



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Non-Regulatory Guidance: Credit Recovery

September 6, 2018

In January 2018, OSSE led an investigation into graduation and attendance policies in District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). As a part of that investigation, Alvarez & Marsal found that the District of Columbia, like many other jurisdictions, lacked state-level regulations that govern the use of credit recovery courses across all LEAs.

OSSE recognizes that credit recovery is an important tool that helps students stay on track for graduation. Credit recovery should be used in a manner that supports individual student learning without compromising academic standards. As OSSE continues to work with the State Board of Education, DCPS, and PCSB to promulgate regulations that establish minimum standards for the use of credit recovery courses towards graduation, OSSE is issuing this non-regulatory guidance to guide LEAs in administering credit recovery programs.

Carnegie Unit Seat Time Requirement

The current graduation requirements are based on the Carnegie Unit. A Carnegie Unit is equivalent to 120 hours of instructional time. *See 5-A DCMR § 2299.*

Use of Credit Recovery Courses

Credit recovery courses should only be offered for courses required to be satisfactorily completed for graduation.

LEAs should ensure that a student enrolled in a credit recovery course previously completed the underlying course and received a failing grade thus not earning a full or partial Carnegie Unit.

Ensuring Quality Credit Recovery Courses

Credit recovery courses should be rigorous and comparable with the underlying course. OSSE recommends that LEAs ensure that credit recovery courses are aligned to the District's statewide content standards for the underlying course.

LEA Credit Recovery Policies

LEAs are expected to have written credit recovery policies governing its use in all schools in its jurisdiction. LEAs should ensure that credit recovery programs are consistent across schools in their jurisdiction. Further, LEAs should ensure that relevant school personnel are trained on the policy.

OSSE recommends that LEAs include the following components in an LEA credit recovery policy:

- General requirements for student eligibility, enrollment, and attendance in credit recovery courses;
- A process for student referral to a credit recovery course;
- A process to determine student learning needs upon commencing a credit recovery course;
- The method for:
 - Collecting student attendance at, and enrollment in, a credit recovery course;
 - Awarding grades in credit recovery courses consistent with the underlying course and is included in the calculation of grade point averages (GPA).
 - Recording that credit was earned through credit recovery on student transcripts;
 - Notifying parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student's referral to a credit recovery course and providing a copy of the LEA's credit recovery policy to the parent(s) or guardian(s);
 - This notification should note that credit earned through credit recovery courses may have implications on college admissions and enrollment depending on the post-secondary institution's policies.
 - The notification should note that credit recovery courses have implications for student athletes seeking [NCAA eligibility](#).
- A list of credit recovery course offerings, along with the timing (during school day, after school, night) and method for delivery of the course; and
- The vendor(s) providing credit recovery courses, if applicable.

Ensuring Transparency

Although an important tool to support timely graduation, students and families should have access to information on credit recovery policies in their respective LEA. OSSE recommends that LEAs post their LEA credit recovery policies in a conspicuous location on its website and, if the policy is not incorporated into student handbooks, provides copies of the policy to the parents of all high school students.