

Curriculum & Course Offerings

A study of Seward Public Schools

What was the purpose of the study?

- The purpose of this study was to evaluate how Seward Public Schools compares with other schools related to course offerings, instructional units offered, and staffing in each curricular area.

What information was collected for the study?

- Class schedules, registration handbooks, and state report card data from 14 other schools were collected, including those in our athletic conference.
- These documents were analyzed to determine the number of teachers in each department, the number of course offerings, the number of periods and length of the school day, and the number of instructional units offered at each school.

Instructional Units 101

- ✦ Instructional units are calculated based upon the amount of time differing courses are offered.
- ✦ The state department requires a minimum number of instructional units for each subject taught.
- ✦ A comparison was completed a few years ago that showed Seward well behind other schools in the number of instructional units offered in the schedule.

Instructional Units

- ✦ Are calculated by:

minutes per period (x) # days the course meets

900

- ✦ A 50-minute course meeting for 180 days earns 10 instructional units. Often found in a traditional schedule.
- ✦ A 90-minute course meeting for 44 days earns 4.4 units or 8.8 units per year, as in the block schedule.

Instructional Units

- ✦ Three ways to quickly increase instructional units
 - ✦ **Lengthen the instructional period**
 - ✦ 2 min. per period = 0.1 i.u. per course per term
 - ✦ **Lengthen the term**
 - ✦ 1 day per term = 0.1 i.u. per course per term
 - ✦ **Offer additional courses**
 - ✦ A new 18 week course would generate 4.4 i.u.

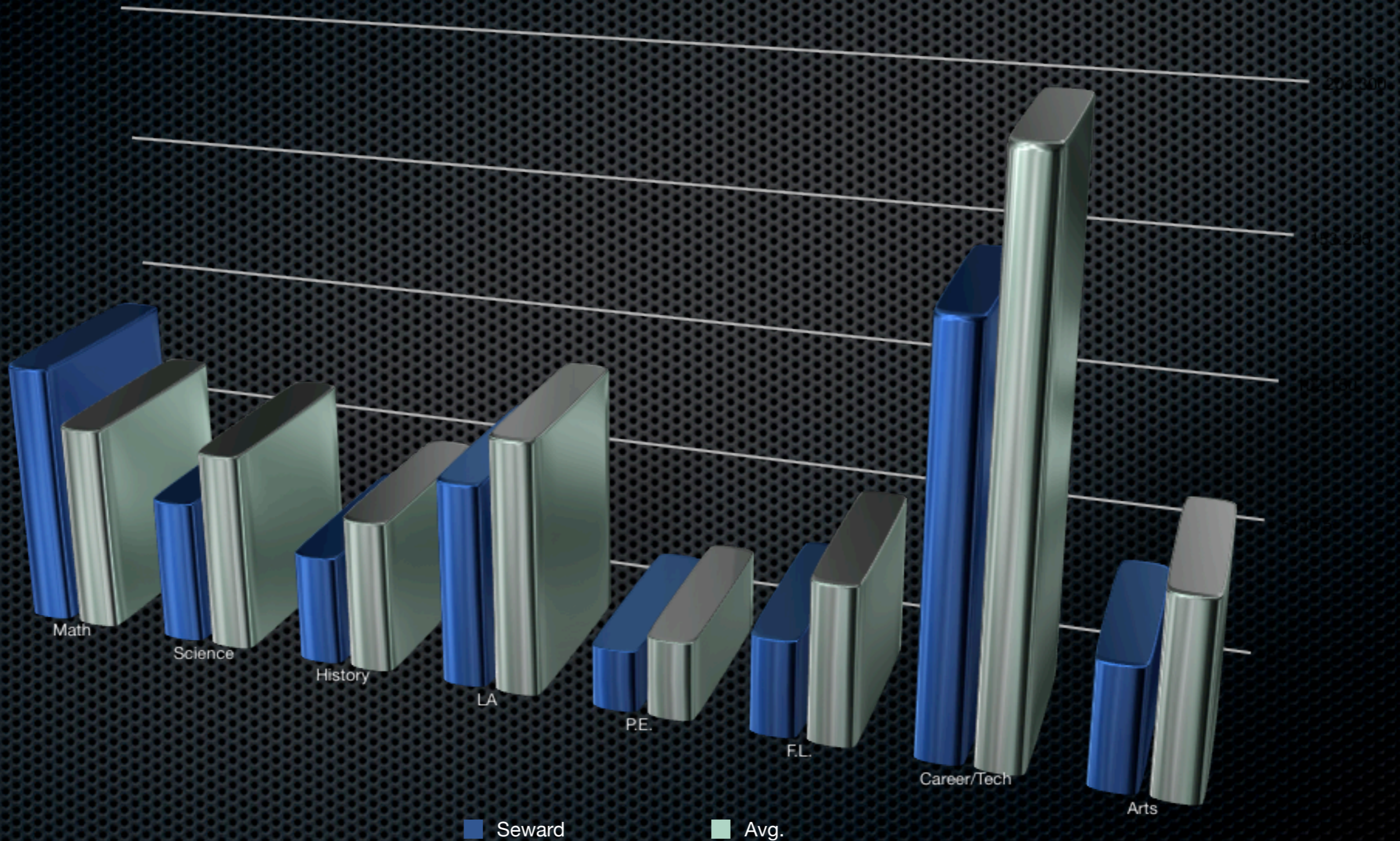
Instructional Units (I. U.)

