Credit Flexibility

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Carnegie Units

- Introduced at start of 20th century
- Originally applied to teacher retirement plans
- One Carnegie unit =
  - 120 hours of classroom instruction
  - 150 hours of laboratory instruction
Carnegie Unit Limits

- Standardizes time, not learning
- Proxy measure of student learning
- Assumes uniform progressions
SB 311 (Ohio Core)

- Permits students to meet Core coursework requirements in four ways:
  - Traditional
  - Integrated
  - Applied
  - Career-technical

- Sets guidelines for credit flexibility
Credit Flexibility
What Is Credit Flexibility?

- Earn credit through:
  - Classroom instruction
  - Demonstration of subject area competency
  - A combination of both

- Pertains only to high school credit

- No limit to kind of course work or number of credits
What Is Credit Flexibility?

- Transcripted in the same way as traditional credit
- Credits can be mixed
  - e.g., ½ credit in two different subjects
Credit Flexibility Examples

- **Traditional coursework**
  - Distance learning
  - After-school program

- **Educational Options**
  - Educational travel
  - Independent study
  - Internship
  - Community service
Credit Flexibility Examples

- Career-tech blend
  - Program credit
  - Academic credit

- Test out
Test Out Considerations

- What are the knowledge and skills expected from the course?

- To what extent does the test measure:
  - Content covered in the course
  - Depth and breadth of knowledge and skills expected from the course

- Do the test questions proportionately match the content covered?
Test Out Considerations

- How many measures are needed to reflect the scope, depth, and breadth of the course?
  - When should they be taken?
  - What types should they be?

- How will the grade for the test out be determined?
Test Out Considerations

- Are districts required to have a test-out option?

- Testing out must be an option to students
  - Students may earn credits through any or a combination of:
    - Completion of courses
    - Testing out or otherwise demonstrating mastery of the course content
    - Pursuit of one or more “educational options”
Who Administers It?

- Local Board policies govern
- Teachers determine award of credit
Benefits of Credit Flex

- Creates more learning choices
- Focuses on performance, not time
- Accommodates different learning styles, paces and interests
Benefits of Credit Flex

- Promotes integration of different subjects

- Recognizes importance of student engagement and ownership

- Matches pacing to learning capacity
  - Acceleration
  - Needed time for mastery
State Plan

- Required by Ohio Core (SB 311)
- Developed by Credit Flex Design Team
- Adopted by:
  - State Board of Education (March 2009)
  - Local Boards (by 2010-11 school year)
- State Board review of policy implementation (2011-12 school year)
- [www.education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov)
  - Keywords: new emphasis on learning
Local Plan Requirements

Students may earn credit through any of the following or a combination thereof:

- Completion of courses
- Testing-out, or another demonstration of mastery of course content
- Pursuit of one or more “educational options”
Local Plan Requirements

- All students are eligible
- Communicate policy annually
- Allow demonstrated proficiency options
- Determine credit equivalency for Carnegie unit
Local Plan Requirements

- Permit credits to count toward graduation
- Can’t limit number of courses or credits earned
- Allow simultaneous credit for:
  - Academic and career-tech
  - More than one area content
  - Secondary and post-secondary
Local Plan Requirements

- Permit **partial credit**

- Accept credit from other districts
  - **Required** if credit has been earned
  - **Permissive** if credit is in process

- Establish **provisions** for when students:
  - Do not complete requirements
  - Transfer between districts
  - Graduate early
Local Plan Requirements

- Establish a review process
- Data the state is interested in
  - Methods and frequency of communication with students and families
  - Number of participating students
  - Total credits earned
  - Evidence that student participation reflects diversity of student body
State Role

- Establish appeals process for people grieving access to or implementation of policy
- Amend Operating Standards pertaining to Educational Options
- Share research findings with schools
State Role

- Work with professional associations to promote and refine the State Plan
- Encourage businesses and Educational Service Centers to identify regional learning opportunities
Guidance Documents

- Ways to implement local credit flexibility policy that complies with state plan

- ODE website:
  - [www.education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov)
  - Keyword search: “Guidance Documents”
Credit Flex Waiver

- Waivers must be filed by July 1, 2010
- Waiver requests must include:
  - Waiver application (on ODE’s website)
  - Copy of the local school/governing board resolution that contains:
    - A request for delay of the specific component of the Credit Flexibility Plan
    - Date that portion will be fully implemented
  - Brief description of the implementation plan for full implementation by SY2011-12
How does credit flex affect athletic eligibility for Ohio sports? (OHSAA):

- A student must, at the end of the grading period, be “passing” their credit flex course.
- It can then count toward the five required credit hours for academic eligibility.
Common Questions

How does credit flex affect athletic eligibility college sports? (NCAA):

- Credit transcribed as a course approved by the NCAA can be used for eligibility.
  Approved list: [http://eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org)
- Does not allow “credit by exam” courses
- Internet, distance learning, and independent study can satisfy NCAA, if coursework:
  - Meets all NCAA core-course requirements
  - Is acceptable for any student and placed on high school transcript
Common Questions

- **Can my district phase in credit flex?**
  
  - No. Districts must adopt a policy allowing credit flex:
    - By the 2010-11 school year
    - That is receptive to students’ and parents’ individualized proposals
Common Questions

- **Can students use an Advanced Placement (AP) test out of a class?**

- The College Board requires that an AP class be taken in order to be reported as an AP course on a transcript.
  - If a college accepts AP test scores as a replacement for college courses, it may count as **dual credit**.
Common Questions

- How will credit flexibility affect class standing (valedictorian placement)?

- Credits will be reported in the same way that seat time credit is recorded:
  - GPA/class standing should not affect
  - If a district has a weighted system for GPA based on the rigor, credit flex plan can be designed to meet the same rigor
Common Questions

- How does credit flex use highly qualified teachers (HQT)?

- A HQT from the core academic subject where credit is being awarded should be an integral part of designing the credit flex plan.
Common Questions

- How does credit flex use highly qualified teachers (HQT)?

- Non-core courses must include a credentialed teacher

- Outside of school facilitators, if contracted with facilitator’s entity, are not required to be HQT (Internships)
Common Questions

- **Can districts charge students a fee for using credit flex?**

- Yes, but only if the fee is:
  - Charged the same as for all other students
  - Clearly for activities outside the regular instructional programs
Can districts charge students a fee for a district teacher’s time used to review plans, tests or other educational related activities associated with credit flex?

Generally, not recommended
Can districts charge students a fee for materials and supplies used for credit flex coursework?

Generally, it is permitted

- Permitted in accordance with local policies on fees for materials and other supplies used in the traditional classroom setting
Common Questions

- What is the funding impact if a student is not enrolled and attending, but does participate in credit flexibility?

- Generally, only students enrolled and attending in a school district qualify for funding through the state’s funding formula.
Common Questions

- Do districts have to transport students using credit flex?

- Transportation is only required between a student’s primary residence and their educational program
  
  - The district is not responsible for any additional transportation requirements, unless it is required by an IEP