this?

Tenth grade students will be tested on the Science AIMS on Wednesday, April 9, 2008. Our tenth grade students piloted the Science AIMS test in Spring 2007. We have CRA's (Criterion Referenced Assessments) written for Chem/Physics and Biology for pre- and post-assessment data. Aligning our curriculum with state standards, creating curriculum maps, using best practices in instructional strategies, and focusing on science literacy are also ways we are preparing our students for the Science AIMS.