



# Rocky River High School

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## Credit Flexibility Program Information and Guidelines

In 2006, the Ohio General Assembly established the Ohio Core Curriculum (Senate Bill 311), which raised expectations for what all Ohio students must know and be able to do to earn a high school diploma.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Senate Bill 311 directed the State Board of Education to develop a statewide plan for implementing methods for students to earn units of high school credit based on the demonstration of subject area competency. ***In addition to raising the expectations for graduation, lawmakers provided flexibility to students and educators to successfully meet these higher expectations.***

—Ohio Department of Education. 2009. *New Emphasis On Learning*

Flexible credit applies to any alternative coursework, custom learning activity, assessment, and/or performance that demonstrate proficiency qualified to be awarded equivalent credit toward graduation as applied for and approved in advance by the district. Approved credit awarded will be posted on the student's transcript, calculated into the student's Grade Point Average (GPA), and counted as required graduation credit in the related subject area or as an elective.

The school district will communicate the Credit Flexibility Program Information and Guidelines annually on the district website and in the RRHS course catalog and student handbook. If interested, a student must initiate the request to take a course or earn credit via Credit Flexibility.

### APPLICATION

1. Any student (with high school status) may write a Credit Flexibility Plan (CFP) and apply for high school credit only to be awarded via Credit Flexibility.
2. Applications may be made annually, and are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> for students in grades 8 – 12 or by April 1<sup>st</sup> for students in grades 6 & 7. Transfer students are allowed to submit approved applications from another district upon enrollment in the district for Flexible Credit Committee (FCC) consideration and approval.
3. The student shall submit a CFP on the district's Application for Credit Flexibility form.
4. All required information, plans, and timelines must be included with the CFP.
5. The student may be required to provide supporting documentation as determined by the Flexible Credit Committee (FCC).
6. All transportation required for or associated with, and any fines incurred during the FCC approved CFP are the responsibility of the student and his/her parent.

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio Core raised the graduation requirements to 4 units of mathematics (including Algebra II or equivalent) and 3 units of science (including a lab based science).

7. Fees for materials and supplies used for independent study and flexible credit coursework shall be permitted in accordance with the district's policies on fees for materials and other supplies used in the traditional classroom setting.
8. Student athletes and their parents shall discuss Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) eligibility requirements with school staff prior to the development of a student's CFP to ensure compliance with OHSAA rules.

### **FLEXIBLE CREDIT COMMITTEE (FCC)**

The FCC is comprised of the principal or principal's designee, at least one school counselor, and the chairperson of the department from which flexible credit is sought or his/her designee. In cases where the student submitting the CFP application has other legally binding education plans (e.g., IEP, 504, WEP), the case manager for that student shall also be a member of the FCC.

### **TEACHER OF RECORD**

The FCC will appoint a HQT teacher of record for the student's CFP.

### **REVIEW OF APPLICATION**

The FCC will review the CFP and approve or deny it. Upon the approval of a CFP, the student shall commence his/her alternative coursework, custom learning activity, assessment, and/or performance. Credit will be awarded at the conclusion of the preapproved timeline provided all CFP requirements are completed and evaluated in accordance with these Guidelines.

### **AWARDING CREDIT**

The student may be eligible to receive credit upon satisfactory completion of the alternative coursework, custom learning activity, assessment, and/or performance as approved in the CFP by the FCC. The following standards apply to credit awards:

1. The total number of flexible credits that may apply toward graduation requirements is not limited.
2. Completion of the work outlined in the student's CFP may result in credit being designated as fulfilling either required or elective credit toward graduation requirements as approved by the FCC.
3. In order to receive credit, all CFPs must be aligned to:
  - the Ohio Academic Content Standards (as applicable);
  - the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS•S) and Performance Indicators for Students; and
  - the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) College- and Career- Readiness Standards.
4. The determination of how credit will be awarded must be outlined in the CFP at the time of its approval. A student must demonstrate proficiency through an assessment or exam, performance, or work product as outlined in the CFP and approved by the FCC.
5. The FCC and the teacher of record reserve the right to award partial credit if student work does not warrant full credit, or to withhold credit until the student does additional work to warrant the agreed upon credit.

