

Credit Flexibility Operating Procedure

Sheridan High School

Effective Date 2010-2011 School year

1. Options for Earning High School Credit

- a. High school students in grades 9-12 may earn high school credits using any combination of the following methods:
 - i. Successfully completing traditional high school level courses for which one credit shall be granted per 120 hours of class time;
 - ii. Successfully completing an educational option plan as outlined in #2 below.
 - iii. Successfully completing a college-level course for dual credit in accordance with the Board's policy on post-secondary enrollment options. *Board policy 2271 R.C. 3313.613, 3365.01 through 3365.09*
 - iv. Successfully completing an online course offered by a provider approved by (a high school principal or his or her designee OR the district credit flexibility committee).
 - v. Successfully completing an examination, providing a portfolio of work that demonstrates mastery of academic content standards, or a combination of these methods.
- b. The district shall not limit the number of credits earned by a student through demonstration of mastery or completion of educational options. The district shall evaluate requests for early graduation in accordance with its policy on Academic Acceleration. However, the district shall not cap the total number of credits a student may earn or compel a student who does not wish to do so to graduate after completing fewer than four years of high school.
- c. Students may earn credit in multiple content areas by successfully completing interdisciplinary educational options that address content standards in more than one subject area.
- d. The district shall not prohibit access to online programs, postsecondary options, or deny credit earned under credit flexibility options by students transferring to the district from another Ohio public or chartered non-public school.

2. Educational Options

- a. Responsibilities and Expectations
 - i. Educational options plans for students participating in extracurricular activities governed by the Ohio High School Athletic Association shall include procedures for documenting ongoing participation and satisfactory progress on the part of the student for the purpose of satisfying academic eligibility requirements established in OHSAA bylaws. Students must have five passing credits in the previous grading period to be eligible to play and be carrying five credits during the athletic season.
 - ii. The district reserves the right to reassign a student participating in an educational option to a traditional course or other placement at its discretion if the student fails to meet the standards for ongoing participation and satisfactory progress described in his or her educational options plan.
 - iii. Educational options plans may include activities that occur outside of school such as mentorships, internships, service learning, and educational travel. However, parents of students proposing educational options that include such activities may be required to sign a waiver holding the district harmless for any injuries or damages that occur in the course of a student's participation in educational options activity outside district facilities and without staff supervision as a precondition of the district's approval of the plan.
 - a.) Students participating in field-based educational options-related activities (e.g. mentorships and internships with businesses and community organizations) shall be required to adhere to safety rules and standards of behavior and appearance appropriate for the activity setting.
 - b.) The district may suspend an approved educational option plan and reassign the student to another setting at its discretion if the host organization reports significant misconduct, tardiness, or absence on the part of the student.

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b. Appeals

- i. Students may appeal decisions regarding access to an educational option and/or standards established for awarding grades and credit for educational options by submitting an appeal to his or her principal or his or her designee.
- ii. Appeals will be reviewed by a committee comprised of a building principal or assistant principal, a teacher in the relevant subject area not involved in the original decision, and a guidance counselor.
- iii. The student filing the appeal and his or her parent(s) shall be given an opportunity to present concerns and recommendations to the committee.
- iv. Appeals shall be reviewed by the committee within 10 days from the date the appeal was submitted in writing. The decision of the committee shall be final unless overturned by the Superintendent or a directive resulting from an appeal filed with the Ohio Department of Education.

3. Credit by Demonstration of Mastery

- a. The district shall allow students the opportunity to earn credit by demonstrating mastery of the academic content standards covered by any course offered by the district, and shall award a number of credits to students demonstrating mastery equal to the number of credits awarded to students who successfully complete the equivalent traditional course.
- b. Students may demonstrate mastery by completing a comprehensive examination covering essential knowledge and skills addressed in an equivalent traditional course, by presenting a portfolio of work demonstrating mastery of knowledge and skills addressed in an equivalent traditional course, or through a combination of these methods. The student is responsible for the completion of all major term papers, presentations, or projects that would take place in the traditional classroom setting regardless of which option is chosen if the course is taught at Sheridan High School.
 - i. Test Option

Tests used for this purpose shall be comprehensive exams created for the traditional course (e.g. a course final exam), state-approved assessments (e.g. end-of-course exams), and published assessment instruments covering relevant content approved by the Superintendent or his or her designee, or a combination of these options. The district shall communicate to students how assessment instruments used will be scored and how the number of credits awarded and grade assigned will be determined based on scores earned before the assessment is administered. The district may require a student to complete examinations in a proctored environment.
 - ii. Portfolio Option

This option requires students to develop activities that meet the requirement of the Ohio Content Standards. Students will present projects or portfolios to the Credit Review Panel. Students who wish to obtain credit for this option must submit a written proposal to the principal that includes:

