

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

RSU 26 aims to meet the individual educational needs of each student. One tool to do this is to allow middle school students to earn high school credit. This policy provides guidelines for this occurrence.

A. Scenarios

A middle school student (enrolled in grades 6-8) may earn high school credit in three ways:

- a. The student takes a course physically located in the high school taught by a teacher on the high school faculty
- b. The student takes a course that is normally only offered in the high school but is offered at the middle school by a teacher on the middle school faculty to address the needs of a particular cohort of students
- c. Subsequent to a course completed at the middle school, the student submits a portfolio of work for evaluation, and the portfolio is found to demonstrate proficiency with high school standards.

Placement of a student in a course conforming to any of the above scenarios requires approval of the middle school principal after consultation with the student and the student's parents/guardians (and in coordination as appropriate with the Chapter 104 coordinator, school counselor, or teachers). For scenario #1, students will be placed in accordance with the same requirements and standards used for the placement of high school students except that age or grade will not be used. Such placement decisions will require demonstration of accelerated aptitude and be decided based on what is determined to be the best interests of the student based on her/his intellectual and social development.

B. Course requirements for high school credit

Under scenario #2 the student will only be offered high school credit if the following criteria are met:

- a. The teacher of the course has certification to teach the subject at the high school level (e.g. 6-12 or K-12)
- b. The middle school teacher of the course and a high school teacher of the course have met in advance of the course and establish that the syllabus of material covered is closely aligned
- c. The middle school course offers a summative assessment that is identical to the summative assessment offered in the high school

If any of the above criteria for the middle school course are not met, then the middle school course can be used for placement into a higher level high school course but not for high school credit.

C. Student choice around high school credit

If a middle school student is taking a course for high school credit in accordance with sections A & B, then the following will apply:

- a. The course will always appear on the student's middle school transcript.
- b. The student and the student's parents/guardians will decide within a week of the halfway point of the course (end of quarter for 0.5 credit, end of semester for 1.0 credit course) after the grade has been released whether they wish to take the course for high school credit or not. This decision will be recorded in writing on a form created by the superintendent or designee and signed by the student and the student's parents/guardians. The decision will be binding for the remainder of the course.
- c. If the student opts to take the course for high school credit, it will appear on their Orono High School transcript and it will count toward the required number of credits for graduation set forth in policy IKF.
- d. If the student elects not to take the course for high school credit, the course will not appear on the high school transcript or count as credits towards graduation from high school, and will only be used for placement into advanced classes in the high school.
- e. Whether taken for credit or not (per C.2), any high school courses taken as a middle school student (all of scenarios A.1-A.3) will not be used in the calculation of the student's high school GPA or used in high school class rankings or academic awards.

This policy is not retroactive.

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