

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools

Credit Flexibility Plan

We educate each student to become a global citizen who is serious about learning, is appreciative of the arts, is culturally aware of social issues and is sensitive to the diversity among us. As a global citizen a Gahanna-Jefferson student will be:

- A Responsible Community Member
- A Comprehensive Problem Solver
- A Proficient Technology User
- A Collaborative Team Member
- An Effective Communicator

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Credit Flexibility and Interscholastic Athletics

The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) is a private, non-profit, membership-based, athletic administration organization that sets and monitors “bylaws and sports regulations that apply to all participants in interscholastic athletic contests involving students in grades seven through twelve and include matters of eligibility, contracts, qualifications, responsibility and behavior of various personnel.” (Bylaw 1-1-1).

To be eligible to play interscholastic high school sports, a student must:

- be officially enrolled in school
- be enrolled in at least five one credit courses or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation
- have received passing grades in at least five one credit courses or the equivalent, each of which count toward graduation, during his or her last grading period

A student enrolled in credit flexibility courses must, at the conclusion of the high school’s grading period, be “passing” all credit flexibility courses used to establish athletic eligibility. The student may not yet have completed the courses, but it must be determined that the student was “passing” the course(s) at the time the grading period ended. If it is determined that the student is not passing, no credit toward the five credits (or equivalent) required for eligibility can be awarded.

Both OHSAA and NCAA operate independently from the Ohio Department of Education and each set specific eligibility rules for participation in high school and college sports.

Practical Considerations for Athletic Eligibility Under Credit Flexibility

There are practical considerations for student, parents, and educators related to athletic eligibility and the state’s credit flexibility policy (e.g. showing academic progress, awarding course credit, main rules).

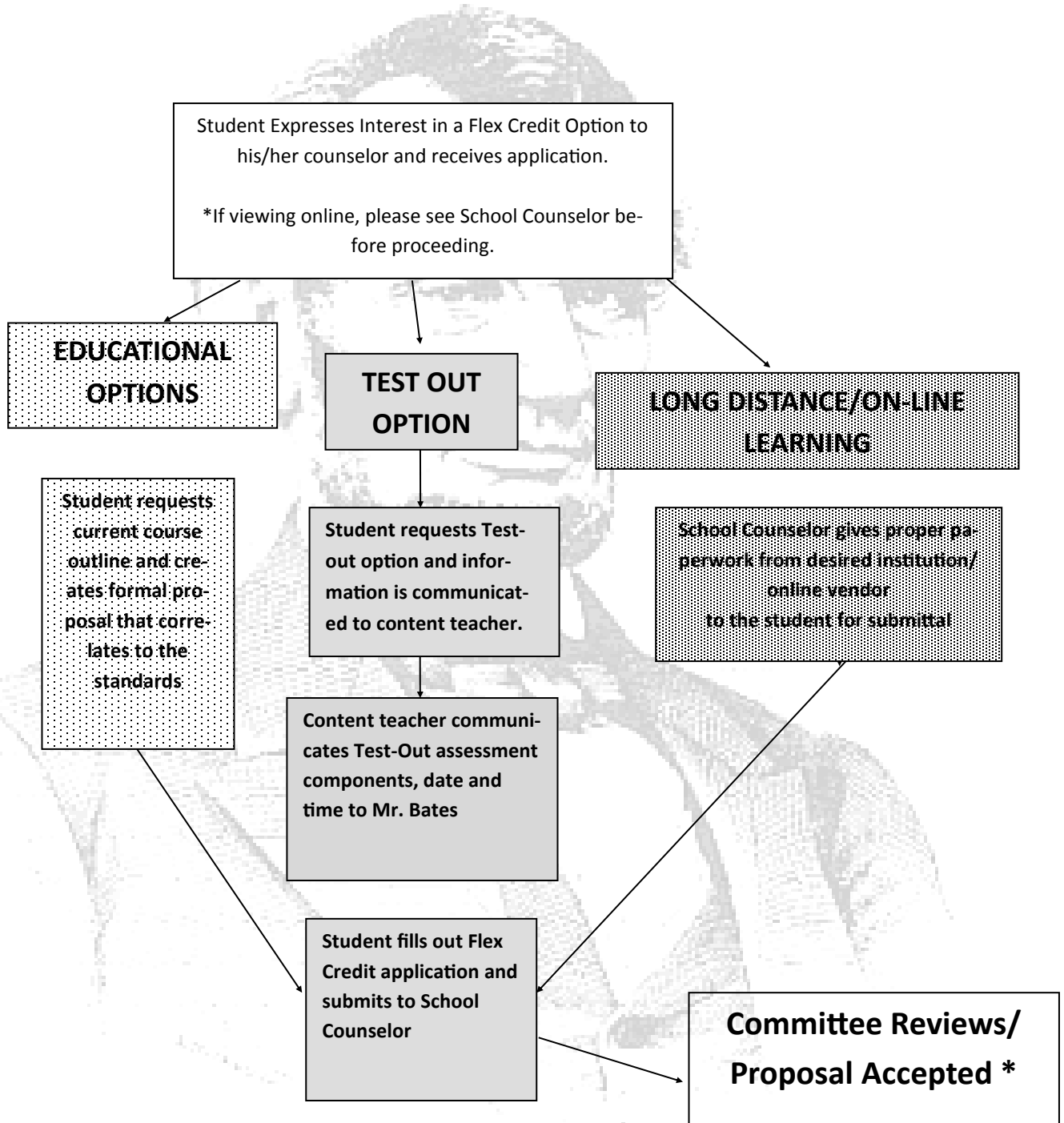
The OHSSA 2009-10 Student-Athlete Eligibility Guide provides specific eligibility requirements for participation in interscholastic sports. Students and parents should discuss OHSAA eligibility requirements with school staff prior to the development of a student’s individual learning plan to ensure compliance with OHSAA rules. (see pages 15-16)

