

Instruction

High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students ¹

Credit for Non-District Experiences ²

A student may receive high school credit for successfully completing any of the listed courses or experiences even when it is not offered in or sponsored by the District:

1. Distance learning course, including a correspondence, virtual, or online course
2. Courses in an accredited foreign exchange program
3. Summer school or community college courses ³
4. College courses offering dual credit courses at both the college and high school level ⁴
5. Foreign language courses taken in an ethnic school program approved by the Illinois State Board of Education ⁵
6. Work-related training at manufacturing facilities or agencies in a Youth Apprenticeship Vocational Education Program (Tech Prep) ⁶

The footnotes are not intended to be part of the adopted policy; they should be removed before the policy is adopted.

¹ State law requires that several of the programs in this policy be covered in policy. State law controls this policy's content. Note that 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(b) requires "[e]very school district [to] have an organized plan for recording pupil progress and/or awarding credit, including credit for courses completed by correspondence, online, or from other external sources, that can be disseminated to other schools within the State." Section 1.460 requires "[e]ach local board of education with a high school [to] adopt a policy which defines the board's position with reference to the awarding of high school credit on the basis of local examinations to pupils who have achieved the necessary proficiencies through independent study, either with or without private tutoring, or for work taken in or from another institution."

Sample policy 6:185, *Remote Educational Program*, provides for educational programs **delivered by the district** in a location outside of the school.

Sample policy 6:315, *High School Credit for Students in Grade 7 or 8*, allows students enrolled in grade 7 or 8 to enroll in a course required for high school graduation (105 ILCS 5/27-22.10(a), amended by P.A. 99-189, and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.440(c)(3).

² Each board may choose for which, if any, of the listed non-district experiences the district will grant high school credit. If a district does not grant credit for any of the listed activities, substitute the following alternative for all text in the entire section: "The District does not grant graduation credit for learning experiences that an enrolled student does not complete through the District."

³ 105 ILCS 5/27-22.1 provides that no fewer than 60 hours of classroom instruction in summer school is required for one semester of high school course credit. Districts may accept courses completed in a community college toward graduation (23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.440(f). Superintendents, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4, must annually report to ISBE the number of students enrolled in accredited courses at any community college along with the name(s) and number(s) of the course(s) each student is taking (105 ILCS 2-3.142).

⁴ The Dual Credit Quality Act, 110 ILCS 27, defines dual credit as a college course taken by a high school student for credit at both the college and high school level. An instructor who teaches a dual credit course does not need the certification required by Article 21 of the School Code. Dual credit programs will require cooperation between the school district and the institution providing the dual credit courses (see the Higher Education Student Assistance Act at 110 ILCS 947/10 for a definition of *institution*). A high school evaluation of a dual credit program must also incorporate the analysis of data from ISBE's statewide longitudinal data system (see the P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act, 105 ILCS 13/, for more information).

⁵ 105 ILCS 5/2-3.44 and 5/10-22.43a. An ethnic school is a part-time, private school that teaches the foreign language of a particular ethnic group as well as the culture, geography, history, and other aspects of a particular ethnic group. For requirements, see 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.465.

7. Credit earned in a Vocational Academy 7

The student must seek approval from the Superintendent or designee to receive graduation credit for any non-District course or experience. The Superintendent or designee shall determine the amount of credit and whether a proficiency examination is required before the credit is awarded. As approval is not guaranteed, students should seek conditional approval of the experience before participating in a non-District course or experience. The student assumes responsibility for any fee, tuition, supply, or other expense. The student seeking credit is responsible for (1) providing documents or transcripts that demonstrate successful completion of the experience, and (2) taking a proficiency examination, if requested. The Superintendent or designee shall determine which, if any, non-District courses or experiences, will count toward a student's grade point average, class rank, and eligibility for athletic and extracurricular activities. This section does not govern the transfer of credits for students transferring into the District.

Substitutions for Required Courses

Vocational or technical education.⁸ A student in grades 9-12 may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing related vocational or technical education courses if:

1. The Building Principal approves the substitution and the vocational or technical education course is completely described in curriculum material along with its relationship to the required course; and
2. The student's parent/guardian requests and approves the substitution in writing on forms provided by the District.

Advanced placement computer science.⁹ The advanced placement computer science course is equivalent to a high school mathematics course. A student in grades 9-12 may substitute the advanced placement computer science course for one year of mathematics, in accordance with Section 27-22 of the School Code. The transcript of a student who completes the advanced placement computer science course will state that it qualifies as a mathematics-based, quantitative course.

Substitutions for physical education. A student in grades 9-12, unless otherwise stated, may submit a written request to the Building Principal to be excused from physical education courses for the

⁶ The State Superintendent and Board of Higher Education were encouraged by 105 ILCS 5/2-3.115 to establish a program of academic credit for youth apprenticeship vocational education programs, which could be instituted by school districts. See also 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.445.

⁷ Vocational Academies Act, 105 ILCS 433/. The Act's purpose is to "integrate workplace competencies and career and technical education with core academic subjects." School districts are permitted to partner with community colleges, local employers, and community-based organizations to establish a vocational academy that functions as a two-year school within a school for grades 10 through 12. Grant funds may be available from ISBE when the vocational academy meets statutory requirements.

⁸ Allowing this substitution is optional, but, if offered, must be included in board policy (105 ILCS 5/27-22.05). The *related* requirement is met if the course contains at least 50% of the content of the required course. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.445 requires that the vocational or technical education course be completely described in the policy along with its relationship to the required course. The sample policy satisfies these requirements by referring to the courses as described in curricular material.

ISBE requires that the parent/guardian of a student under the age of 18 request the course substitution "on forms that the school district makes available" and that the request must be maintained in the student's temporary record (23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.445). See 6:310-E, *Class Substitution Request*.

⁹ Optional, but allowed by 105 ILCS 5/27-22.

reasons stated below.¹⁰ The Superintendent or designee shall maintain records showing that the criteria set forth in this policy were applied to the student's individual circumstances, as appropriate.¹¹

1. Enrollment in a marching band program for credit;
2. Enrollment in Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program sponsored by the District;
3. Ongoing participation in an interscholastic athletic program (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade);
4. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for admission to an institution of higher learning (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade); or
5. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for graduation from high school, provided that failure to take such classes will result in the student being unable to graduate (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade).

A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses pursuant to 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Education*.

Volunteer service credit.¹² A student participating in the District's Volunteer Service Credit Program, if any, may earn credit toward graduation for the performance of community service. The amount of credit given for program participation shall not exceed that given for completion of one semester of language arts, math, science, or social studies.

Re-Entering Students ¹³

Individuals younger than 21 years of age may re-enter high school to acquire a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate, subject to the limitations in Board policy 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*. Re-entering students may obtain credit through the successful completion of the following (not all of these may be available at any one time):

1. District courses
2. Non-District experiences described in this policy
3. Classes in a program established under Section 10-22.20 of the School Code, in accordance with the standards established by the Illinois Community College Board
4. Proficiency testing, correspondence courses, life experiences, and other nonformal educational endeavors

The footnotes are not intended to be part of the adopted policy; they should be removed before the policy is adopted.

¹⁰ Optional, but allowed by 105 ILCS 5/27-6; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e) and (f) (added at 40 Ill. Reg. 2990). A board that wants to allow any of these P.E. exemptions must include the ones it selects in a policy that excuses students on an individual basis.

This policy excuses students from P.E. only during the marching band season because the statute allows the exemption "for ongoing participation in such marching band program." Thus, if the marching band season is over, the student's *ongoing participation* has ceased and the student no longer qualifies for the P.E. exemption. Common sense, however, would allow the exemption to continue until the end of the current grading period.

¹¹ 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(f).

¹² Optional. The credit given for one semester may not exceed that stated in this policy (105 ILCS 5/27-22.3). The program may include participation in the organization of a high school or community blood drive or other blood donor recruitment campaign. ISBE must provide assistance to districts opting to offer the program (105 ILCS 5/2-3.108).

¹³ Required by 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.470(a). While the sample policy does not provide for it, a school board may permit adults 21 years of age or older to re-enter high school (23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.470(b)). Items #4 & #5 are optional, but must be included in a policy if credit will be granted for them.

5. Military service, provided the individual making the request has a recommendation from the U.S. Commission of Accreditation of Service Experiences

The provisions in the section **Credit for Non-District Experiences**, above, apply to the receipt of credit for any non-District course.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/2-3.44, 5/2-3.108, 5/2-3.115, 5/2-3.142, 5/10-22.43a, 5/27-6, 5/27-22.3, and 5/27-22.05.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.425(e) and (f), 1.440(f), and 1.470(c).

CROSS REF.: 6:180 (Extended Instructional Programs), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 6:315 (High School Credit for Students in Grade 7 or 8), 6:320 (High School Credit for Proficiency), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Education)