

Pittsfield School District

**ALTERNATIVE CREDIT OPTIONS**

Credit may be earned through alternative methods outside of regular classroom-based instruction offered by the district schools. Awarding of credits to be applied toward high school graduation will be determined by the director of college and career readiness, and will be granted only if the request fulfills the following:

1. The request is submitted with a plan to achieve competency that meets or exceeds the rigorous academic standards required by the school for students enrolled in a credit course offered by the school;
2. The request requires prior approval by the director of college and career readiness if it involves college credit and is not in a dual-enrollment course; in such circumstances, the student is responsible for ensuring that an official transcript from the credit-granting institution is provided to the director of college and career readiness in a timely manner following completion of the course;
3. The plan includes clear expectations for performance;
4. The plan includes clearly defined methods and expectations for assessment;
5. Verification of the plan's merit can be evaluated in a timely fashion and does not cause unnecessary burden of the resources of the administration.

The board encourages increased educational options for hospitalized or homebound students, dropouts, suspended or expelled students, young athletes, or other atypical students for whom regular classrooms are not practical or effective. It is hoped that such offerings will serve as a motivator for students with different learning styles.

Students earning credit via alternative methods will participate in all assessments required by the statewide education improvement and assessment program.

The Board directs the superintendent to establish regulations and procedures for implementing this policy that will include:

1. Definitions of allowable alternative learning opportunities;
2. Reasonable limits on the number of approved alternative courses that can be administered each school year, both school-wide and per student;
3. The number of alternative credits each student may use toward graduation requirements;

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4. Application and approval process;
5. Criteria for determining which requests satisfy a particular subject area requirement;
6. Identification of person(s) responsible for approval, supervision, and monitoring progress;
7. Requirements that alternative opportunities meet the same rigorous academic outcomes as traditional classroom delivery;
8. Assurance of student safety, including physical and technological safety;
9. Assurance of equal access for all students;
10. Assurance that approved alternative learning opportunities are consistent with all policies of this Board;
11. The procedure will be made available to the public.

It is the policy of the Board that alternative methods for the awarding of credit may include:

1. Competency testing in lieu of enrollment;
2. Interdisciplinary credit;
3. Satisfactory completion of course requirements at another public school district, an approved private school, or a home-schooling experience;
4. Transfer of credits earned by students before enrolling in the district, such as students moving into New Hampshire from another state or country;
5. Extended learning opportunities under the provisions of Policy IHBH;
6. Online/virtual learning opportunities under the provisions of Policy IMBA;
7. College credit/dual credit; when college credit is awarded, the student will receive .1 PMHS credit for each college credit awarded for non-dual enrollment courses; such credits may be awarded for elective courses only;
8. Early graduation;

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9. Middle school acceleration to the extent that the course work exceeds the requirements for seventh or eighth grade, is consistent with the related high school course(s), and the student achieves satisfactory standards of performance.

If a student demonstrates knowledge and abilities on a placement pre-test developed by the District for a particular course, the student shall not receive credit for the course, but shall be allowed to take a more advanced level of the subject or an elective.

### Funding

Unless otherwise recommended by the superintendent and approved by the Board, under ordinary circumstances students and their parents/guardians are responsible for all related expenses, including tuition and textbooks. The district may pay the fee for expelled students who are permitted to take courses in alternative settings. If paid by the district, and the course is not completed, the student must reimburse the district for the expenses.

Reading: July 20, 2006  
Reading: August 17, 2006  
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Reading: July 16, 2009  
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