

EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Purpose

“Extended learning opportunities” (ELOs) are personalized learning experiences that allow for achievement of competencies through means outside of the traditional classroom/course setting. The Board encourages students to pursue extended learning opportunities (ELOs) as a means of acquiring knowledge and skills through instruction or study outside the classroom. Extended learning opportunities may include, but are not limited to, independent study, private instruction, performing groups, internships, community service, apprenticeships, remote learning, or other opportunities approved as provided below by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and in accordance with applicable Board policies.

The purpose of extended learning opportunities is to provide educational experiences that are meaningful and relevant, and that provide students with opportunities to explore and achieve at high levels. In order to maximize student achievement and meet diverse pathways for learning, this policy permits students to employ extended learning opportunities that are stimulating and intellectually challenging, and that enable students to fulfill or exceed the expectations set forth by State minimum standards and applicable Board policies.

Credit is earned when students achieve the State or District competencies of a subject area. Students achieve competency when they can demonstrate proficiency in the subject area. Extended learning opportunities allow students to earn credit through competencies or may be taken to supplement regular academic courses. Extended learning opportunities may also be used to fulfill prerequisite requirements for advanced classes.

If a student can demonstrate proficiency in high school competencies after the completion of the extended learning opportunity, irrespective of current grade level, the provisions of *Policy IK, Earning of High School Credit*, will apply.

Roles and Responsibilities

All areas of study in the program must meet or exceed the proficiencies and skills identified by the New Hampshire State Board of Education, applicable rules and regulations of the Department of Education, and all applicable Board policies. All learning opportunities approved as an ELO shall have specific instructional objectives aligned with the State minimum standards and/or District curriculum standards. All extended learning opportunities will comply with applicable laws and regulations, including child labor laws and regulations governing occupational safety.

Students wishing to pursue a specific learning opportunity must first present their proposal to the school’s ELO coordinator for approval. The name and contact information for the school’s ELO coordinator will be found in the Student/Parent Handbook or by contacting the Principal’s office or the School Counselor. The designated ELO coordinator will assist students in preparing the application form and other necessary paperwork and will work with the Principal to determine the competencies and potential credits that may be earned through the ELO.

The Principal will have primary responsibility and authority for overseeing the implementation of ELOs and all aspects of such programs. The Principal will determine who will be responsible

for approving student eligibility and such approval will include a consideration of the overall benefits, costs, advantages and disadvantages to both the student and the District.

The Principal will review and determine what credit(s) can be awarded for ELOs toward the attainment of a high school diploma. Parents/guardians and/or students may appeal decisions rendered by the Principal within the provisions below (see Appeal Process).

Students approved for an ELO must have parental/guardian permission to participate in such a program. Such permission will be granted through a Memorandum of Understanding for Educational Services signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to the District before beginning the program.

All ELOs not initiated and designed by the District shall be the financial responsibility of the student or his/her parent/legal guardian. Students seeking independent study, remote instruction, college coursework, internships, or other ELOs that are held off the high school campus will be responsible for providing their own transportation to and from the off-campus site. However, the District may provide transportation if feasible.

Students who have a financial or transportation need that would prevent such participation, may request school assistance through the School Counselor. Such requests may be granted if District resources are available and at the discretion of the Superintendent. The Principal or School Counselor will assist students in seeking alternative means of financial or transportation assistance if so needed.

Students approved for off-campus extended learning opportunities are responsible for their personal safety and well-being. Extended learning opportunities at off-campus sites will require a signed agreement among the school, the student, and a designated agent of the third-party host. The agreement should specify the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Application Process

1. The application is to be completed by the student/parent/guardian seeking approval for the extended learning opportunity.
2. The application should be completed and submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the proposed program. However, the Board recognizes that short-term notice opportunities may present themselves to students from time to time. As such, the Principal may grant waivers to the thirty (30) day submission requirement at his/her discretion, provided all other application criteria are satisfied. Such waivers will be granted on a case-by-case basis. All required information must be attached to the application and submitted to the student's Guidance Counselor.
3. The application will be reviewed by appropriate District staff and administration and a decision will be made within ten (10) days of receipt of the application. The student will be notified in writing of the status of the application. If additional information is requested, the information must be submitted within one week of receipt of the request.
4. It is the student's responsibility to maintain academic standing and enrollment in the approved program. Any failure to complete an approved program may jeopardize the student's ability to earn credit for the course. The student and parent/guardian recognize that in the event the student withdraws from an approved program, the District cannot guarantee placement in an equivalent District-offered course.

5. The District reserves the right to determine the number of credits to be awarded. Any credits earned may be calculated towards the overall Grade Point Average. The course name and actual grade earned will be noted on the student's official transcript.

Evaluation Criteria

The Principal will evaluate all applications. At a minimum, all applications must meet the following criteria:

- Provides for administration and supervision of the program
- Provides that certified school personnel oversee and monitor the program
- Requirement that each extended learning opportunity meets rigorous standards, including the minimum standards established by the State Board of Education and all other applicable District standards

Appeal Process

A student whose application has been denied may request a meeting with the Principal. The Principal will provide the student with rationale as to why the proposal was denied. Students may resubmit alternate proposals for consideration if such proposals are made within the timelines established by this policy. If the Principal rejects the resubmitted proposal, the student may appeal to the Superintendent. All decisions made by the Superintendent shall be final.

Program Integrity

In order to ensure the integrity of the learning experience approved under this program, the student will be required periodically or upon demand to provide evidence of progress and attendance. The Principal will be responsible for certifying course completion and the award of credits (based on the achievement of competencies) consistent with the District's policies on graduation.

If a student is unable to complete the ELO for valid reasons, the Principal or Principal's designee evaluate the experience completed to date and make a determination for the award of partial credit (when the ELO has empowered the student to demonstrate some, but not all, of the required competencies) or recommend a different learning opportunity.

If a student ceases to attend or is unable to complete the ELO for insufficient reason (lack of effort, failure to follow through, indecision, etc.), the Principal may determine that the student's transcript be adjusted to reflect the experience as a failure.

In order to certify completion of co-curricular programs and activities based upon specific instructional objectives aligned to the standards, the school will develop appropriate mechanisms to document student progress and achievement of competencies on student personnel records.

Students transferring from other schools who request acceptance of credits awarded through ELO programs shall have their transcripts evaluated as provided in Board policy IK.

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.04(a) (13), Extended Learning Opportunities
NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 306.26(f), Extended Learning Opportunities – Middle School

Legal Disclaimer: *These legal references are not intended to be considered part of this policy, nor should they be taken as a comprehensive statement of the legal basis for the Board to enact this policy, nor as a complete recitation of related legal authority. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.*

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