

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE ATTENDED AN UNACCREDITED SCHOOL  
OR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

To be in compliance with SDCL 13-27-29 the school district hereby adopts the following policy statement and procedures.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the school district to provide a free and appropriate public education for all eligible students enrolling in the school district.

For those students who have attended an unaccredited school or alternative program, and enroll in the school district, the following procedures shall apply to ensure appropriate grade placement and to determine units of credit for graduation purposes.

Procedures

I. Procedures for appropriate grade placement for school age students in grades 1 through 8 who have attended an unaccredited school or alternative program:

1. The superintendent shall appoint a grade placement committee consisting of the elementary principal, school counselor, a classroom teacher(s) that teach students of the same chronological age as the student being placed, and a school psychologist to interpret assessment data. The student's parent or guardian shall have the opportunity to participate at grade placement meetings to provide information and to clarify any questions the committee may have. The parents or guardian shall be ex-officio members, without having a vote in placement decisions pursuant to Sections I and II of this policy or Section IV pertaining to override recommendations.

2. The grade placement committee shall ensure that the student enrolling has completed one achievement test selected by and administered by the school district.

3. The proficiency standard for grade (1-8) placement shall be based on the student's Complete Battery (composite) state achievement score. The student's Complete Battery (composite) state achievement score shall not be more than one standard deviation below the class mean Complete Battery (composite) state achievement score.

4. If the student's achievement test scores reflect a severe discrepancy of more than 1.5 standard deviation between achievement and intellectual ability the grade placement committee may make a referral for consideration of special education services.

5. The grade placement committee shall ensure that a student's placement shall not be in a grade level higher than warranted by the student's chronological age assuming entry into the first grade at age six and annual grade advancement thereafter.

6. After initial placement the student may be advanced according to his/her demonstrative performance.

7. A parent or guardian dissatisfied with the grade placement committee's determination may appeal the decision to the school board.

8. A parent or guardian dissatisfied with the school board's decision may appeal the decision to the Secretary of the Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

II. Procedures for appropriate grade placement and determining units of credit for high school age students who have attended an unaccredited school or alternative program:

1. The superintendent shall appoint a grade placement committee consisting of the high school principal school counselor, a classroom teacher(s) that teach students of the same chronological age as the student being placed, and a school psychologist to interpret assessment data. The student's parent or guardian shall have the opportunity to participate at grade placement meetings to provide information and to clarify any questions the committee members may have. The parents or guardian shall be ex-officio members, without having a vote in placement decisions pursuant to Sections I and II of this policy or Section IV pertaining to override recommendations.

2. The grade placement committee shall ensure that the student enrolling has completed one achievement test selected by and administered by the school district.

3. The grade placement committee shall have the authority to approve units of credit for English and Mathematics based on the student's composite Subtest achievement scores in Reading (English) and Mathematics.

4. The proficiency standards for granting units of credit for the subjects of English and Mathematics shall be the student's composite Subtest state achievement scores for each subject area. The composite Subtest state achievement scores shall not be more than one standard deviation below the class mean Subtest state achievement scores for each subject area being considered.

5. If the student's achievement test scores or minimum competency test results reflect a severe discrepancy of more than 1.5 standard deviation between Achievement and Intellectual Ability, the grade placement committee may make a referral for consideration of special education services.

6. The grade placement committee shall have the authority to grant units of credit for lower level courses in the subjects English and Mathematics provided the student's Subtest state

achievement scores for each subject meet or exceed the proficiency standard for granting units of credit at a higher level. For example, if the student's Subtest state achievement score meets the proficiency standard to be placed in English III, the committee may grant units of credit for English I and English II.

7. In order to receive units of credit for subjects other than English and Mathematics the grade placement committee shall have the authority to direct classroom teachers, who are teachers of the selected subjects, to develop minimum competency tests for their particular subject areas.

Furthermore, the committee shall ensure:

7.1 Prior to taking a minimum competency test, the student shall receive a course outline, syllabus, or plan of study, text books, and any other curriculum material that describes the course requirements. Furthermore, the district shall notify the student of the school district's proficiency standard for passing the subject.

7.2 The student shall have the opportunity to complete the minimum competency test within one year (12 months) from the date the student enrolled in the school district.

7.3 The student completing the minimum competency test shall have an individual test score that meets or exceeds the school district's acceptable proficiency standard for passing the subject prior to granting a unit of credit.

7.4 If the student does not receive a passing score on the minimum competency test, the student shall have the opportunity to retake a comparable version of the minimum competency test one year (12 months) after the date of the first test or complete the course requirements at an accredited summer school program.

8. All students who have attended an unaccredited school or alternative program shall be required to complete the two unity requirements for lab science at the school district, another accredited school district, or at an accredited summer school program.

9. The grade placement committee shall ensure that a student's placement shall not be in a grade level higher than warranted by the student's chronological age assuming entry into the first grade at age six and annual grade advancement thereafter.

10. After initial placement the student may be advanced according to his/her demonstrative performance.

11. A parent or guardian dissatisfied with grade placement committee's determination may appeal the decision to the school board.

12. A parent or guardian dissatisfied with the school board's decision may appeal the decision to the Secretary of the Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

III. The school district requires all high school students to successfully complete the following (24) units of credit "(a credit is defined as successful completion of two semesters, i.e. 1/2 credit is earned in a class for successful completion of one semester of course work.)"

1. Four units of English/Language Arts including
  - a. 1 unit Writing
  - b. 1 unit of literature (1/2 American Lit);
  - c. 1/2 unit of speech;
  - d. 1.5 units of Language Arts Electives
2. Three units of social studies including:
  - a. 1 unit of US History
  - b. 1/2 unit of US Government
  - c. 1/2 unit of geography
  - d. 1/2 unit of World History
  - e. 1/2 unit of elective
3. Three units of mathematics
4. Three units of laboratory science
5. One unit of computer science
6. One unit of fine arts; and
7. 1/2 unit of Physical Education
8. 1/2 unit of Health
9. 1/2 unit of Personal Finance
11. 2 units of CTE/Capstone/or World Language
10. 5 ½ units of electives.

IV. Procedures The Grade Placement Committee Shall Follow when making an override recommendation to the school board:

If the grade placement committee recommends that a student should be placed in a specific grade level or should receive a unit credit, even though the student does not meet the district's proficiency standards, the committee shall be required to include the following documentation in their report as justification for their recommendation to override the district's proficiency standards:

1. The record shall contain documents that explain why the standards and procedures that are used with the majority of students resulted in invalid findings for this student.
2. The record shall indicate what data were used to conclude that the student should be placed in a specific grade level or should receive a unit of credit. Examples of data that may be used include: (1) other tests or evaluation scores; (2) student work products; (3) teacher testimonials; (4) previous tests; (5) observational data, and (6) other developmental data.
3. The record shall contain an explanation of why the data selected for recommending the override had greater relative importance than the achievement test data and minimum competency test data used by the district.

4. Placement committee override recommendation shall include a sign-off by all committee members agreeing to override the proficiency standards adopted by the district. For those members who disagree with the override recommendation, a statement of why they disagree and their signatures shall be included.

5. All override committee recommendations shall be approved by the school board.  
Adoption date:

August 12, 1996

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