

Education

SCHOOL TALK

By Dr. Marshall C. Darnell

Graduation Requirements Increase

A recent ruling by the State Board of Education will increase the graduation requirements needed for completion of a high school diploma program beginning in 1988. In reaction to recent research documents, which suggested that the high school curriculum throughout this nation should be strengthened, the State Board of Education, meeting in Las Vegas, reviewed a number of proposals and has made the following changes:

- ...Four credits of English;
- ...Two credits of mathematics;
- ...Two credits of science;
- ...Two credits of social studies;
- ...Two credits of physical education;
- ...One-half credit of health education;
- ...One credit of humanities education;
- ...Eight and one-half credits of electives; and,
- ...Computer education competency.

This would be the state mandated course of study and would suggest that the

Clark County School District must make a number of changes in the graduation requirement outline so that students would be able to satisfy these requirements. As an example, students who will be graduating in the year 1992 must complete a humanities course which may be from the curricula area of art or music or social studies. A computer education competency must be demonstrated by students graduating in 1992. This competency must be defined and while many of the students leave junior high school with this skill, many high school students would be required to complete this new program.

The areas of English, math, and science have also increased and obviously the number of electives the student may select during their high school career has been reduced. The reduction of electives for many students will necessitate the elimination of programs such as fine arts and occupational education if the current school day remains at its

present length.

The call for reform throughout the nation for America's high schools has witnessed a number of states joining Nevada in increasing the academic preparation that each student must successfully complete before a diploma is issued. This call for reform was made not only to provide stronger academic programs, but to prepare students for additional training at the post secondary level.

A real concern rests with the elimination of strong elective programs in the occupational education area. Once a program has been eliminated from the curriculum, and that program may be a business or office occupations class, a welding program, or a class in technologies, it is extremely difficult to reinstate that program within this area of limited resources. Monies may not be available to obtain the equipment essential to instructional activity. Teachers will simply not be trained but will in fact move

into the private factor for employment. The most recent research available suggests that there has been a 28% decrease in enrollment in occupational education classes during the past four years in the Clark County School District. This is directly related to a reduction in occupational program offerings and the desire by many students to attend college as their choice for career preparation. The dropout rate within the district also has a significant impact on this decrease in occupational education enrollment.

In the months ahead the Clark County School District will be required to develop programs which will meet the educational needs of all the students, and while we must address the new graduation requirements, a strong emphasis is being exerted to maintain the current job skills training program which have become an acceptable and productive segment of the total curriculum.

As plans are developed for a curriculum design for the



Alex Haley
Journalist and Author

A Special Message from Alex Haley for minorities about careers in journalism

My career as a journalist began in my spare time with lots of desire and no formal training. Minority news professionals were scarce then and getting into the news business was tough.

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future, parents and students will be asked to participate in this decision making process. Job skills for high school students cannot be considered a luxury. It is an essential educational service because 50% of our students who graduate each year will never attend a college or a university. Job training for America's youth can produce a strong work force and lack of such a program can quickly place America in a position of having its services provided by other countries.

JACOB

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reticence in dealing with the subject of sex.

His call for more sex education should not be ignored, especially in schools serving at-risk student populations. The scope of the problem suggests we need more school-based health clinics that provide information and assistance to youngsters.

The reality is that many young people engage in sex without the information they need to avoid premature pregnancy. In New York City alone, the schools report that over 14,000 girls under the age of 17 became pregnant in 1984 -- and almost 1,300 of those pregnancies were to girls under 15.

Those kids need the opportunity to grow to maturity before they have children and school clinics can help them.

CCCC Schedules Parent Education Seminars

Clark County Community College has received a grant from the Nevada Children's Fund channeled through a local non-sectarian family counseling agent which is being used to provide weekly parent education seminars.

Each Friday, beginning on November 7th and continuing until May 15, 1987, a parent education group will meet from 11:00 a.m. until Noon in Room 1076 at the CCCC Cheyenne Campus, 3200 E. Cheyenne Avenue in North Las Vegas. Focus will be on such issues as parenting, dealing with feelings, adolescents, parent-child communication and discipline (positive guidance of children). There are no participation fees and Ms. Karen Jorgenson will act as the group facilitator.

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CLARK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE