

July 26, 2023

**RESCIND BOARD REPORT 08-0827-PO7 AND  
ADOPT A NEW POLICY FOR AWARDING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT AND COMPETENCY FOR  
PLACEMENT FOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL COURSES TAKEN BY ELEMENTARY STUDENTS**

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:**

That the Board rescind Board Report 08-0827-PO7 and adopt a new policy for Awarding High School Credit and Placement for High School Level Courses Taken by Elementary Grade Students. This policy was posted for public comment from June 2, 2023 to July 3, 2023.

**PURPOSE:** This policy establishes criteria for awarding high school credit or competency out of high school courses for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have demonstrated proficiency and mastery in high school courses. This policy shall ensure high school credit and/or competency is awarded to Chicago Public Schools elementary students in compliance with the requirements of section 27-22.10 of the Illinois School Code.

**EQUITY STATEMENT:** The district will develop equity-based strategies reflecting the CPS Equity Framework to ensure access and success in accelerated coursework with a focus on most impacted students who are disproportionately under-enrolled in accelerated coursework opportunities outlined in this policy.

**POLICY TEXT:**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

This policy is consistent with the philosophy that embraces an accelerated model of high school education that leads to students taking more advanced and challenging courses at the high school level. It will more accurately place 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in appropriately challenging high school courses. Thus, the matriculation into high school for elementary grade students having already completed high school course work will be a seamless transition. Courses for high school credit or competency that leads to placement into advanced high school courses shall be offered in a manner that will allow qualifying students who wish to take such courses access to them. This policy shall take effect beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

The Office of Teaching and Learning will supervise an ongoing review of these programs to consider ongoing expansion and/or modification.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Elementary Grade Students: For purposes of this policy, students enrolled in 7th and 8th grade in a CPS school.
- B. High School Placement: Permission to enroll in the next sequential course in the content area that the student demonstrated competency of a specific course, as defined by the criteria of the applicable CPS curriculum office.
- C. Competency: Acknowledgement from a High School or a CPS curriculum office that a student has met the CPS curriculum office's criteria to demonstrate mastery for the specified course.
- D. High School Credit: Credit given for successful completion of a high school course in a high school setting.
- E. High School Setting Courses: Courses taken at a CPS high school or at a CPS Academic Center.

**III. REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFERING A HIGH SCHOOL COURSE TO ELEMENTARY GRADE STUDENTS IN ALL SUBJECT AREAS**

- A. All high school courses offered to elementary grade students must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered a qualifying course:
1. Teacher Certification: To teach any high school level course that will award high school credit, the teacher must hold a current high school teaching certificate endorsed in the subject taught. To teach any high school level course that will award competency, the teacher can hold either a 9-12 certification endorsed in the subject taught OR a 5-8 teaching certificate with a middle school endorsement in the subject taught and satisfy any additional district-mandated criteria (qualifying examinations, prerequisite coursework, etc.) or obtain a waiver from the Office of Teaching and Learning;
  2. Curriculum: The course must be aligned to the applicable Illinois Learning Standards or follow the approved Chicago Public Schools (“CPS”) high school curriculum and/or CPS Course Framework approved by the appropriate CPS curriculum office. The principal and teacher must consult with the appropriate CPS curriculum office for guidance when developing or selecting the course curriculum for the subject being taught to ensure its educational quality and integrity;
  3. Approval: For each high school class offered in the elementary school setting, the principal must complete and submit an application to the appropriate CPS curriculum office for approval; and
  4. Duration: The course must include a minimum of 120 contact hours of instruction.
- B. Qualifying courses may include virtual high school courses when the course satisfies the requirements noted in this policy as well as the Board’s Policy on Courses Taken Through Internet-Based Delivery, as may be amended or otherwise modified.