The NCAA provides information regarding specific eligibility requirements through the NCAA Eligibility Center. In addition, the NCAA has developed a Frequently Asked Questions document for athletic eligibility. Students and parents should discuss OHSAA eligibility requirements with school staff prior to the development of a student’s individual learning plan to ensure compliance with NCAA rules. (see pages 15-16)



Credit Flexibility Options and Application

FLEXIBLE CREDIT PLAN OPTION FLOW CHART



OHIO CREDIT FLEXIBILITY GUIDELINES:

There are three (3) options for earning credit within the Credit Flexibility Program. Contact your guidance counselor as you are considering the following options:

Long Distance/On-Line Learning: allows for a course to be completed through an accredited long distance vendor.

Test Out: an option to test out of and earn credit for a high school course through the successful completion of an assessment.

Educational Options: allows a student to earn credit through the creation of and completion of a student-designed project/proposal.

Detailed information and guidelines for each of these options is provided below. Please read through these guidelines in their entirety.

***Contact your guidance counselor before completing the attached applications. Please note, the Flex Credit program does not exempt you from the Ohio Assessments in the following courses:** English 9, English 10, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, US History and/or American Government

Advantages of Flex Credit:

- Work completed at student's pace
- Different approach to learning as opposed to traditional classroom setting
- Opportunity for student to earn extra credits toward graduation

Disadvantages of Flex Credit:

- Lack of daily teacher contact and support including the perspective of the instructor
- Lack of social interaction in a typical classroom setting
- Potential for lack of student inclination and disregard for material
- Cost is the responsibility of the student
- Using Flex Credit for core coursework may affect a student's ability to pass the state mandated assessments.

Option 1: Long Distance/On-Line Learning

Allows for a course to be completed through an accredited long distance vendor

- ◇ GLHS recommends our Preferred Vendor List which includes: Nebraska Independent Study, American School, and Meta Solutions. A student has the option of choosing another accredited educational vendor of his/her choice.
- ◇ All costs associated with the Long Distance/On-Line Learning Option for Credit Flexibility are the responsibility of the student.
- ◇ Students who elect to earn credit through the Long Distance/On-Line Learning option must complete and submit the attached application to their School Counselor.
- ◇ **Students taking any of the following courses through an online vendor are still required to take the Ohio Assessment for that course:**
 - English 9, English 10, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, US History and/or American Government
- ◇ All options must meet the knowledge and skills approved by the GLHS Program of Studies.

Option 2: Test-Out

- ◆ **The Test Out option is available for all courses, grades 9-12**
- ◇ All Gahanna-Jefferson students in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in the test-out option for credit flexibility. **Credit can only be earned for learning experiences beginning with the ninth grade year.**
- ◇ Students who demonstrate proficiency in a course will earn the credit as assigned to the course in the current district program of studies.
- ◇ The assessment score will be the final grade awarded. **The final grade will appear on the transcript; there will be no exceptions to this rule.**
- ◇ A student may not retake a test-out assessment. If a student wishes to replace the grade on the assessment, they must successfully attend the full length of the course and complete all course requirements.
- ◇ Honors and AP courses completed through the test-out option **will not produce a weighted grade** due to the additional requirements and rigor that cannot be included on the assessment.

