

Written Testimony of Douglas Pike
Submitted to the Administrative Rules Review Committee

5/13/11

Since arriving in Utah a couple of years ago I have been surprised by a particular education practice. I was informed (at, now, several levels of administration) that high school courses (such as algebra) taken prior to ninth grade enrollment, cannot be placed on the high school transcript or given credit. Interestingly, my child's school sent a notice cautioning parents to delay enrollment in a first year language to ninth grade because the state scholarship program requiring two years of a language would not recognize the credit if it occurred before 9th grade. And this is at a 3 year jr high where the class is taught to both 8th and 9th graders but only 9th graders get a credit for it.

The only effect is to delay students from proceeding through their programs at a pace that remains challenging. Why demand that students "tread water"? Other regulations that I have discussed with Mr. Hunsaker note that as students do take math courses earlier than 9th grade, rather than grant credit, the student is liable to replace that class with another credit of the district's designation. (See 277-700.6.C.2) The only function of these regulations seems to be to ensure districts have more money from the state then they would if they let a small percentage of their students graduate early or take less classes as they transition to college.

I have no objections to the number of credits required or the level of work required. I do object to artificially holding students back and discriminating in the granting of credits.

Would you please make a simple change? I would suggest:

"No regulation promulgated by the state, a state agency, a licensed contractor, or a subdivision of the state shall bar high school transcript credit for any course taken prior to enrollment in 9th grade, that, if taken after said enrollment, would be granted such credit."

Most of my children have taken HS math prior to entering HS. My youngest son took Algebra in 7th grade and is now taking geometry in 8th. He has ninth graders in the same class. They are receiving HS credit. He is not. I believe this is discriminatory and fairly poor thinking!

I would enjoy answering any questions you may have. By way of personal information, I served seven years on the Arizona State Charter School Board as the appointee of both Gov. Symington and Gov. Hull. I served as president for two and a half years. Only one of my nine children went to a charter. I am a strong advocate of educational reform and have experience in making it happen. Please feel free to call [please see Art Hunsaker for phone #], I would enjoy speaking with you and getting to know you better. I very much wish to pursue this change for both my children and the others it is discouraging in their educational pursuits.

Douglas F. Pike, P.E.