- ✦ If a course, such as English 11, is offered 5 times per day, that course generates 4.4 i.u. per term. We can only count it as one course offering.
- ✦ If the course is split to include 4 sections English 11 and 1 section of British Lit, we now calculate 8.8 i.u.
- ✦ Instructional units, while required in each area, are based upon seat-time. This can be easily adjusted by changing the length of time the course meets, adjusting the curriculum and re-naming the course, or offering additional courses.

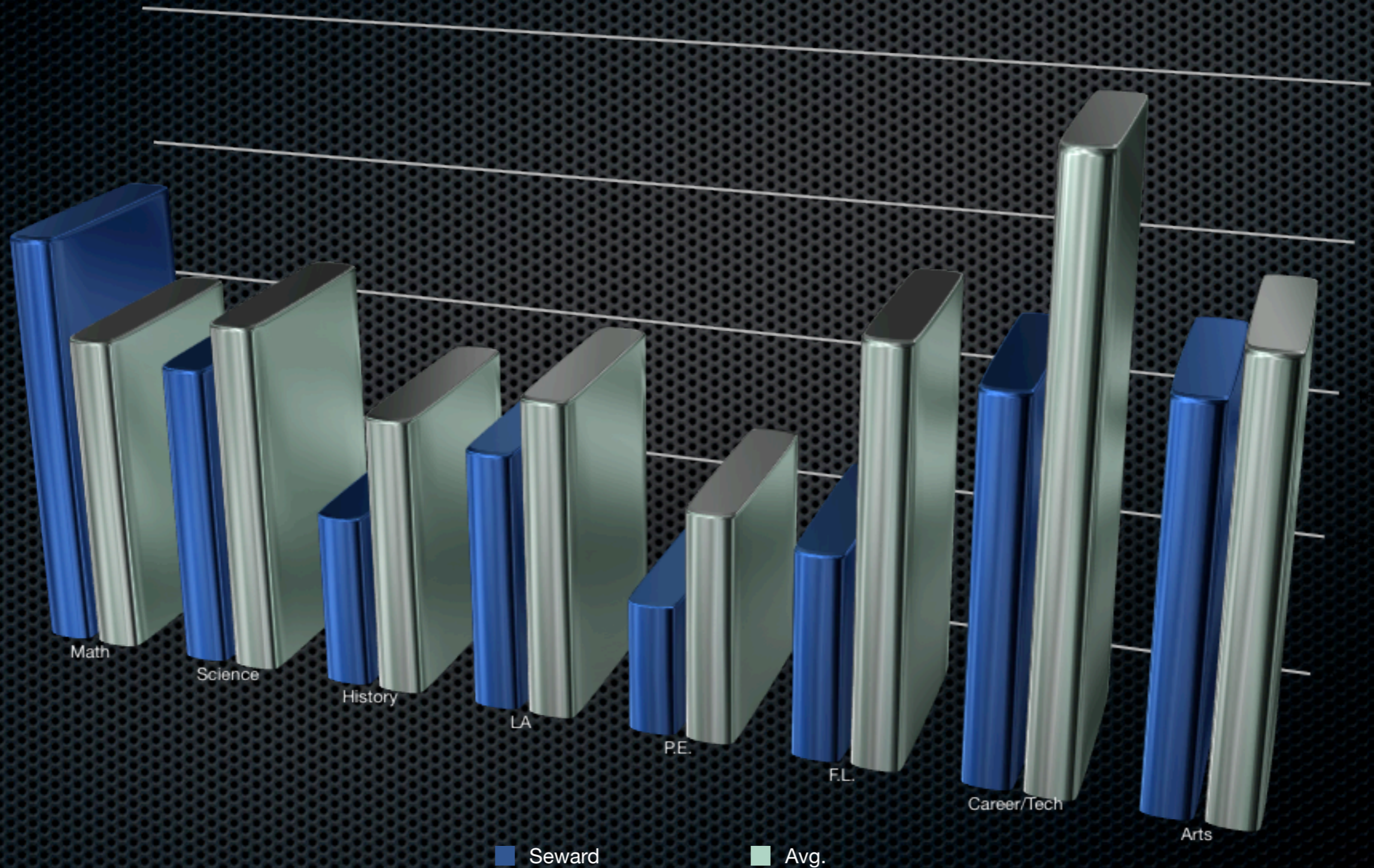
Definitions for Following Graphs