 - a) Clearly defined goals that are tied directly to the Ohio Academic Content Standards as well as clearly described activities that will lead to successful attainment of the described goals.
 - b) Description and rubric for how the goals will be measured against the Ohio Academic Content Standards in order to provide evidence of learning. Portfolios shall be evaluated by staff with expertise in the relevant content area. Rubrics shall be used for evaluating portfolios of student work. Criteria and scoring methods shall be shared with the student before the portfolio is assessed.
- c. After tests and/or portfolios are scored, the student shall be notified of the grade for which he or she would be eligible. The student will then be given the choice of accepting the credit and grade earned based on the assessment or completing a traditional course or other option approved by the district. The district shall not require a student to accept credit on a "pass/fail" basis.
- d. Students who wish to earn credit by demonstrating mastery without enrolling in a course

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should notify their guidance counselor according to the following deadlines:

Fall Course: Letter of Intent: March 30 Proposal: May 1
Spring Course: Letter of intent: November 30 Proposal: December 15.

The letter of intent needs to include the following information:

- Course for which you are requesting credit
- School year and semester if applicable
- Current date
- Student and parent or guardian signature

- e. Students who wish to demonstrate mastery for credit during a course already under way shall submit a proposal for another educational option in which to participate for the duration of the course in which he or she was originally enrolled. Proposals will be considered based on current course grade and teacher recommendation. The principal's decision is final.
- f. Students may appeal requirements and standards for awarding grades and credit based on demonstrations of mastery by submitting an appeal to his or her principal or guidance counselor. Appeals will be reviewed by a committee comprised of a building principal or assistant principal, a teacher in the relevant subject area not involved in the original decision, and a guidance counselor. The student filing the appeal and his or her parent(s) shall be given an opportunity to present concerns and recommendations to the committee. Appeals shall be reviewed by the committee within 10 days from the date the appeal was submitted in writing. The decision of the committee shall be final unless overturned by the Superintendent or a directive resulting from an appeal filed with the Ohio Department of Education.

4. Credit Flexibility and Special Populations

- a. Students with disabilities shall not be excluded from opportunities to earn credit through educational options or by demonstrations of mastery. Accommodations and supports for students with disabilities participating in educational options and online courses shall be provided consistent with student's Individual Education Plan and/or 504 plan.
- b. Educational options and opportunities to earn credit based on demonstration of mastery may be used in combination with other forms of academic acceleration described in the Board's policy on academic acceleration for advanced students (*Policy 5410*) and documented on the student's Written Acceleration Plan.

5. Fees Associated with Educational Options, Online Courses, and Credit by Demonstrations of Mastery

- a. All courses will have an \$80 fee that must be paid with the application to earn credit by testing out or submitting a portfolio. This will go to offset the cost of materials, teacher consultation time, and grading that would take place outside the normal school day. No additional assessment fees shall be charged to students or their families when district-made tests or portfolio review rubrics are used or when instruments are provided by the State of Ohio are used in evaluating students for credit based on demonstrations of mastery. The district may also require students to pay part or all of the cost of administering a commercial assessment instrument if that instrument is not normally administered free of charge to students participating in equivalent traditional courses. The district shall make every reasonable effort to provide a free or low cost assessment option to economically disadvantaged students requesting the opportunity to earn credit based on a demonstration of mastery.
- b. The district may require parents of students participating in educational options not initiated by the district to pay additional fees not to exceed the actual cost of participation in that option, including any charges for tuition and registration fees; books, assessments and materials not typically provided free of charge to students in traditional courses, and travel costs if transportation is provided by the district.

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6. Communication Plan

- a. Opportunities and requirements related to credit flexibility shall be publicized annually using multiple forms of media which may include any combination of the following: publication on the district's website, publication in the high school course catalogs, dissemination of information at parent/teacher conferences and other events open to parents, and the district newsletter. Copies of a publication describing opportunities and requirements related to credit flexibility shall also be made available to students, staff, and parents upon request to the high school guidance counselors and principals.
- b. The content of these publications shall be reviewed annually to ensure their completeness and accuracy by the Superintendent or his or her designee.
- c. The superintendent or his or her designee(s) shall maintain a cumulative database of approved educational options and standards for awarding grades and credits based on demonstrations of mastery to assist students, parents, and teachers with understanding available options and to help ensure equity and consistent standards of rigor beginning in the 2010-2011 school year.

7. Data Collection and Reporting

- a. The superintendent or his or her designee(s) shall develop and implement procedures for monitoring and annually reporting to the Board and the Ohio Department of Education data regarding:
 - i. Methods and frequency of communicating credit flexibility information to students and parents;
 - ii. The number of students participating in educational options and earning credit based on demonstration of mastery;
 - iii. The total number of credits earned by students through successful completion of educational options and demonstrations of mastery;
 - iv. The extent to which student participation in flexible credit options reflects the diversity of the student body as a whole.