

The Board encourages students to pursue extended learning opportunities (ELO) as a means of acquiring knowledge and skills through instruction or study that is outside the traditional classroom methodology. Extended learning opportunities may include, but are not limited to, independent study, private instruction, performing groups, internships, community service, apprenticeships, online courses/distance education, or other opportunities approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee, in conjunction with 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.

Extended learning opportunities may be taken for credit or may be taken to supplement regular academic courses. Extended learning opportunities may be used to fulfill elective courses needed to meet graduation requirements. If the extended learning opportunity is taken for credit, a Highly Qualified Teacher and Principal must authorize the granting of course credit for learning accomplished through extended learning opportunities.

Standards

All programs of study 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 programs of study proposed through this program shall have specific instructional objectives aligned with the State minimum standards and District curriculum standards. All extended learning opportunities will comply with applicable laws and regulations, including child labor laws and regulations governing occupational safety.

Approved programs must comply with all federal and state statutes pertaining to student privacy and to public broadcasting of audio and video. Confidentiality of Student Record Information will be maintained throughout the process. This includes information shared between school district representatives and the virtual school/online teacher, information shared between the school district and teacher with students and parents, and information shared between school district representatives, or the teacher with others.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students wishing to pursue programs of study under these guidelines must first present their proposal to their guidance counselor/ELO Coordinator for initial approval. The student's guidance counselor/ELO Coordinator will assist students in preparing the application form and other necessary paperwork.

The Administration will have primary responsibility and authority for ensuring the implementation of extended learning opportunities and all aspects of such programs. The Administration 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 Administration will review and determine credits that will be awarded for extended learning opportunities toward the attainment of a high school diploma. Parents/guardians and/or students may appeal decisions rendered by the Administration within the provisions below (see Appeal Process).

Students approved for an extended learning opportunity must have parental/guardian permission to participate in such a program. Such permission will be granted through a completed application signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to the district before beginning the program.

All extended learning opportunities not initiated and designed by the district shall be the financial responsibility of the student or his/her parent/legal guardian. Students electing independent study, college coursework, internships, or other extended learning opportunities 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 their school Guidance Counselor and Administration. Such requests may be granted if district resources are available and at the discretion of the Superintendent. The Administration or Guidance 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

The application is to be completed by the student/parent/guardian seeking approval for the extended learning opportunity.

The application should be completed and submitted 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 Administration may grant waivers to prior 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 and Administration.

The application will be reviewed by appropriate District staff and administration and a decision will be made within ten (10) school 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.

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.

Evaluation Criteria

The Administration will evaluate all components of the ELO (Proposal, Research, Reflection, Product, and Presentation) against the criteria outlined in the provided rubrics, ensuring the student meets the minimum required standard.

Appeal Process

A student whose application has been denied may request a meeting with the Administration. The Administration will provide the student with rationale as to why the proposal was denied. Students may resubmit alternate proposals for consideration. If the Administration 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 insure 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 Administration will be responsible for certifying course completion and the award of credits consistent with the District's policies on graduation. If a student is unable to complete the extended learning opportunity for valid reasons, the Administration, Administration's designee, or assigned Highly Qualified Teacher will evaluate the experience completed to date and make a determination for the award of partial credit or recommend an alternative experience.

If a student ceases to attend or is unable to complete the extended learning opportunity for insufficient reason (lack of effort, failure to follow through, indecision, etc.), the Administration 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 program completion on student educational records.

Students transferring from other schools that request acceptance of course credits awarded through similar extended learning opportunity programs shall have their transcripts evaluated by the Guidance Counselor and Administration.

It shall be incumbent upon the students or his/her parent/legal guardian to request that copies of the student's official transcript be sent from the former school.

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

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.27(b) (4), Extended Learning Opportunities – High School