

Paine Mountain School District



Flexible Pathways Handbook

2019-2020

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Flexible Pathways at Paine Mountain School District

Overview

Flexible Pathways is an all encompassing term for opportunities that allow voice and choice in one's education. We are proud to offer flexible pathways to all learners, regardless of the path they will be taking after graduation. When learners are interested in pursuing experiences outside of the courses listed in the [Guide To Learning Experiences](#), they consult with the appropriate Coordinator of Student Support for a discussion of options, prior approval and appropriate next steps as outlined in the [Paine Mountain Flexible Pathways flowchart](#). The costs and transportation associated with Flexible Pathways experiences vary, are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and are provided to learners as funding allows.

NMHS and WMHS strive to collaborate with all learners and partners to identify and provide assistance and supports (e.g., transportation, tuition costs, technology) necessary for success.

Assessment

Assessment of all flexible pathways learning experiences is based on the [CVSU Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements](#). Assessment for individual pathways is articulated in the relevant sections of this handbook. All flexible pathways become part of the learner's transcript, and in the case of higher education through VT's Dual Enrollment/Early College programs, college transcript.

Flexible Pathways Options

Pathways

All learners interested in earning proficiency-based graduation requirements through Pathways initially meet with the Coordinator of Student Support to express interest. When a focus is chosen, a [Pathways Contract](#) is developed in collaboration with the Pathways Coordinator. The contract ensures that both teachers and learners have clear expectations for what will be done during the semester and how proficiency-based credit will be earned. Contracts may be revised during the course of the semester based on formative feedback and assessment. A contract must be in place prior to the learning experience in order to earn performance indicators toward graduation.

Participation

Pathways is open to all learners. Requirements include:

- Completion of a Pathways contract
- Independent and collaborative identification of resources needed for the learning experience
- Weekly meeting with Pathways Coordinator*
- Weekly goal setting and reflection
- Creation of a body of evidence to demonstrate proficiency

** If a learner fails to meet regularly with the Pathways Coordinator and/or doesn't complete planned tasks, the Pathways Coordinator will meet with the learner to determine whether the study should be amended, referred to Pathways Team, Social/Emotional Team or discontinued. This initial meeting will be held no later than one month after the Pathways contract was finalized.*

Assessment Pathways learners are assessed both formatively and summatively. In addition to formative feedback, learners will typically receive weekly feedback on progress toward meeting the Habits of Success identified in their Pathways Contract, as well as content-performance indicators. The Pathways Coordinator will enter all summative assessments for Pathways into Tyler SIS. If the student works in conjunction with a content-specific teacher(s), then that teacher will be responsible for assessing learners' proficiency and communicating that to the Pathways Coordinator, following the school's procedures and deadlines for reporting and verifying performance indicators.

Proficiency/Credit In their contract, learners identify the performance indicators they will be working on to gain proficiency in. Learners who elect to do a single semester choose a minimum of four content-specific performance indicators and a minimum of one Habit of Success. Learners who elect to do a full-year choose a minimum of eight content-specific performance indicators and a minimum of two Habits of Success.

Community/Work Based Learning

Community/Work Based Learning provides learners a learning-by-doing experience utilizing the community as an extension of the classroom. These experiences add authenticity to learning by affording supervised real-world experiences to those eager to explore work and hobby related interests. Through mentoring provided by community partners, learners' experiences expand beyond the school walls; their perspectives on themselves as engaged young adults and responsible community members change and mature.

Participation

Community/Work Based Learning is open to all learners who have room in their schedules to be out in the community. Learners interested in Community/Work Based Learning are required to enroll in Pathways and create a [Pathways Contract](#) in conjunction with the Pathways Coordinator. In addition to participation in the community, this opportunity provides a structured environment in which learners complete performance tasks, share their experiences with their cohort, and learn from the experiences of their peers in the Pathways classroom.

Hours learners devote to their individual experiences vary greatly depending upon the particular placement. Learners are expected to communicate regularly and in a professional manner with their Pathways Coordinator and community partner. A Pathways [log](#) will be kept by the student to record their hours of service.

Assessment

All Community Based/Work Based learners are assessed on the Habits of Success for Responsible Learner, Goals and Preparedness. If a learner wishes to address additional Performance Indicators or Habits of Success through his/her/their experience, it is possible to do so through Pathways.

Proficiency

Seniors will be assessed on a scale of 1-4, and all other students will be assessed as Beginning, Approaching, Proficient or Exemplary based on their demonstration of proficiency in the performance indicators identified in their contract, and the successful completion of the performance tasks and activities outlined in the contract created between the learner and the Pathways Coordinator.

Online Learning

Learners have the opportunity to pursue coursework virtually; in some cases, a course is a blended-learning experience, involving both virtual and classroom-setting components. Historically in the Paine Mountain School District, learners have worked with various institutions, including the [Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative \(VTVLC\)](#) and [Brigham Young University \(BYU\)](#).