- ✦ **Instructional Units** - (I.U.) - a number representative of the length of time differing courses are offered.
- ✦ **F.T.E.** - “Full Time Equivalent” - equal to one full-time teacher in that particular subject area.
- ✦ **Course Offerings** - the number of different titles of courses that are taught. Not reflective of the length of the course. One school may offer “Art” for the same amount of time as another school offers “Drawing” and “Painting”, they simply name it differently than “Art”.

Total Instructional Units (I.U.)



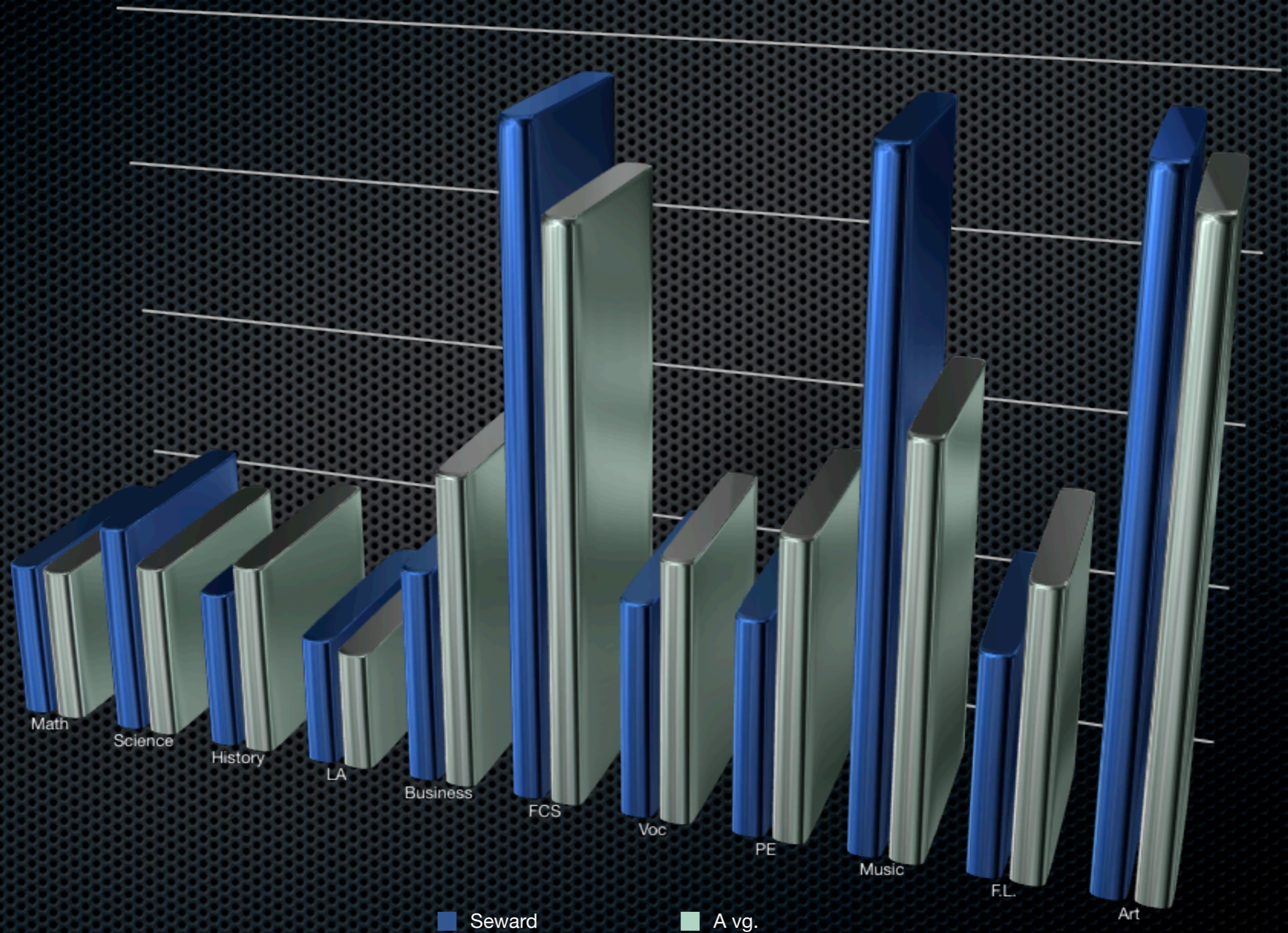
Instructional Units per F.T.E.



