

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23 – BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Special General Affairs Committee DATE: January 23, 2013

CHAIRPERSON: Trustee M. Baxter STAFF CONTACT: H. Gloster, Superintendent

Attendees:

Trustee M. Baxter (Chairperson)
Trustee J. Brinkerhoff
Trustee D. Butler
Trustee R. Cacchioni
Trustee J. Fraser
Trustee C. Gorman
Trustee M. Pendharkar

Staff:

H. Gloster, Superintendent
L. Paul, Secretary-Treasurer
T. Beaudry, Assistant Superintendent
R. Oliver, Director of Instruction K-12
M. Essler, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

Partner Group Representation:

COPAC	Shaun Bos, President
COTA	Susan Bauhart, First Vice-President
COPVPA	Derek Lea, President
CUPE	Wendy Johnson, Vice-President
DSC	No representative

Discussion/Action Items

The Committee Chairperson confirmed that the purpose of this Special General Affairs Committee Meeting was to provide an opportunity to learn about and discuss *Options for Earning Credits for Graduation*.

1. Graduation Program – Policy Options for Earning Credits

Presenters: Hugh Gloster, Superintendent
Terry Beaudry, Assistant Superintendent
Rick Oliver, Director of Instruction K-12
Vianne Kintzinger, Principal, Kelowna Secondary School

A brief background of the B.C. Graduation Program was provided. The Graduation Program commenced in 1986 for students in their grade 11 year. At this time it was a course-based program rather than a required number of credits to graduate. The courses were typically Ministry prescribed although certain specialty courses were recognized (Advanced Placement, Career Preparation, Correspondence Study Courses, International Baccalaureate courses and Locally Developed courses). In 1995 a new Graduation Program was introduced which required 52 credits over grades 11 and 12 including: 28 credits of Foundation Studies, 24 credits of Selected Studies (1 credit = 30 hours; 4 credits = 100 to 120 hours). Specialty Courses continued to be recognized with the exception of Correspondence Study courses and added were Board/Authority Authorized Courses and Independent Directed Studies. The key elements of the Graduation Program introduced in 2004 included 80 credits over grades 10 to 12 comprised of 48 credits from Required Courses, 28 credits from Elective Courses and 4 credits from Graduation Transitions. Additional provisions for earning credits were introduced including External Credentials, Equivalency Credit, Challenge, IDS (expanded up to 4 credits per course), Post-Secondary Courses/Dual Credit and Specialty Academies. The Ministry of Education's *2004 Grad Program Overview* outlines the required courses and their respective credits required for graduation.

The three key concepts to earning credits include:

1. Curriculum (Learning Outcomes)
 - What are students to learn?
 - Where did curriculum come from?
2. Instruction
 - Who does the teaching? (B.C. Certified Teacher; Post-Secondary Instructor; Community Member etc.)
 - What are the strategies employed?

3. Assessment
- How are students assessed? (Internal: classroom teachers, Provincial Exams and External: independent of School District)
 - Who assesses student progress and assigns a mark or credit?

The three main goals of the Ministry of Education 2012/13 – 2014/15 Service Plan are:

1. Personalized, flexible education that enables students to be successful;
2. Effective support for teachers; and
3. An effective, accountable and responsive education system.

Objective 2.1 of the Service Plan states:

“A flexible education system, that provides families, students and teachers choices in how, when and where education is delivered.”

External Credentials

- The Ministry authorizes certain courses or credentials for credit toward graduation that are developed outside the Ministry and taken by British Columbia students. An example of external credentials would be a dance class taught privately in the community by a highly qualified dance instructor with a set of standards where the rigor is equal to or more than a dance class taught at a school. Students would either be provided with a letter grade and percentage or “Transfer Standing” (TS) credit. The Ministry approved list of the 125 organizations offering approved external credentials can be found at:
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/ext_credentials/welcome.php.
- A sample transcript was provided and reviewed, indicating the use of TS (Transfer Standing) for completion of “Royal Conservatory Music 10” and “ICBC Driver Education Course 11”. The ‘U’ before a course code on a transcript indicates an external credit.