- ◆ **Test-Out Option assessments will adhere to the following general guidelines:**
- ◇ Depending on the nature of the course, the test out assessment will be comprised of one or more of the following:
 - Written test
 - Lab or performance (e.g. lab work, art work, physical activity, speech, etc.)
 - Student work samples (pieces of artwork, writing, research paper, etc.)
- ◇ In general, a student can expect to spend no more than four (4) hours on a test-out assessment for a single course.
- ◇ A student may not take a test-out option assessment for a course once he/she is enrolled in the course; however, a student may elect, during the drop/add time at the beginning of the course, to drop a course and register to take the course test-out option. A semester course must be dropped within the first fifteen (15) school days and a year-long course must be dropped within the first nine (9) weeks.
- ◇ To initiate the test out option, students should see Mr. Bates in the main office to request information regarding the specific assessment.
- ◇ To complete the test-out option application process, students must complete and submit the attached application to their School Counselor.
- ◇ A letter will be mailed home confirming receipt of the application; the letter will identify the requested course, assessment date, time and location.
- ◇ **Students electing the test-out option for the following courses must take the new Ohio Assessments for that course. Testing dates are determined by the district:**
- ◇ English 9, English 10, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, US History and/or American Government
- ◇ Test-out assessment dates and times will be set on a case by case basis in coordination with the schedules of the student and test administrator.

Option 3: Educational Options

◆ Educational Options credit is offered for any course listed in the Lincoln High School current Program of Studies.

- ◇ All high school students are eligible to participate in Educational Options. **Credit can only be earned for learning experiences beginning with the ninth grade year.**
- ◇ Depth and breadth of the Educational Options experience will determine the amount and weight of credit received.

◆ Students wishing to earn credit through the Educational Options must develop a formal proposal and submit it to their School Counselor.

- ◇ To initiate the Educational Options application process, students should see Mr. Bates to request a current Lincoln High School course of study prior to developing/submitting a formal proposal.
- ◇ To complete the Educational Options application process, students must complete and submit the attached application and proposal form to their School Counselor.
- ◇ Examples of Educational Options may include earning credit as part of educational travel, internship, independent study and community service. All options must link to the knowledge and skills identified in the current Ohio academic content standards.
- ◇ Credit will not be issued for any projects/activities retroactively; students must adhere to designated deadlines and follow the application/proposal process.
- ◇ Any cost(s) associated with completing the Educational Options proposal (i.e. fee for a non-district created assessment to demonstrate proficiency in a course not offered by Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools) is the responsibility of the student.
- ◇ **Students selecting to earn credit for any of the following courses through the Educational Options are still required to take the Ohio Assessment associated with the course:**

English 9, English 10, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, US History and/or American Government

◆ Professional Mentor

- ◇ Students must identify a teacher/mentor for their project; the mentor does not have to be a school employee; however, the mentor must be an “expert” in the content area for proposed work.
- ◇ The mentor’s role is to help guide the student and provide assistance and feedback through the program. **The mentor is not expected to provide traditional access as would a classroom teacher.**
- ◇ The mentor may not be a family member and/or relative.
- ◇ Mentor must be present for the presentation.

- ◆ **Withdrawal Policy:** Students have nine (9) weeks from the start date to withdraw without penalty. See your guidance counselor for details. After that date, the student must complete the course in full or receive a 0-F on their transcript.

- ◆ **Important:** Students will have nine (9) months from the date of the approved Educational Options for Credit Flexibility to complete coursework. Any course not completed within the required time frame as instituted by this Flex Credit Option Policy will result in a “0-F” grade that will be posted on the student’s transcript and calculated into the student’s cumulative GPA. **An “F” grade will not be expunged for any reason.**

Guidelines for ON-LINE/DISTANCE LEARNING:

1. Students currently enrolled in grades 9-12 may apply; all options must link to the knowledge and skills identified in the current Ohio academic content standards.
2. Students' work will be graded by the respective institution, and their grades will be incorporated into their official Lincoln High School transcript. The grade and credit value will be incorporated into the students' cumulative GPA. **Grades will not be expunged for any reason.**
3. The completed application must be submitted to your school counselor; please also include the course syllabus from your selected vendor and a suggested timeline for completing this course.
4. A letter will be mailed home confirming receipt of application; the letter will identify the requested course, institution and suggested completion date.
5. Once received, a copy of the completed admission form AND the acceptance letter from the institution providing the course must be submitted to your school counselor. This should be no longer than 10 days after the Flex Credit application is submitted.
6. The completed application for the On-Line/Distance Learning Credit Flexibility must be submitted and approved prior to starting the online course.
7. All costs associated with the On-line/Distance Learning Option are the responsibility of the student; all tuition/fees are to be paid directly to the educational institution of choice.