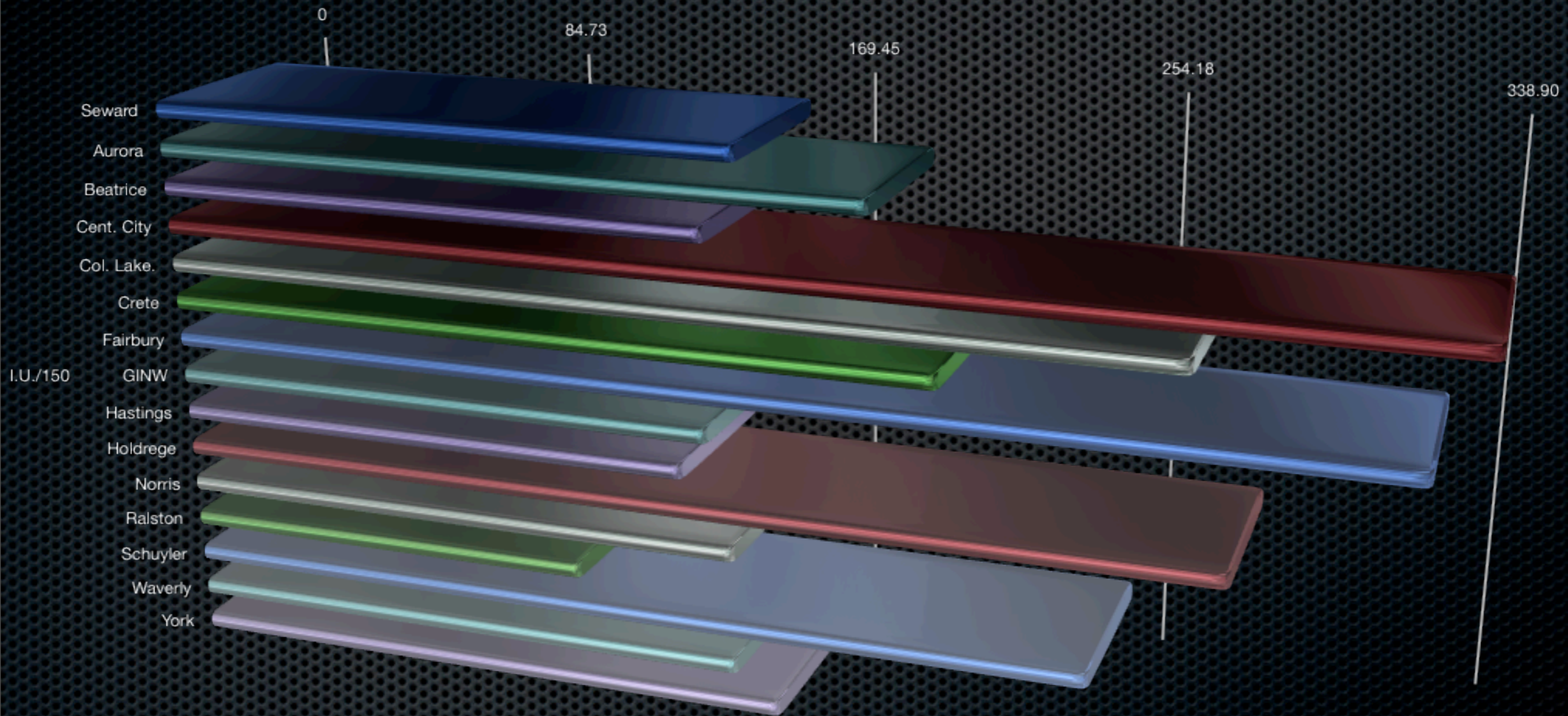
Offerings per F.T.E.



