


INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 271
Bloomington, Minnesota

REQUEST FOR SCHOOL BOARD ACTION

DATE OF BOARD MEETING: December 11, 2017

SUBJECT: New Policy 620, Credit for Learning

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Academic Services

APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE CABINET MEMBER: Eric Melby 
Assistant Superintendent

RESOLUTION FOR BOARD TO ADOPT:

RESOLVED, that the School Board of Independent School District 271 approves new Policy 620, Credit for Learning.

RECOMMENDATION OF SUPERINTENDENT:

Approve. 

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of Policy 620 is to recognize student achievement which occurs in post-secondary enrollment options, other advanced enrichment programs, and out of district online learning programs. The purpose is also to recognize student achievement, which occurs in other schools, in alternative learning sites, and in out of school experiences.

On November 29, 2017, the School Board Policy Committee reviewed new Policy 620, prepared and presented by Administration.

This policy is mandatory according to the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA). The committee made no edits to the policy.

There is no accompanying regulation for this policy.

Adopted: December 11, 2017 [New MSBA Policy]
Contact Person: Assistant Superintendent

POLICY 620 CREDIT FOR LEARNING

I. PURPOSE

To recognize student achievement which occurs in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options, other advanced enrichment programs, and out of district online learning programs. The purpose of this policy also is to recognize student achievement, which occurs in other schools, in alternative learning sites, and in out-of-school experiences such as community organizations, work-based learning, and other educational activities and opportunities. The purpose of this policy also is to address the transfer of student credit from out-of-state, private, or home schools and online learning programs and to address how the District will recognize student achievement obtained outside of the school district.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Policy of the District is to provide a process for awarding students credit toward graduation requirements for credits and grades students complete in other schools, post-secondary or higher education institutions, other learning environments, and online courses and programs.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Accredited school," means a school that is accredited by an accrediting agency, recognized according to Minn. Stat. § 123B.445 or recognized by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).
- B. "Blended learning" is a form of digital learning that occurs when a student learns part time in a supervised physical setting and part time through digital delivery of instruction, or a student learns in a supervised physical setting where technology is used as a primary method to deliver instruction.
- C. "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of MDE.
- D. "Digital learning" is learning facilitated by technology that offers students an element of control over the time, place, path, or pace of their learning and includes blended and online learning.
- E. "Eligible institution" means a Minnesota public post-secondary institution, a private, nonprofit two-year trade and technical school granting associate degrees, an opportunities industrialization center accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, or a private, residential, two-year or four-year, liberal arts, degree-granting college or university located in Minnesota.

- F. "Nonpublic school" is a private school or home school in which a child is provided instruction in compliance with the Minnesota compulsory attendance laws.
- G. "Online learning" is a form of digital learning delivered by an approved online learning provider.
- H. "Online learning provider" is a school district, an intermediate school district, an organization of two or more school districts operating under a joint powers agreement, or a charter school located in Minnesota that provides online learning to students and is approved by MDE to provide online learning courses.
- I. "Weighted grade" is a letter or numerical grade that is assigned a numerical advantage when calculating the grade point average.

IV. TRANSFER OF CREDIT FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

- A. Transfer of Academic Requirements from Other Minnesota Public Secondary Schools
 - 1. The District will accept and transfer secondary credits and grades awarded to a student from another Minnesota public secondary school upon presentation of a certified transcript from the transferring public secondary school evidencing the course taken and the grade and credit awarded.
 - 2. Credits and grades awarded from another Minnesota public secondary school may be used to compute honor roll and/or class rank.
- B. Transfer of Academic Requirements from Other Schools
 - 1. The District will accept secondary credits and grades awarded to a student for courses successfully completed at a public school outside of Minnesota or an accredited nonpublic school upon presentation of a certified transcript from the transferring public school in another state, country or nonpublic school evidencing the course taken and the grade and credit awarded.
 - a. When a determination is made that the content of the course aligns directly with District graduation requirements, the student will be awarded commensurate credits and grades.
 - b. Commensurate credits and grades awarded from an accredited nonpublic school or public school in another state or country may be used to compute honor roll and/or class rank.

- c. In the event the content of a course taken at an accredited nonpublic school or public school in another state or country does not fully align with the content of the District's high school graduation requirements but is comparable to elective credits offered by the District for graduation, the student may be provided elective credit applied toward graduation requirements.
 2. Students transferring from a non-accredited, nonpublic school shall receive credit from the District upon presentation of a transcript or other documentation evidencing the course taken and grade and credit awarded.
 - a. Students will be required to provide copies of course descriptions, syllabi, or work samples for determination of appropriate credit. In addition, students also may be asked to provide interviews/conferences with the student and/or student's parent and/or former administrator or teacher; review of a record of the student's entire curriculum at the nonpublic school; and review of the student's complete record of academic achievement.
 - c. In the event the content of a course taken at an non-accredited, nonpublic school does not fully align with the content of the District's high school graduation requirements but is comparable to elective credits offered by the District for graduation, the student may be provided elective credit applied toward graduation requirements.

V. POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT CREDIT

- A. A student who satisfactorily completes a post-secondary enrollment options course or program under Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 that has been approved as meeting the necessary requirements is not required to complete other requirements of the Minnesota Academic Standards content standards corresponding to that specific rigorous course of study.
- B. Secondary credits granted to a student through a post-secondary enrollment options course or program that meets or exceeds a graduation standard or requirement shall be counted toward the graduation and credit requirements of a student completing the Minnesota Academic Standards.
 1. Course credit will be considered by the District only upon presentation of a certified transcript from an eligible institution evidencing the course taken and the grade and credit awarded.
 2. Seven quarter or four semester post-secondary credits shall equal at least one full year of high school credit. Fewer post-secondary credits may be prorated.

3. When a determination is made that the content of the post-secondary course aligns directly with a required course for high school graduation, the commensurate credit and grade will be recorded on the student's transcript as a course credit applied toward graduation requirements.
 4. In the event the content of the post-secondary course does not fully align with the content of a high school course required for graduation but is comparable to elective credits offered by the District for graduation, the District may provide elective credit and the grade will be recorded on the student's transcript as an elective course credit applied toward graduation requirements.
 5. If no comparable course is offered by the District for which high school graduation credit would be provided, the District will notify the Commissioner, who shall determine the number of credits that shall be granted to a student.
 6. When secondary credit is granted for post-secondary credits taken by a student, the District will record those credits on the student's transcript as credits earned at a post-secondary institution.
- C. A list of the courses or programs meeting the necessary requirements may be obtained from the District.

VI. CREDIT FROM OUT OF DISTRICT ONLINE LEARNING COURSES

- A. Secondary credits granted to a student through an out of district online learning course or program that meets or exceeds a graduation standard or requirement shall be counted toward the graduation and credit requirements of a student completing the Minnesota Academic Standards.
- B. Course credit will be considered only upon official documentation from the out of district online learning provider evidencing the course taken and the grade and credit awarded to the student.
- C. When a student provides documentation from an out of district online learning provider, the course credit and course grade shall be recorded and counted toward graduation credit requirements for all courses or programs that meet or exceed the District's graduation requirements in the same manner as credits are awarded for students transferring from another Minnesota public school as set forth in Section IV.A. above.

VII. ADVANCED ACADEMIC CREDIT

- A. The District will grant academic credit to a student attending an accelerated or advanced academic course offered by a higher education institution or a nonprofit public agency, other than the District.

- B. Course credit will be considered only upon official documentation from the higher education institution or nonprofit public agency that the student successfully completed the course attended and passed an examination approved by the District.
- C. When a determination is made that the content of the advanced academic course aligns directly with a required course for high school graduation, the commensurate credit and grade will be recorded on the student's transcript as a course credit applied toward graduation requirements.
- D. In the event the content of the advanced academic course does not fully align with the content of a high school course required for graduation but is comparable to elective credits offered by the District for graduation, the District may provide elective credit and the grade will be recorded on the student's transcript as an elective course credit applied toward graduation requirements.
- E. If no comparable course is offered by the District for which high school graduation credit would be provided, the District will notify the Commissioner and request a determination of the number of credits that shall be granted to a student.

VIII. WEIGHTED GRADES

- A. The District offers weighted grades for courses that are identified as more rigorous or academically challenging.
- B. The District will update its website prior to the beginning of each school year with a listing of the courses for which a student may earn a weighted grade.

IX. PROCESS FOR AWARDING CREDIT

- A. The building principal will be responsible for carrying out the process to award credits and grades pursuant to this Policy. The building principal will notify students in writing of the decision as to how credits and grades will be awarded.
- B. A student or the student's parent or guardian may seek reconsideration of the decision by the building principal as to credits and/or grades awarded upon request of a student or the student's parent or guardian if the request is made in writing to the assistant superintendent within five school days of the date of the building principal's decision. The request should set forth the credit and/or grade requested and the reason(s) why credit(s)/grade(s) should be provided as requested. Any pertinent documentation in support of the request should be submitted.

- C. The decision of the superintendent as to the award of credits or grades shall be a final decision by the District and shall not be appealable by the student or student's parent or guardian except as set forth in Section IX.D. below.
- D. If a student disputes the number of credits granted by the District for a particular post-secondary enrollment course, out of district online learning course, or advanced academic credit course, the student may appeal the District's decision to the Commissioner. The decision of the Commissioner shall be final.
- E. At any time during the process, the building principal or superintendent may ask for course descriptions, syllabi, or work samples from a course where content of the course is in question for purposes of determining alignment with graduation requirements or the number of credits to be granted. Students will not be provided credit until requested documentation is available for review, if requested.