Guidelines for TEST-OUT OPTION:

1. The Test-Out Option will be offered for all courses in grades 9-12.
2. Test-out incorporates general measures including one or more of the following components, as determined by the classroom teacher: presentation, project, performance, paper-pencil test, product, or other task necessary to measure knowledge of the course.
3. The completed application should be submitted to your school counselor. A letter will be mailed home confirming receipt of the application; the letter will identify the requested course, assessment date, time and location.
4. Any student who withdraws from a Test-Out option course or fails to produce the general measure set forth by the classroom teacher of said course within the assigned time frame will have a "O-F" posted on their transcript. Flex Credit Test-Out option courses will not appear on students' schedules but will be posted on their high school transcript at the completion of the course.

Guidelines for EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS:

A study of an independent nature requires self-motivation, structure, time management skills and organization. A study of this type allows students to earn credit for real-world experiences that have educational value.

1. Credit can be earned through Educational Options in all content areas (departments) listed in the Lincoln High School's current Program of Studies. Earned credit will count as credit toward graduation requirements.
2. Credit can only be earned for learning experiences beginning with a student's entrance into high school (grades 9-12).
3. Credit will not be issued for any projects/activities retroactively.
4. Students must see Mr. Bates (in the main office) to obtain a current Lincoln High School course of study for course(s) being requested prior to submitting a formal proposal.
5. The completed application must be returned to your school counselor. Students will be notified of approval/disapproval of their proposal within fourteen (14) days of correlating deadline submission.
6. The completed application for Educational Options must be submitted by the following deadline(s):
7. The Educational Options work must meet the current Ohio academic content standards. Please note the Ohio Credit Flexibility Guidelines for all policy information regarding Educational Options.

Seniors currently enrolled must have their course completed on the last day of the final exam period in their senior year

STUDENT AND PARENT CONTRACT

The student and parent/guardian **must initial** each item below indicating that all parties agree to the following terms:

Student

Parent

- _____ _____ It is understood that any grade earned through credit flexibility will be treated as a permanent grade on a student’s transcript.
- _____ _____ If a student is unhappy with the outcome of the educational option and would like to replace the grade, the course must be taken in a traditional manner through Gahanna-Jefferson Schools curriculum.
- _____ _____ If using an online provider, it is the responsibility of the student to have the transcript sent directly to the high school registrar at the completion of the course.
- _____ _____ The student will be expected to independently fulfill the work required to complete the course by agreed upon due dates. Failure to complete could result in a failing grade.
- _____ _____ Using credit flexibility for core coursework may affect a student’s ability to pass the state mandated assessments and thus jeopardize a student’s graduation status.
- _____ _____ **Students participating in the Flex Credit program are still required to take the Ohio Assessments associated with English 9, English 10, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, US History and American Government.**
- _____ _____ Choosing this option could negatively impact college admissions decisions. Students are encouraged to contact any college of interest to get a perspective from an admissions standpoint.
- _____ _____ Credit Flexibility may impact a student’s athletic eligibility during high school (see explanation on p. 22 -23) and/or collegiate career. It is the student’s responsibility to show quarterly progress and ensure flexible credits earned are NCAA acceptable.
- _____ _____ The student is responsible for the success of this program.
- _____ _____ The student will be expected to update parents regarding their progress.
- _____ _____ If a student wishes to cancel the credit flexibility proposal after is has been approved, the student must follow the schedule change policy of Gahanna-Jefferson schools and meet all corresponding deadlines. Plans canceled after the deadline will be subject to the same penalty (F) as traditional courses are.
- _____ _____ Honors and AP courses completed through the test-out option **will not produce a weighted grade** due to the additional requirements and rigor that cannot be included on the assessment.
- _____ _____ Depth and breadth of the Educational Options (#3) experience will determine the amount and weight of the grade given.

SIGNATURES (student is responsible for securing **ALL** signatures prior to turning in this application)

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above information and that the grade earned will appear on my transcript.

