

## **CREDIT FOR LEARNING and GRADING SYSTEM**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to recognize student achievement which occurs in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options, in advanced enrichment programs, 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 policy is also to address the transfer of student credit from out-of-state, private, or home schools and online learning programs and to address how the school district will recognize student achievement obtained outside of the school district. Additionally, this policy addresses the grading system and weighted grading and defines the systems for class rank, honor roll, and the process for determining the valedictorian and salutatorian.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The policy of the school district is to provide a process for awarding students credit toward graduation requirements for credits and grades that students complete in other schools, post-secondary or higher education institutions, other learning environments, and online courses and programs. It is also a policy of the school to offer a weighted grading system for more rigorous courses taught at Aitkin High School.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. "Accredited school" means a school that is accredited by an accrediting agency, recognized according to Minn. Stat. § 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, or a private, residential, two-year or four-year, liberal art, 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 school district, an intermediate school district, an organization of two or more school districts operating under a joint power's 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. "Secondary Credit" is course credit awarded at the high school equivalent to one credit per semester.
- J. "Post-secondary Credit": Course credit awarded at a post-secondary institution.
- K. "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 school district 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 will be used to compute honor roll and/or class rank.

##### **B. Transfer of Academic Requirements from Other Schools**

- 1. The school district 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 school district 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.

- 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 school district's high school graduation requirements but is comparable to elective credits offered by the school district for graduation, the student may be provided elective credit applied toward graduation requirements.
2. Students transferring from a non-accredited, nonpublic school shall receive credit from the school district 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 school district determines that a course completed by a student at a non-accredited, nonpublic school is commensurate with school district graduation requirements, credit shall be awarded. At the discretion of administration, the grade may be recorded on the student transcript as "P" (pass).
  - c. In the event the content of a course taken at a non-accredited, nonpublic school does not fully align with the content of the school district's high school graduation requirements but is comparable to elective credits offered by the school district for graduation, the student may be provided elective credit applied toward graduation requirements. At the discretion of administration, the grade may be recorded on the student transcript as "P" (pass).
  - d. If no comparable course is offered by the school district for which local high school graduation credit would be provided, credit will be provided to the student at the discretion of administration.
  - 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 Minn. Stat. § 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. Post-secondary credits (converted to 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 school district only upon presentation of a certified transcript from an eligible institution evidencing the course taken and the grade and credit awarded.
  2. Twelve secondary credits shall equal one full year. Post-secondary credits will be converted to secondary credits at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  secondary credit for each post-secondary credit. Students taking less than the equivalent of 12 secondary credits at the post-secondary institution must also take classes at Aitkin High School to fulfill credit requirements.
  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 school district for graduation, the school district 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. When secondary credit is granted for post-secondary credits taken by a student, the school district will designate those credits on the student's transcript as credits earned at a post-secondary institution.
  6. All post-secondary courses taken to meet a high school graduation requirement must be pre-approved by a counselor or principal.
- C. A list of the courses or programs meeting the necessary requirements may be obtained from the school district.

## **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 school district'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. WEIGHTED GRADES/GRADING SCALE

The school district offers weighted grades for courses that are identified as more rigorous or academically challenging as follows:

### 4.0 Point System (Grading Scales)

#### Weighted Courses:

<b>A</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>

#### All Other Courses:

<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>1.67</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>1.33</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>0.67</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Weighted grades will be awarded for College in the Schools and/or PSEO courses and will be used for determining the class rank for scholarship purposes, honor roll, and any academic honors according to the following point system. Asterisk (\*) will be used after the course name on the student's transcript and report card to indicate that it is a weighted class.

The school district will update its student handbook 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 transfer credits and grades will be noted on the Aitkin High School transcript when they are 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 superintendent 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 superintendent as to the award of credits or grades shall be a final decision by the school district 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 school district for a particular post-secondary enrollment course, online learning course, or advanced academic credit course, the student may appeal the school district's decision to the Commissioner of Education. The decision of the Commissioner shall be final.
- E. At any time during the process, the building principal or superintendent 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.

## **X. CLASS RANK, HONOR ROLL, VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN**

### **A. Class Rank:**

Courses in grades 9-12 will be used to determine the senior high school class rank. Students must earn the minimum number of credits (12) per year to be included on the class rank. Credits toward class rank will be accepted as follows:

1. Letter grades and credits will be accepted from other public schools.
2. Credits will be accepted from accredited private schools or state approved nontraditional schools.
3. Nontraditional schools will include home schools, alternative schools, treatment programs, and juvenile detention centers.
4. PSEO students who take a course that is a concurrent enrollment/College in the Schools (CIS) course at Aitkin High School will receive the same grade points.
5. The senior high counselor will identify grade point averages and class ranking for senior students at the end of 1st semester for scholarship eligibility purposes.

**B. Valedictorian/Salutatorian**

In order for a senior to be eligible to be named the Aitkin valedictorian or salutatorian, they must complete/meet all graduation requirements as defined by the State of Minnesota and by Aitkin High School. They must also pass all Basic Skills Tests, MCA, or state required tests as defined by the State of Minnesota for their graduating class. Students must also have earned at least 24 credits on the Aitkin High School campus.

**C. Honor Roll**

1. The honor roll will be calculated for all classes on the 4.0-point system.
2. To be placed on the "A" Honor Roll, a student's current term grades must average 3.67 points. To be placed on the "B" Honor Roll, a student's current term grades must average 3.0 points.
3. All senior high subjects will be used to compute the honor roll. Classes which meet less than a full period or less than 5 times per week will be counted as ½ credit.
4. Hashtag (#) will be used after the course name on the student's transcript and report card to indicate that the curriculum used for the class has been modified. Modified courses will be included in determining the honor roll, but will not be included for determining class rank.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations for Minnesota's Students)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 (Required Academic Standards)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.14 (Advanced Academic Credit)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.02 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)  
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. 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 3501.0800-3501.0815 (Academic Standards for the Arts)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0955 (Academic Standards in Science)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1000-3501.1190 (Graduation-Required Assessment for Diploma) (repealed Minn. L. 2013, Ch. 116, Art. 2, § 22)  
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)

***Cross References:*** MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 601 (School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District 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 (School District System Accountability)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 618 (Assessment of Student Achievement)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 624 (Online Learning Options)

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