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MSBA/MASA Model Policy 620 Charter

Orig. 1998 (as ISD Policy)

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620 CREDIT FOR LEARNING

[Note: Charter schools statutorily are required to provide students with credit for approved post-secondary courses, as set forth in Section V.; online learning courses, as set forth in Section VI.; and accelerated or advanced academic courses offered by a higher education institution or nonprofit public agency, as set forth in Section VII. Additionally, charter schools are required by statute to identify whether the charter school offers weighted grades and, if it does, identify the courses for which a student may earn a weighted grade (Section VIII). Optional provisions related to awarding credit to students transferring from out-of-state, private, or home schools and the issuance of student grades for purposes of awarding certain honors, as set forth in Section IV., are not required by statute. Therefore, the language contained in Section IV. is suggested language, and a charter school may or may not include this section or may modify this section at its discretion.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize student achievement which occurs in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options and other advanced enrichment 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 charter school will recognize student achievement obtained outside of the charter school.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The policy of the charter school 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 Minnesota Statutes section 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 an accreditor recognized by the United States Department of Education, 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 charter school, an intermediate charter school, an organization of two or more charter schools 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 charter school 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 if a student has earned at least **[insert number]** credits from the charter school.
- B. Transfer of Academic Requirements from Other Schools
 - 1. The charter school 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 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 charter school 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 may be used to compute honor roll and/or class rank if a student has earned at least **[insert number]** credits from the charter school.
 - c. In the event the content of a course taken at an accredited nonpublic school or public school in another state does not fully align with the content of the charter school's high school graduation requirements but is comparable to elective credits offered by the charter school for graduation, the student may be provided elective credit applied toward

graduation requirements. Credit that does not fully align with the charter school's high school graduation requirements will not be used to compute honor roll and/or class rank.

- d. If no comparable course is offered by the charter school for which high school graduation credit would be provided, no credit will be provided to the student.
2. Students transferring from a non-accredited, nonpublic school shall receive credit from the charter school 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.
 - b. Where the charter school determines that a course completed by a student at a non-accredited, nonpublic school is commensurate with charter school graduation requirements, credit shall be awarded, but the grade shall be "P" (pass).
 - 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 charter school's high school graduation requirements but is comparable to elective credits offered by the charter school for graduation, the student may be provided elective credit applied toward graduation requirements.
 - d. If no comparable course is offered by the charter school for which local high school graduation credit would be provided, no credit will be provided to the student.
 - e. Credit and grades earned from a non-accredited nonpublic school shall not be used to compute honor roll and/or class rank.

V. POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT CREDIT

- A. A student who satisfactorily completes a post-secondary enrollment options course or program under Minnesota Statutes section 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 charter school 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 charter school for graduation, the charter school 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 charter school for which high school graduation credit would be provided, the charter school 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 charter school 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 charter school.

VI. CREDIT FROM ONLINE LEARNING COURSES

- A. Secondary credits granted to a student through an 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 online learning provider evidencing the course taken and the grade and credit awarded to the student.
- C. When a student provides documentation from an 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 charter school'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 charter school 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 charter school.
- 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 charter school.
- 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 charter school for graduation, the charter school 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 charter school for which high school graduation credit would be provided, the charter school will notify the Commissioner and request a determination of the number of credits that shall be granted to a student.

VIII. WEIGHTED GRADES

[Note: Charter schools must identify in policy whether they offer courses with weighted grades. Therefore, charter schools must include one of the following options in their policies.]

- A. The charter school does not offer weighted grades.

[or]

- A. The charter school offers weighted grades for courses that are identified as more rigorous or academically challenging as follows:

[List the types of courses that will be awarded weighted grades and the multiplier, similar to the following examples.]

1. A grade awarded in an Advanced Placement course will be multiplied by a factor of ____ (i.e., 1.07).
 2. A grade awarded in an Honors course will be multiplied by a factor of ____.
 3. A grade awarded in a College In the Schools course will be multiplied by a factor of ____.
 4. A grade awarded in a course taken through a Post-Secondary Enrollment Options program will be multiplied by a factor of ____.
 5. A grade awarded in a course in a dual enrollment course will be multiplied by a factor of ____.
- B. The charter school 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 executive director 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 executive director as to the award of credits or grades shall be a final decision by the charter school 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 charter school for a particular post-secondary enrollment course, online learning course, or advanced academic credit course, the student may appeal the charter school's decision to the Commissioner. The decision of the Commissioner shall be final.
- E. At any time during the process, the building principal or executive director 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.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations and Graduation Requirements for Minnesota's Students)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 (Required Academic Standards)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement; Striving for the World's Best Workforce)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.14 (Advanced Academic Credit)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.445 (Nonpublic Education Council)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.03, Subd. 9 (Enrollment Options Program)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 (Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.095 (Online Learning Option)
Minn. Stat. § 124E.07 (Board of Directors)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0640-3501.0655 (Academic Standards for Language Arts)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0700-3501.0745 (Academic Standards for Mathematics)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0820- (Academic Standards for the Arts)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0960 (Academic Standards in Science)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1200-3501.1210 (Academic Standards for English Language Development)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1400-3501.1410 (Academic Standards for Physical Education)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (Charter School Mission Statement)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 601 (Charter School Curriculum and Instruction Goals)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (Charter School Testing Plan and Procedure)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (Charter School System Accountability)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 618 (Assessment of Student Achievement)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 624 (Online Learning Options)