

ADMISSION OF NEW RESIDENTS AND STUDENTS FROM UNACCREDITED SCHOOLS LEARNERS ENROLLING FROM ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION AND UNACCREDITED SCHOOLS

Grade placement shall be the responsibility of the principal. In general, pupils transferring into the system from accredited schools will be placed in the same grade level as in the school from which they transferred.

A student of compulsory school age, that has been attending an unaccredited school or receiving alternate instruction and enrolls in the school district, shall be placed at the student's demonstrated level of proficiency as established by one or more standardized tests. The student's initial placement may 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 advancement thereafter. After initial placement the student may be advanced according to his or her demonstrated performance.

High school credit will be accepted from high schools approved by the state department of education and/or regional accrediting agencies similar to the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. A student, who has attended an unaccredited school or has been receiving alternate instruction and enrolls in the school district, shall be placed in English and Mathematics at the level of achievement demonstrated by one or two standardized tests. In all other subjects the principal shall take into consideration transcripts; general achievement; and mental, physical, emotional and social maturity of the student before grade placement.

The student's initial placement may 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 advancement thereafter. After initial placement the student may be advanced according to his or her demonstrated performance. A student to graduate from high school must meet graduation requirements of the state and school district.

An elementary aged child who has been attending an unaccredited school in another state or country or has been receiving alternative instruction and seeks to enroll in the District shall be placed at the child's demonstrated level of proficiency as established by the standardized test administered to enrolled learners in that grade in this District. Such child's placement may not be in a grade level higher than warranted by the child's chronological age assuming entry into the first grade at age six and annual grade advancement thereafter. After initial placement the child may be advanced according to his or her demonstrated performance.

A child of secondary school age who has been attending an unaccredited school in another state or country or has been receiving alternative instruction who seeks to enroll in the District shall be placed in English and math at the level of achievement demonstrated by standardized tests administered to enrolled learners of that age, and in all other subjects on a review of transcripts according to this policy. The child's placement may not be in a grade level higher than warranted by the child's chronological age assuming entry into the first grade at age six and annual grade advancement thereafter. After initial placement the child may be advanced according to his/her demonstrated performance.

Procedures for determining units of credit for high school age learners who have attended an unaccredited school or alternative program:

1. The principal shall appoint a credit review committee consisting of the high school staff deemed appropriate, and the parents or guardians. The purpose of the credit review committee is to make recommendations to the principal regarding which high school credits should be awarded to the applicant for work completed in the unaccredited school or alternative instruction program.
2. The credit review committee shall ensure that the learner enrolling has completed at least one standardized achievement test in the areas of English and Math selected by and administered by the school district.
3. The credit review committee shall recommend to the principal units of credit for English and Mathematics based on the learner's composite Subtest achievement scores in Reading (English) and Mathematics as deemed appropriate by the committee.
4. The credit review committee shall recommend to the principal units of credit for subjects other than English and Mathematics based upon factors, including but not limited to the following: classes taken, transcripts, class or course syllabus for each course taken, and District approved minimum competency tests in particular subject areas.
5. Should there not be a consensus within the credit review committee, the committee shall submit to the principal the differing recommendations and the rationale for each recommendation given.
6. Upon receipt of the credit review committee recommendations, the principal shall determine which credits are to be applied for purposes of grade and class placement and toward graduation credits.
7. All learners who have attended an unaccredited school or alternative program and enrolling in the District shall be required to meet District graduation requirements before being issued a diploma.
8. Any parent or guardian who is dissatisfied with the secondary placement by the principal of the child may appeal it to the secretary of the Department of Education.

The following procedure shall be used to address an appeal of the Principal's decision.

1. The appeal shall be in writing. The appealing party must attach the Principal's written decision.
2. In the Superintendent's sole discretion, the Superintendent may (a) meet and discuss the matter with the Complainant, (b) meet and discuss the matter with the Complainant and Principal, or (c) meet and discuss the matter with the Principal.
3. Within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the appeal was filed with the Superintendent, the Superintendent shall render a decision in writing. The time frame for rendering a decision by the Superintendent may be extended by the Superintendent for good cause and upon written notification to the Complainant and Principal; the notification shall identify the reason for the extension and the date on or before which the decision shall be rendered. The Complainant and Principal shall receive copies of the decision. The Superintendent may uphold, reverse or modify the Principal's decision. The Superintendent may also refer the matter back to the Principal for further investigation. The Principal may uphold, modify or reverse his or her initial decision. After a matter has been referred back to the Principal, and the Principal rendered a second decision, that decision may also be appealed to the Superintendent.
4. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed by the Complainant to the Secretary of Education within (10) ten calendar days of receipt of the Superintendent's written decision.

Legal References: [SDCL 13-27-1](#) (Responsibility of person controlling child for school attendance)
[SDCL 13-27-29](#) (Placement of child who has attended unaccredited school or alternative program)
[SDCL 13-27-3](#) (Child excused if provided alternative instruction)
[SDCL 13-28-21](#) (Admission of nonresident students)

Cross References: **JEAA: Learners Alternative Instruction**
JEC: School Admissions

1st Reading: 08/12/2013
2nd Reading: 09/16/2013
Final/Adopted: 10/15/2013
Notification: 06/14/2021
1st Reading: 07/19/2021