

**TOPIC: 2010 HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:  
SCHOOL DISTRICT WAIVERS**

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**I. BACKGROUND & SUMMARY**

This agenda item recommends Commission action on requests from school districts seeking a waiver from the 2010 Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR) for students in their districts.

At its July 2007 meeting, the Commission directed staff to work with the Colorado Department of Education to address the problem that an unknown number of students who graduate in 2010 or later may not meet the requirements. Based on collaborative work with the Department of Education and discussions with Admissions Directors and other higher education institutional staff, Department staff recommended three adjustments to the admission policy for 2010 implementation. At its July 2008 meeting, the Commission directed staff to revise the Admission policy on the 2010 requirement to: (A) include an exemption for students whose index number exceeds the minimum institutional admissions index number by more than 10 points<sup>1</sup>; (B) apply the 20% window on a statewide rather than an institutional basis; and (C) permit school districts to apply for waivers to HEAR for graduates of that district's high school. In September 2008, the Commission approved revisions to Commission policy Section I Academic Affairs: Part F Admissions Standards, adding the three exemptions addressed above.

The academic units required for applicants who graduate high school in the spring of 2010 or later are listed below.

**2010 Higher Education Admission Requirements**

<b>Academic Area*</b>	<b>2010+ Graduates</b>
English**	4 years
Mathematics (Must include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or equivalents)***	4 years
Natural/Physical Sciences (two units must be lab-based)****	3 years
Social Sciences (at least one unit of U.S. or world history)	3 years
Foreign Language	1 year
Academic Electives*****	2 years

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<sup>1</sup> More than 15 points for MSCD.

\* CCHE, CDE, and School Districts are developing standards for alternative demonstration of proficiency to be accepted in lieu of course completion. For course guidelines see paragraph 4.01 of the [Admissions Standards Policy](#).

\*\*Two units of ESL English may count for HEAR requirements when combined with two units of successfully completed college preparatory English.

\*\*\*College-preparatory ESL mathematics/science courses that include content and academic rigor/level comparable to other acceptable courses may satisfy HEAR requirements.

\*\*\*\*Acceptable Academic Electives include additional courses in English, mathematics, natural/physical sciences and social sciences, foreign languages, art, music, journalism, drama, computer science, honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate courses, and appropriate CTE courses.

Under Commission policy, the school board of a school district seeking a waiver for students in their district shall by a vote “*attest that their school district does not have available resources to meet HEAR 2010 requirements as established in current policy and requests a district waiver from CCHE starting with the graduating class of 2010*”. (See Appendix B)

The Commission directed staff to define how a school district could apply for a waiver and how the staff will administer the waiver application process. Policy changes adhere to the intent of the recommendation that the Commission discussed and approved at the July 2008 meeting. By March 13, 2009 Staff will provide institutions the list of school districts approved for a waiver for HEAR 2010.

## **II. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Adopted policy required school districts to submit the resolution and request for a waiver to the Department of Higher Education by January 15, 2009. The request must specify that the school district cannot meet the requirements of the fourth year of mathematics, the one year of foreign language, or both and provide an explanation as to why the requirements cannot be met. School district waivers are to be effective for three years, until the graduating class of 2013.

Department staff received waiver requests from the following three school districts:

**Weldon Valley School District RE-20J** – The Weldon Valley School Board passed a resolution approving a waiver request for the fourth year of math and the one year of foreign language based on lack of available resources to consistently offer the required course work in either subject area. This school district has one mathematics teacher for 84 students from 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (District)** – The Board of Trustees passed a resolution approving a waiver request for the one year of foreign language based upon the lack of a certified teacher(s) in their district to teach foreign language. The challenge is finding foreign language teachers with the skills to work with visually and hearing impaired students.

**Rocky Ford School District R2** – The Rocky Ford School Board passed a resolution approving a waiver request for the fourth year of mathematics and the one year of a foreign language based on a lack of available financial and staffing resources. The mathematics teachers are at the limit of course preparations they can do because of the need to teach from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

**III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Commission approve the waiver requests from Weldon Valley School District RE-20J, Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, and Rocky Ford School District R2.**

Copies of all relevant statute, policy, and the school districts waiver request materials are on file in the Academic Affairs Office.