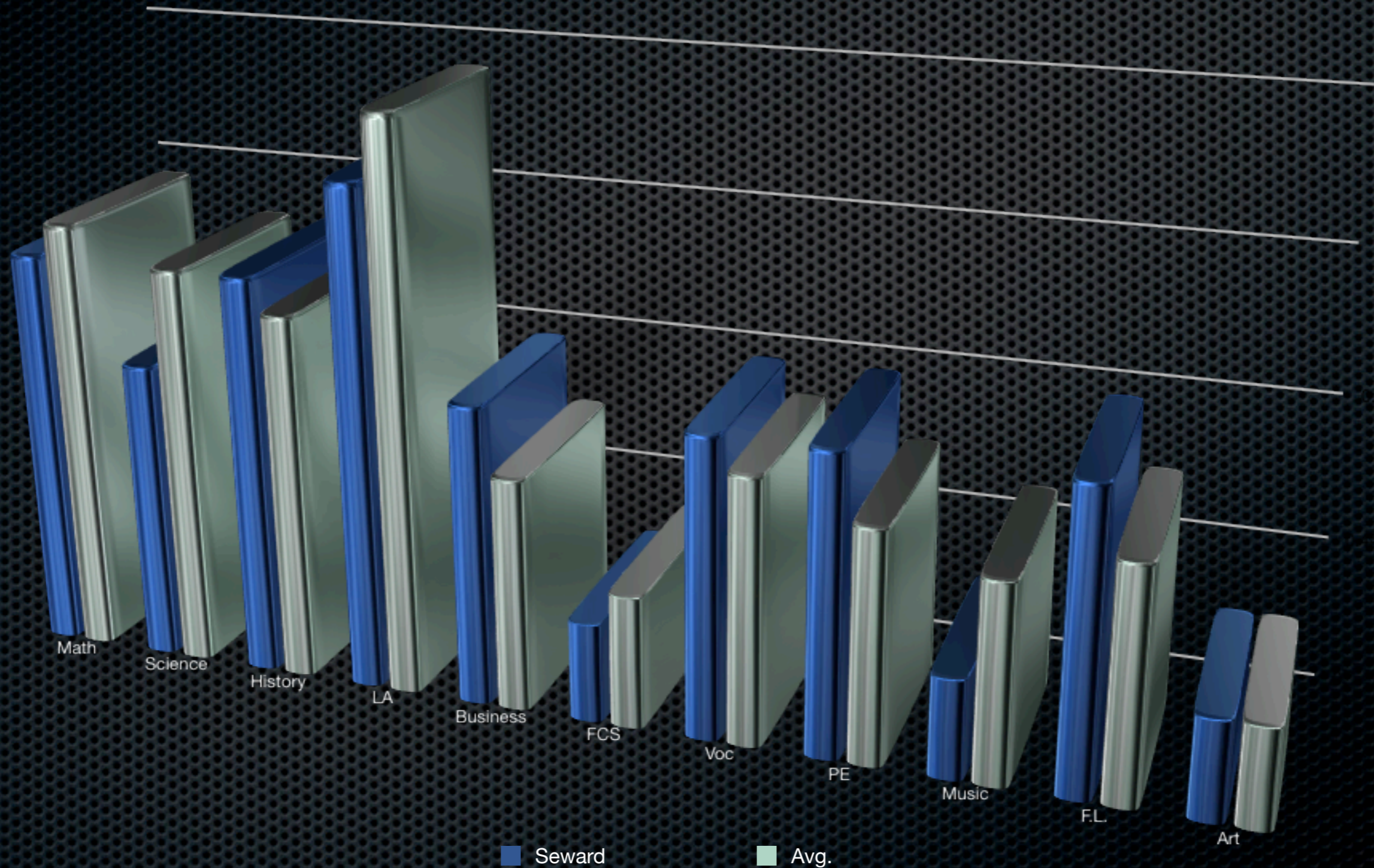
Students per F.T.E.



I. U. per 150 Students



F.T.E. per 150 Students



Looking Forward

- ✦ Schedules will be analyzed to make sure that they are as efficient as possible.
- ✦ More courses could possibly be offered, depending on scheduling & the number of sections needed.
- ✦ Teachers in Seward may be able to offer more variety, but the number of students per teacher is at or above the average in most areas with current courses.
- ✦ Adding or consolidating curriculum &/or staffing will be based upon the needs of students for the 21st century.