Because the online environment is a highly independent endeavor, learners who are most successful have the following skills and dispositions, aligned with the following [Habits of Success](#)

- Respectful Learner: Personal Integrity & Lifelong Learning
- Responsible Learner: Goals & Adaptability
- Engaged Learner: Curiosity & Synthesis and Application
- Effective Learner: Organization & Innovation

Participation As with all flexible pathways options, learners must first meet with the Coordinator of Student Support before enrolling in an online course. Once the course(s) are chosen, a [Pathways Contract](#) is developed in collaboration with the Pathways Coordinator. Students will be required to meet monthly with their Pathways Coordinator to monitor progress. The Paine Mountain School District will not cover the cost of any outside online “course” if

- a) The course or a nearly identical course is taught within the walls of NMHS or WMHS **AND**
- b) The course being taught would fit into the student's schedule
- c) **BUT** payment may be covered if an extenuating circumstance, determined by guidance and administration, prevents the learner from taking the course offered at NMHS/WMHS.

Each provider has its own unique policies that must be reviewed and followed upon enrollment. Most learners who enroll in online courses are assigned an Online Study block during which they work on their course and can receive support. Support can be answering questions, assisting with problem solving, providing supplemental resources, assisting with technology needs/glitches, etc. Some learners' schedules have no open blocks, which means their online coursework falls exclusively outside the school hours. Every online course requires daily attention and work completion, including homework time, even with an Online Study block in the schedule.

The amount of oversight for online learning varies from learner to learner. Initially, there is frequent communication with the learner, electronically and in person, for course selection, enrollment, questions, and support. As the course unfolds, a gradual increase in autonomy may occur. The adult supporting the learner has the ability to monitor learners' progress at any time with electronic oversight, as well as by communicating with providers' contact staff. An online learner's approach and progress drives the adult's degree of involvement.

Assessment Assessment practices vary for online courses, depending upon the provider. Once a learner is enrolled in a course with a particular institution, the supporting adult reviews with the learner the institution's assessment practices and course policies.

Proficiency/Credit Online course titles and grades (regardless of academic outcomes) are put on transcripts upon course completion; this is done by the Coordinator of Student Support.

Content performance indicators and Habits of Success will also be added to the transcript based on the indicators specified in their Pathways Contract.

Introduction to College and Careers

Introduction to College and Careers (ICC) is a free course designed to help learners develop strategies for college success. ICC classes are offered at all 12 Community College of Vermont (CCV) locations. An ICC course does not count as a Dual Enrollment course; this means a voucher is not required to enroll. (Dual Enrollment and vouchers are explained in the next section of the handbook.)

Participation As with all flexible pathways options, enrollment in ICC begins with a meeting with one's Coordinator of Student Support for discussion and approval. Once a student decides they will enroll, a [Pathways Contract](#) is developed in collaboration with the Coordinator of Student Support. A Vermont high school sophomore, junior, or senior can take Introduction to College and Careers (ICC).

Assessment Assessment practices depend on the given instructor at CCV.

Proficiency/Credit Seniors who complete ICC will earn .5 credit on their high school transcript and for all other students, work will align with CVSU Performance Indicators identified in their Pathways Contract.

Dual Enrollment

[Vermont's Dual Enrollment program](#) allows high school learners to take courses at any one of 19 Vermont colleges and universities while still in high school. Participating learners challenge themselves through college-level curriculum and earn up to eight college credits, potentially reducing the time and costs required for earning a college degree. Vermont high school learners are eligible for two Dual Enrollment vouchers, each good for one course tuition free.

Learners may request their vouchers in their junior and/or senior years of school, including the summers before junior year and senior year.

Participation As with all flexible pathways options, dual enrollment begins with a meeting with one's Coordinator of Student Support for discussion. The next step is to complete an online [Vermont Dual Enrollment Voucher Request](#). The learner then meets with the Coordinator of Student Support to complete the college application and registration process (the voucher number is required for this step). If the course is a Community College of Vermont course, math and literacy Accuplacer tests are required to determine appropriate placement. The Coordinator of Student Support can help facilitate this step. Once the course(s) are chosen, a [Pathways Contract](#) is developed in collaboration with the Pathways Coordinator. Students will be required to meet monthly with their Pathways Coordinator to monitor progress.

Assessment Assessment practices vary for each course and each institution. Once a learner is enrolled in a course with a particular institution, the Pathways Coordinator reviews with the learner the institution's assessment practices and course policies. A Pathways contract will be created to determine which performance indicators the student will be working toward. They will work with the Pathways Coordinator to demonstrate proficiency.

Proficiency/Credit The college sends the school a transcript. Depending upon which college, sometimes the learner has to request it be sent to NMHS or WMHS from the college's registrar's office.

Content performance indicators and Habits of Success will also be added to the transcript based on student performance in the indicators specified in their Pathways Contract.