	Print	&	Sign		Date
	Print	&	Sign		Date

Please fill out and submit the following information to your School Counselor:

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ ID#: _____

School Counselor: _____ Academic Year: _____

Which FLEX CREDIT option will you pursue?

_____ 1. Online/Distance Learning Vendor _____

_____ 2. Test-out

_____ 3. Educational Options (requires mentor and written proposal)

Content Area for which FLEX CREDIT option is requested:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Career & Technical Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Sciences | <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> International Languages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Wellness/PE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family & Consumer Sciences | | |

Course Title (if applicable): _____ Course Code#: _____

Credit Amount Requested: .25 .5 1.0

Start Date: _____ Projected End Date: _____

Do you plan to participate in interscholastic athletics? Yes No *Student athletes must complete pages 22-23 of the application

Teacher/ Mentor Information (required for Educational Options):

Name: _____ Title: _____

Business: _____ Business Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Will Learning Experience Take Place at this Business Site? Yes No

If No, List Experience Site: _____

Mentor Approval Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Teacher/Mentor must be present at the student presentation. See page 8 for details.

**continued on next page...*

Briefly describe your reasoning for selecting the FLEX CREDIT program (Educational Options requires an additional detailed proposal):

I. **Purpose:** Why have you selected the Flex Credit Program for this course?

II. **Goals:** What is it you hope to gain from this experience? (How does this option connect to your life and academic goals?)

III. **Resources Needed:** Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools are not obligated to provide resources for the Flex Credit Program. Any GJPS resources utilized must have prior approval from administration.

IV. **Project Summary/Plan:** Students choosing the Educational Options will be required to demonstrate their learning to the Flex Credit Committee upon completion of the course.

Please attach a typed proposal, outlining your plan in detail.

Your plan should consist of three main parts:

- 1) Documentation of your progress in learning the material aligned to the course objectives/state standards
- 2) Demonstration of learning (assessments, logs, videos, portfolio, etc)
- 3) A detailed timeline

The detailed timeline will help you stay on schedule to complete your work. Include in your timeline monthly check-points with your mentor for determination of progress. *You should have documentation of progress to share with your mentor each time you meet. Insufficient documentation could affect your grade and athletic eligibility at Lincoln High School.* Examples of documentation of progress could include: questions you are seeking an answer to, phases of a project you are working on, research, journaling, or evidence of activities you have taken part in as a part of your over-all plan, and a log of hours. Demonstration of learning is where you outline, specifically, what you will be working on as your plan. Keep in mind, your plan must support the goals/objectives in the State Academic Standards.

Educational Options Proposal Rubric

The following criteria will be used by the Credit Flexibility Committee in determining acceptance/revision/denial of an Educational Options Proposal:

Criteria	0	1	2	3	4
Purpose: experience outside of classroom	Missing	Unclear	Similar to current classroom experience	Project stretches classroom experience	Project can only be done outside of classroom experience
Goals: personal and academic	Missing	Unclear	Option meets personal goals; lacks academic goals	Option meets academic goals; lacks personal goals	Option meets personal and academic goals
Resources: human and material	Missing	Incomplete	Resources documented	Resources documented and some arrangements made	Resources documented and arrangements made
Supports State Curriculum	Missing link to State curriculum	Unclear how plan links to State curriculum	Vague link between plan and State curriculum	Plan is linked to most of State curriculum requirements	Clearly defined link between plan and State curriculum requirements
Plan: Documentation of Progress	Missing	Plan includes minimal documentation of progress irrelevant to proposal	Plan includes adequate documentation of progress loosely relevant to proposal	Plan includes adequate documentation of progress relevant to proposal	Plan includes thorough documentation of progress relevant to proposal
Plan: Demonstration of learning	Missing	Plan minimally addresses demonstration of course content	Plan minimally addresses demonstration of mastery course content	Plan includes demonstration of mastery of course content	Plan requires clear demonstration of mastery of course content
Plan: Time Line	Missing	Incomplete	Does not include monthly checkpoints	Includes monthly checkpoints	Includes clearly defined monthly checkpoints

*Proposals must score a minimum of three (3) in every applicable category for project approval.

I acknowledge that I have read, understand and accept all components of the Flex Credit Program. I have completed the application and have submitted all documentation necessary.