Challenge

- Students are entitled to receive credit for undocumented prior learning for Ministry-Developed or Board/Authority Authorized Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses.
- Districts assess the relevant knowledge and skills students have gained elsewhere through a challenge assessment process.
- An example is if a student is travelling and has learned another language which would meet the required outcomes of a course. Once the student provides evidence to a Principal that they would be successful in the challenge, a school would accommodate the request.
- A sample transcript was provided and reviewed, indicating a student who challenged French 10. There is no evidence on the transcript that the course was challenged – the student would receive either TS or a letter grade/percentage.

Equivalency

- Recognizes documented learning from outside the regular British Columbia school system that the local school district deems equivalent to the learning outcomes of a Ministry-Developed or Board/Authority Authorized Grade 10, 11 or 12 course. “Deems equivalent” means a match of approximately 80% of the prescribed learning outcomes.
- Where the Ministry has not reviewed courses for equivalency, school districts have the authority to do so.
- For courses completed outside of Canada a ‘TS’ is usually granted as it is difficult to generate a letter grade.
- If equivalency is not granted, the student can proceed under the challenge process.
- A sample transcript was provided and reviewed.

Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) Courses

- The rationale for BAA courses is as follows: The Ministry of Education encourages Boards of Education and independent school authorities to offer locally relevant courses to meet the needs of schools and the communities while providing choice and flexibility for students.
- BAA courses are developed and offered at the district/authority level.
- There is no limit to the number of BAA courses that may count toward elective credits needed for graduation.
- BAA courses may count for a maximum of 12 of the 16 required Grade 12 credits.

- The curriculum for a BAA course is usually developed by a teacher in conjunction with a Ministry Order. The proposal is then presented to the PAC and SPC at a school, reviewed by the Career Life Programs staff, and is then referred to the Board of Education for approval. Once approved, the signed document is forwarded to the Ministry of Education. A BCeSIS course code is then applied along with the name/number of a Ministry of Education contact.
- A course registry is maintained by the Ministry of Education and can be viewed at:
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/datacollections/course_registry_web_search/advanced-search.php
- Examples of BAA courses offered in the Central Okanagan School District include Aboriginal Outdoor Education 12, Hairdressing 11A, 11B, 11C, Robotics 12 and History of Rock and Roll 11.
- The November deadline for a BAA course to come forward to the Board of Education for approval was established in order to allow schools the opportunity to advertise a course as BAA in their course selection handbook which is printed in January/February.
- A sample transcript was provided and reviewed, indicating a student who completed a BAA course. The "Y" included in the course code indicates a BAA course.

Independent Directed Studies (IDS)

- Under the supervision of a teacher, students may initiate, develop and complete their own areas of learning based on the learning outcomes of Ministry-Developed or Board/Authority Authorized Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses.
- Students pursue learning outcomes, including or beyond those normally taught in the classroom, for 1, 2, 3 or 4 credits. One credit is earned for approximately every 30 hours.
- This policy also allows schools to recognize learning for a course that a student may not have completed.
- A sample transcript was provided and reviewed. Under course code 'IDS' is shown and includes a letter grade/percentage.

Post-Secondary Courses

- Students are entitled to receive "dual credit" for post-secondary courses that lead to a credential from a post-secondary institution. "Dual Credit" means a student earns both graduation credit and credit at a post-secondary institution.
- Courses for which credit may be earned are listed in the BCCAT Transfer Guide, CTC Agreements and BC Public Post-Secondary Calendars.
- The curriculum for a Dual Credit course is normally taught by a post-secondary instructor (ie BCIT or Okanagan College) with the assessment completed by the institution.
- A Central Okanagan School District teacher is added to assist with the liaison between the District, institution and parents.
- The course code on a transcript would display PSI – Post Secondary Institution.

Specialty Academies

- Must meet learning outcomes that are in addition to the standard educational program.
- Reflect an emphasis on a particular sport, activity or subject area.
- Minimum hours of instruction:
 - 240 hours for a one year academy
 - 120 hours per year for a multi-year academy
- Specialty Academies are established by a specific school, a Proposal for Substantive Change must be approved by the School Planning Council and submitted to the Board of Education for consideration.
- Community agencies are also developing their own academies and programs requesting the core subjects be taught within one of our schools (ie the Pursuit of Excellence Program at George Elliot Secondary School).

Questions – Please Contact:

Moyra Baxter, Chairperson
Hugh Gloster, Superintendent
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Moyra Baxter, Chairperson