Early College

[Vermont's Early College Program](#) is a full-year alternative to one's senior year of high school. Learners take courses in college, completing their senior year requirements for graduation and their freshman year of college credits simultaneously **tuition-free**. Some Early College programs also include on-campus housing, however, *only the cost of tuition is paid for by the state of Vermont*; learners and families are responsible for the cost of housing, if applicable, transportation, textbooks, and meals. Early College on-campus programs are available at Community College of Vermont, Castleton University, Johnson State College, Lyndon State College (soon to be Northern VT University), Goddard College, and Norwich University. Vermont Academy of Science and Technology (VAST) at Vermont Technology College (VTC) is also affiliated with the Early College program.

When participating in VT's Early College program, learners are welcome to continue at the same college or to work with the Coordinator of Student Support to apply to another college. In most cases, credits transfer to the learner's next college, especially if that college is within the Vermont State College system. In cases where there is a specific plan, such as Early College at VTC then transferring to UVM, the learner should consult with the schools involved for clarification regarding the transfer process.

Participation As with all flexible pathways options, participation in the Early College program begins with a meeting with one's Coordinator of Student Support for discussion and approval. Once course(s) are chosen, A [Pathways Contract](#) will be created with the Coordinator of Student Support to determine which performance indicators the student will be working toward. They will work with the Coordinator of Student Support to demonstrate proficiency. Participating in Early College is an excellent opportunity to both earn college credits at a minimal cost and to greatly

broaden the available options for study. It is also a *significant* commitment, and the decision should be made carefully. If admitted, the learner enrolls full time in challenging college-level courses. Classes meet 12-15 hours per week. Additionally, learners can expect to complete 30-40 hours of coursework outside of the classroom (homework, studying, papers, readings, projects, etc.). Early College learners must possess strong time-management skills, and be independently motivated learners. Courses are selected with the help of an academic advisor at the college, but usually include introductory courses (prerequisites) that provide easily transferable credits.

Early College learners continue to receive all communication pertaining to their graduating class. They are encouraged to participate in the graduation ceremony and will receive a NMHS or WMHS diploma. Learners are also welcome to play sports, as well as to participate in any extracurricular activities of interest while attending Early College.

Assessment Assessment practices vary for each course and each institution.

Proficiency/Credit Necessary CVSU assessment conversions are made and transcripts updated at the close of each semester.

Content performance indicators and Habits of Success will also be added to the transcript based on student performance in the indicators specified in their Pathways Contract.

Randolph Technical Career Center and Central Vermont Career Center

The mission of [Randolph Technical Career Center](#) is to provide students with a challenging academic and technical education in a supportive, engaging, and respectful environment. Students learn the skills to be responsible, productive citizens who are able to take advantage of educational and career opportunities now and in the future.

For the 2019-2020 school year, RTCC is offering the following programs: Advanced Manufacturing, Diversified Agriculture, AutoTech, Business, Construction Management, Criminal Justice, Culinary, Diesel Technology, Digital Filmmaking, Environmental Resource Management, Graphic Arts, Health Careers, Education Social Services, Co-op, and Tech Project.

The [Central Vermont Career Center](#) has served students throughout the Green Mountain State since 1969. Through a progressive outlook on education and the professional opportunities of a career-based education, students learn the skills that lead to lifetime careers and academic excellence for a 21st century world.

For the 2019-2020 school year, CVCC is offering the following programs: Automotive Technology, Baking Arts, Building Trades, Co-op Education, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Digital Media Arts, Electrical Technology, Emergency Services, Exploratory Technology, Human Services, Medical Professions, Natural Resources and Sustainability, and Plumbing and Heating.

Participation As with all flexible pathways options, learners should meet with the Coordinator of Student Support to express interest. Students will work with the Coordinator of Student Support and the technical school's guidance counselor to ensure all CVSU Proficiency Based

Graduation Requirements are being met. Students typically attend RTCC or CVCC either their junior or senior year. Transportation is provided to RTCC from both NMHS and WMHS.

Assessment While covering a full curriculum of content specific to the trade of study, learners in each program are trained and assessed on the high school-level performance indicators. Both RTCC and CVCC are currently in the process of aligning additional performance indicators for literacy and other academic areas; contact the trade-specific instructor for updates and more information.

Central Vermont Adult Basic Education

[Central Vermont Adult Basic Education](#), located at 46 Washington Street, Suite 100 in Barre, is our local partner in providing basic education. CVABE's mission is to provide accessible literacy instruction for adults and teens in the belief that a literate person has the essential key for self-understanding and for full and active membership in the world. CVABE offers: basic skills in reading, writing, math, computer literacy; English language learning and preparation for U.S. citizenship; high school diploma and GED credential programs; career and college readiness. Learners interested in exploring CVABE's services as a flexible pathways option should discuss participation, assessment, and proficiency/credit details with the Coordinator of Student Support.

[Flexible Pathways Flowchart](#)