

## **CREDIT FOR ONLINE COURSES AND REMOTE LEARNING**

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education (“Board), in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a, sanctions the receipt of online course credit to be used toward high school graduation requirements, in accordance with this policy. Beginning with the school year commencing July 1, 2022, the Board also authorizes Regional School District 17 (the “District”) to offer remote learning for students in grades nine through twelve in accordance with this policy. Further, the Board recognizes that, prior to July 1, 2022, there may be rare circumstances that may still necessitate programming options besides regular in-person instruction and authorizes the Superintendent or designee to develop administrative procedures or regulations regarding continued educational opportunities in such instances.

### **I. CREDIT FOR ONLINE COURSES**

#### **A. Pre-approval of Courses Identified by Students and Parents**

To receive credit for online courses to be used toward high school graduation requirements, students must, prior to registering for the course, receive approval from the high school principal or designee. The decision of the principal or designee with regard to online course credit approval is final. Pre-approval for online course credit may be granted if the requirements set forth below are met.

#### **B. Requirements for Online Coursework**

1. The workload required by the online course is equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom setting;
2. The content of the online course is rigorous and aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where appropriate;
3. The course engages students and has interactive components, which may include, but are not limited to, required interactions between students and their teachers, participation in online demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs;
4. The program of instruction for such online coursework is planned, ongoing and systematic;
5. The courses are:
  - a. taught by teachers who are certified in Connecticut or another state and have received training on teaching in an online environment,  
or

- b. offered by institutions of higher education that are accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or regionally accredited; and
- 6. The principal has determined, in the principal's professional judgment, that, given the student's academic and disciplinary history, the student is appropriately suited to engage in online coursework.

**C. Additional Requirements**

Only students in grades 9-12 are eligible to receive credit toward high school graduation by taking online courses. Students who have been pre-approved shall receive such credit upon completing the online course and obtaining a passing grade.

Remote learning that may be provided to students in lieu of, or as a supplement to, in-person learning during the COVID-19 or other community-wide emergency shall be provided at Board expense.

Any expense incurred for taking an online course identified by the student and/or parent to supplement the District's curricular offerings shall be the responsibility of the student/parent and shall not be the responsibility of the Board.

**II. REMOTE LEARNING**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and for each school year thereafter, the Board authorizes remote learning to students in grades nine to twelve in accordance with the requirements set forth below.

**A. Definitions**

"Remote learning" means instruction by means of one or more Internet-based software platforms as part of a remote learning model.

**B. Remote Learning for Grades Nine through Twelve**

- 1. Beginning with the school year commencing July 1, 2022, and for each school year thereafter, the Board authorizes the District to offer remote learning for students in grades nine through twelve.
- 2. Remote learning shall be provided in compliance with standards for remote learning developed by the Commissioner of Education.
- 3. Student attendance during remote learning will be assessed in accordance with the Board's policy regarding attendance and the Connecticut State Department of Education's guidance on student attendance during remote learning. The District will count the attendance of any student who spends not less than one-half of the school day during such instruction engaged in

(a) virtual classes, (b) virtual meetings, (c) activities on time-logged electronic systems, and (d) the completion and submission of assignments.

### **C. Remote Learning Prior to July 1, 2022**

The District recognizes that school districts are not authorized to provide a remote learning program except for high school students starting in the 2022-2023 school year. However, the District further recognizes that, prior to July 1, 2022, there may be rare circumstances that may still necessitate programming options besides regular in-person instruction. Therefore, the Board authorizes the Superintendent or designee to develop administrative procedures or regulations regarding continued educational opportunities (1) for students who must be in COVID-19 isolation or quarantine, (2) to address localized outbreaks in a school or within the District, and (3) in rare and individualized circumstances, for students with elevated risks from COVID-19 exposure due to cohabiting family members with documented vulnerability to COVID-19. Such procedures or regulations shall:

- provide that the Administration will make programming decisions on an individualized, case-by-case basis;
- consider a variety of continued educational opportunities as necessary and appropriate;
- take into account emerging best practices regarding continued educational opportunities, including, without limitation, any such practices identified by the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- squarely document eligibility with equity and consistency in mind, and address the frequency and with what restrictions access will be granted;
- provide that the District will count the attendance of any student who spends not less than one-half of the school day during remote learning engaged in (a) virtual classes, (b) virtual meetings, (c) activities on time-logged electronic systems, and (d) the completion and submission of assignments; and
- acknowledge that such procedures or regulations may require amendment in the event of changing conditions and public health necessities during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Legal References

Public Act No. 21-46, “An Act Concerning Social Equity and the Health, Safety, and Education of Children”

June Special Session, Public Act No. 21-2, Sections 391-393.

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a

Connecticut State Department of Education, CSDE Guidance Regarding the Future of Remote Learning in Connecticut Schools (July 15, 2021), *available at* <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2021-22/CSDE-Guidance-The-Future-of-Remote-Learning-in-CT-Schools-07-15-21.pdf>.

Connecticut State Department of Education, Superintendents' Meeting, *Back to School Updates* (August 9, 2021).

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