

R 5460 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION - OPTION II

A. Application Process

Pupils or their parents may initiate a request for Option II activities. Such requests must be made as a part of the course selection process. All requests must be made in writing directly to the Principal/supervisor or to the curriculum coordinator.

Requests for Option II activities must be submitted on application forms available in the office of the Principal/supervisor, curriculum coordinator, or the counseling office. The pupil (and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s), if they wish to attend) may be required to appear before the Review Committee to present his/her proposal. Approvals or denials will be returned to the pupil or his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

B. Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be evaluated by the Option II Review Committee. At a minimum, all proposals must meet the following criteria:

1. Alignment with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.
2. Clearly specified instructional objectives.
3. Learning experiences that are substantial in nature, intellectually challenging, academically beneficial to the pupil and measurable by district approved assessment instruments.
4. Feasibility, advantages and disadvantages both to the pupil and the district.
5. Compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including child labor laws and occupational safety regulations.

C. Option II Review Committee

All requests for Option II learning activities will be evaluated by a review committee. The committee will consist of the Principal, subject area supervisor, Supervisor of Guidance, and one or more teachers. The Principal may designate other personnel to sit on the committee including personnel external to the school district.

The primary role of the Option II Review Committee will be to assist the Principal and curriculum personnel to collect and review pertinent information, and recommend approval or disapproval of alternative learning activities as proposed by the pupil or his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The committee may also suggest possible Option II alternatives and assist in the identification and/or development of appropriate assessment instruments. Additionally, the committee will assess the transferability of Option II credits earned in another school district.

D. Appeal Process

Students whose Option II proposal(s) has been denied by the review committee, or their parent(s) or legal guardian(s), may request a hearing of the committee. The committee will then provide its findings to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and pupil and offer a rationale as to why the proposal was rejected. Pupils may resubmit alternate proposals for consideration of the committee, if such proposals are made within established timelines.

E. Program Integrity

In order to insure the integrity of the learning experience approved under this program, the pupil will be required periodically or upon demand to provide evidence of progress and attendance. The Principal or his/her designee will be responsible for certifying course completion and the award of credits consistent with the district's policies on graduation.

If a pupil is unable to complete the Option II earning experience for valid reasons, the Principal along with members of the Review Committee will evaluate the experience completed to date and make a determination for the award of partial credit or recommend an alternate experience.

If a pupil quits or is unable to complete the learning experience for insufficient reason (lack of effort, failure to follow through, indecision, etc.), the Principal shall request that the pupil's transcript be adjusted to reflect the experience as a failure.

In order to certify completion of curricular programs and activities based upon specific instructional objectives aligned to the standards, the Principal will develop appropriate mechanisms to document pupil progress and program completion on pupil personnel records.

Pupils transferring from other schools who request acceptance of course credits awarded through similar Option II programs shall have their transcripts evaluated by the Principal, school counselor and other members of the Option II Review Committee. It shall be incumbent upon the pupil or his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to request that copies of the pupil's official transcript be sent from the former school. Such transcripts must explain the alternate learning experience in sufficient detail to allow for a fair and comprehensive assessment by staff of the district.

F. Data Collection and Program Assessment

Data from all approved Option II learning alternatives, both individual and group experiences, will be collected at the end of each school year and assessed by the Principal and members of the Review Committee. The assessment will include data from district approved assessment instruments. This information will then be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools who shall present the findings to the Board of Education and the public.