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Name (print): _____ **Phone:** _____

Parent signature: _____ **Date:** _____

High School Use Only:

Date Received: _____

School Counselor: _____

Credit Flexibility Review Committee Use Only:

Flex Credit Approved: Yes No **Credit Amount:** _____

Academic Officer

Date

OHIO CREDIT FLEXIBILITY APPLICATION**STUDENT ATHLETES MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION****Guidelines for ATHLETES interested in pursuing Credit Flexibility:**

1. NCAA has qualification limitations on the Test-Out Option for Credit Flexibility. If choosing this option, please speak with your Athletic Director.
2. Student athletes must be enrolled in five (5) one-credit courses, or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation during the preceding grading period on their schedule to be eligible to participate in athletics.
 - APPROVED Educational Options Option for Credit Flexibility would count toward the five credits needed on a student's schedule if the course appears on that schedule during the required time frame.
 - The Test-Out Option for Credit Flexibility would NOT count as one of the five (5) one-credit courses.
3. Student athletes must be passing five (5) one-credit courses, or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation during the preceding grading period on their schedule to be eligible to participate in athletics.
 - Students working on APPROVED Educational Options Option for Credit Flexibility will receive a progress report at the end of each grading period.
 - If passing, the Educational Options Option for Credit Flexibility would count toward the five (5) credits if it is on the student's schedule during the required time frame.
 - If no work has been completed or if the work is not of a level to receive a passing grade, the Educational Options Option for Credit Flexibility CANNOT be used as part of the five (5) credit requirement.
 - The Test-Out Option for Credit Flexibility would NOT count as one of the five (5) one-credit courses.
 - Any work completed or submitted during the summer, prior to APPROVAL of a Credit Flexibility proposal, does not count toward athletic eligibility.

***continued on next page**

STUDENT ATHLETES MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION

Please fill out and submit the following information to your School Counselor along with your formal application for selected Credit Flexibility option(s).

I understand if I am a student athlete, Credit Flexibility could affect my athletic eligibility and I will work with my Athletic Director and Guidance Counselor regarding my eligibility.

Student Signature

Date

I understand Credit Flexibility could affect my son/daughter's athletic eligibility and we will work with the Athletic Director and my child's Guidance Counselor regarding eligibility.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I have provided the student and parent information on the issues regarding Credit Flexibility and athletic eligibility.

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Credit Flexibility Appeals Process

According to the Ohio Department of Education, the Credit Flexibility Recommendations mandate a district-level and a state-level appeals process. A district's Credit Flexibility Policy must provide a basic appeals process for students whose proposed alternative learning credit has been denied.

District Level Appeals: The following local process will be followed in regards to project proposals as well as final grades earned for approved Credit Flexibility projects/test-out options.

Step One: If a student's Credit Flexibility proposal is denied at the first level (Credit Flexibility Committee), the student (with the consent of their parent/guardian) may appeal the decision to the High School Principal within ten (10) calendar days.

Step Two: If the appeal is denied by the High School Principal, the student (with the consent of their parent/guardian) may appeal to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction within ten (10) calendar days.

Step Three: If the appeal is denied by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, the student (with the consent of their parent/guardian) may appeal to the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days. The Superintendent has final ruling authority.

Students will be notified of their appeal status within a reasonable time frame.

State-Level Appeals:

Students may submit an appeal to the Ohio Department of Education if there is a complaint about having access to or implementation of the Credit Flexibility policy. The Department's appeal may be held by a third party and will evaluate the extent to which students were given fair and equitable treatment or process.

Library of Courses

A library of Credit Flexibility proposals that were previously accepted will be maintained in the Lincoln High School Main Office in order to assist students, parents, and teachers with understanding available options. Please see your guidance counselor to obtain access to the library of courses.

Transfer of Credit Flexibility Plan

Credit earned from a completed credit flexibility option will transfer between school districts. Approved credit flexibility plans that are incomplete at the time of a student transfer from or into the Gahanna-Jefferson school district will need to be re-submitted upon enrollment to the new school district. While the credit flexibility plan may be accepted, the plan will be governed by the guidelines and approval processes of the new school district.

Academic Integrity

As stated in the Lincoln High School Student/Parent Handbook, the Gahanna-Jefferson School Board Approved Code of Student Conduct is an expectation for students pursuing Credit Flexibility. Specifically, in regards to **academic misconduct**, "a student shall not cheat on tests or other school assignments, or plagiarize. Any student caught cheating (giving or receiving) on a quiz, test, or project will receive a zero and may be subject to disciplinary action. Any student who steals the instructional materials from a teacher or staff member will be subject to disciplinary action. Any student who **knowingly** provides a term paper, project or test information... for another student will be subject to disciplinary action. See the Student/Parent Handbook for a full description of student conduct regulations and policies.