



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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April 1, 2013

TO LEA Superintendents
Curriculum and Instruction Directors

FROM Rebecca Garland 

Updates and Clarifications Regarding Course Credit

During the last few weeks, we have received various questions about course credit, including high school credit for middle school students, weighted credit for college courses. Each area is addressed separately and in detail below.

Course credit for middle school students taking high school courses: State Board of Education (SBE) policy GCS-M-001 allows middle school students (6th, 7th and 8th grade) to take high school courses, either face-to-face or via NC Virtual Public School (VPS), and receive credit toward high school graduation requirements, while using only courses taken in high school to calculate the high school Grade Point Average (GPA). Recent questions from the field indicated a need to clarify how the policy should be implemented at the school level. As an example, we will use a student who completes Algebra I in middle school to illustrate how the SBE intends the policy to be implemented

A student who successfully completes Algebra I in middle school shall:

1. receive a final grade for the course based upon his or her performance and, in this case, his or her End-of-Course assessment score;
2. receive 1 high school credit for Algebra I, thereby meeting the Algebra I graduation requirement, and fulfilling one of the four mathematics course requirements;
3. enter high school as a freshman with a requirement to complete N-1 additional credits, where N is the number of credits required by the district to graduate. A student whose district requires 28 credits to graduate would enter high school needing only 27 more.

School districts should implement this policy in the same manner for all other high school courses that middle school students are permitted to take (math, science, social studies, world languages and English 1). Grades earned by students while in middle school shall not be included in the students' high school GPA calculation under any circumstances, regardless of how many high school courses a student takes in middle school. Students may use the space created in their high school schedule for other purposes, including taking

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other more advanced high school courses, or to complete college coursework through Career & College Promise. Students also are permitted to graduate early based upon credits earned in accordance with this policy. Early graduation decisions should be made through consultation among parents, students, and principals.

This policy interpretation is effective immediately for all students who have completed high school credits in middle school or who are currently doing so.

Career & College Promise honors credit clarifications: The University of North Carolina General Administration and the North Carolina Community College System Office govern weighting of college courses, and the State Board of Education established policy GCS-L-004 to align with their weighting requirements. There have been multiple questions about the policy and we have worked with community college and university administration staff members as well as members of the SBE to develop the following clarification:

Career & College Promise students in any pathway (College Transfer, Career & Technical Education, or Cooperative Innovative High Schools) who complete a community college course that is listed on the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) shall receive one extra quality point (honors-level weighting) for that course. This includes first- and second-level world language courses for which the analogous high school courses carry standard weighting. There is no limitation on the number of college courses for which a student may receive honors credit. If future CAA revisions result in the removal of some courses, the removed courses shall revert to standard weighting, beginning on the revision date. When such changes occur, school districts are not expected to re-weight and re-calculate GPAs for students who completed a course while it was approved for the extra point.

Additionally, the most recent revision to the CAA includes a college skills course, ACA 122. Previously, ACA courses were not awarded high school credit. However, because the course is included on the CAA, the DPI will provide a high school course code in the coming days to allow students to receive elective credit for this course. Other ACA courses (those not included on the CAA such as ACA 115 and ACA 120) will not receive a course code or earn high school credit.

If you have questions about this policy change, please feel free to contact Rob Hines at 919.807.3244 or via email at rob.hines@dpi.nc.gov

RBG/rth