**IV. GRANTING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT OR COMPETENCY FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF HIGH SCHOOL COURSES**

Elementary grade students who are enrolled in qualifying high school courses in any subject area as defined in Section III of this policy are eligible to obtain high school credit for their coursework or competency, resulting in placement into advanced high school courses in accordance with the following:

- A. High School Credit for Successful Completion of High School Courses  
Elementary grade students taking qualifying high school courses in a high school setting must take the course for credit and are not eligible for competency.
1. Requirements for elementary grade students to earn high school credit for qualifying courses as defined in Section III are:
    - a. Successful completion of course requirements, including examinations;
    - b. The student obtains a C or better in each academic term; and
    - c. The student takes and earns the required score on any applicable exit exams as required by the respective CPS curriculum office.

Elementary grade students taking a qualifying course, with the exception of students enrolled in an Academic Center, can earn a maximum of four (4) credits towards high school graduation provided the student has met all of the requirements noted above and may earn no more than one (1) credit in each subject area.

2. Elementary grade students who meet the above stated requirements will:
  - a. Receive credit for completion of a qualifying high school course; and
  - b. Be placed in the high school course at the same Academic Level which sequentially follows the course in the curriculum.
    - i. Students who earn high scores on the applicable exit exams may be recommended for placement into high school courses at a higher Academic Level.

- ii. Students wishing to be placed in high school courses at higher Academic Levels may be required to complete a placement exam at the receiving high school.
3. High school credits awarded to elementary students will be included on the student's high school transcript. These credits will be included in the determination of the student's high school grade point average.
4. In the event the student does not meet the requirements to earn high school credit, the student's transcript will include the student's grade in the course, but will not be included in the determination of the student's high school grade point average.

**B. Competency for Successful Completion of High School Courses**

Elementary grade students taking qualifying high school courses in an elementary school setting may take the course for competency in accordance with the following:

1. Requirements for elementary grade students who are enrolled in qualifying high school courses, as defined in Section III, to earn competency for placement into advanced high school courses:
  - a. Successful completion of course requirements, including examinations;
  - b. The student obtains a C or better in each academic term; and
  - c. The student takes and earns the required score on any applicable exit exams as required by the respective CPS curriculum office.
2. Elementary grade students who meet the above stated requirements will:
  - a. Receive competency for completion of qualifying high school course; and
  - b. Be placed in the high school course at the same Academic Level which sequentially follows the course in the curriculum.
    - i. Students who earn high scores on the applicable exit exams may be recommended for placement into high school courses at a higher Academic Level.
    - ii. Students wishing to be placed in high school courses at higher Academic Levels may be required to complete a placement exam at the receiving high school.
3. Elementary grade students who obtain competency and then placement in advanced high school courses, will not receive a course credit for the High School coursework completed at the elementary grade level.
  - a. The students' grades from advanced coursework completed at the elementary grade level will not be included in the determination of the students' high school grade point average.
  - b. The course may be included on the students' high school transcripts in accordance with guidelines established by the Office of Teaching and Learning.
  - c. The competency earned by the student will be reflected on the transcript and may not be removed by local High Schools.

**V. ELEMENTARY GRADE STUDENTS TAKING HIGH SCHOOL COURSES OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRICT**

A. Elementary grade students who complete a high school course in a setting outside of the district may be awarded high school credit provided that the course was successfully completed in accordance with Section 27-22.10 of the School Code. In evaluating the request for credit, School Administrators may appeal to the applicable CPS curriculum office if there are concerns that the course's rigor and content did not address the relevant Illinois Learning Standards. The CPS curriculum office will evaluate evidence and determine if the school must accept the course. Elementary grade students who complete a high school level course in a setting outside of the district that does not meet these requirements are not eligible to receive high school credit for that course.


B. Elementary grade students ineligible to receive high school credit for high school courses completed in a setting outside of the district shall be eligible for competency into an advanced high school course as determined by School Administrators in consultation with the CPS curriculum office if they meet the following criteria:

1. Evidence of successful completion of a high school course; and
2. Where applicable, the student takes and earns the required score on an exit exam. As described above, students who earn the required score on an applicable exit exam may be placed in high school courses at higher Academic Levels.

## VI. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

High school credit and/or high school competency issued pursuant to this policy is in addition to the high school graduation requirements, and must not replace the content credit requirements pursuant to the Board's Graduation Policy.


### Approved for Consideration:

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