6. Seniors must successfully complete preapproved alternative coursework, custom learning activities, assessments, and/or performances as outlined in the CFP by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the intended graduation year.
7. Credit may be earned simultaneously for: 1) secondary and postsecondary credit; 2) academic and career technical experiences; or 3) more than one academic content area/course.
8. The student may be awarded Carnegie Units as approved by the FCC.
9. The FCC may award flexible credit in the amount approved in advance based upon the equivalence to a 120-hour (One (1) Carnegie Unit/Credit) course. In preapproved cases, partial credit may be awarded where deemed appropriate.
10. Credit by assessment, or “testing out,” is not limited to a single measure. Rather, it includes multiple measures of assessment (e.g., a paper-pencil test, an oral examination, a presentation, written works such as essays or papers, a portfolio of works, a lab project, a musical performance, or other pieces that are a part of the district’s collaboratively developed instructional course of study). Mastery is defined by a score of 90% or higher.
11. Tests or assessments used to determine advancement and course credit will be given annually in May in order to facilitate planning for the subsequent school semester. Any assessment for a particular course’s credit may only be attempted once per academic year.
12. Once a student has started a course, he or she cannot apply for the credit by assessment option for that same course.
13. As outlined in the CFP and approved by the FCC, credit may be earned from other districts and other educational providers, including on-line providers, in accordance with Ohio’s minimum operating standards of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Chapter 3301-35.
14. Flexible credits earned in another district before transfer to the Rocky River City Schools will count as graduation credits as awarded by the sending district. The principal/designee will review the transfer credit to determine equivalency to specific courses offered by Rocky River City Schools, or to determine its adequacy as a pre-requisite course in the district.
15. If a student is a transfer student from another district and that student has not completed his/her CFP as approved by the transferring school, the FCC shall consider the previously approved application as a new application for flexible credit. The FCC may assign partial credit for partial completion as deemed appropriate.
16. Should a student transfer to another school district, upon request of the student or parent, the district shall forward a copy of the approved CFP to the new district for consideration.

#### **DETERMINING GRADES**

1. Flexible credits will be awarded a letter grade in alignment with Rocky River High School’s grading policy.
2. The Rocky River teacher of record will determine the grade.
3. The Rocky River teacher of record reserves the right to remove the student from a course (withdrawn with penalty) for issues involving plagiarism and copyright violation.
4. Flexible credit grades will be posted on the student’s transcript and will be included in the student’s GPA.
5. The final grade must be posted before the credit can count toward graduation, including early graduation.

6. A senior must successfully complete his/her preapproved CFP by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the intended graduation year.
7. If a student fails to complete or make adequate progress on his/her CFP within the time frame approved by the FCC, the approval to pursue the proposed credit may be revoked and a failing grade may be posted to the student's transcript.
8. If a student is unable to complete the CFP due to illness (with provided medical documentation) or other valid reason as determined by the principal/designee, the FCC may extend the preapproved timeline or revoke the application without posting a failing grade.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

A student who's proposed CFP was denied by the FCC may appeal to the superintendent or his/her designee. Appeals must be submitted to the superintendent's office within 14 calendar days of receiving the FCC's determination. Prior to issuing a decision on the appealed matter, the superintendent/designee will review the matter in its entirety including but without limitation any relevant information submitted by the student and/or his or her parent(s). The superintendent/designee shall decide whether there was a reasonable, verifiable basis for the determination which is the subject of the appeal and whether any procedural or substantive error occurred. The superintendent/designee will issue a determination on the appeal within a reasonable period of time.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

The Superintendent will establish a review process and submit data to the state about the methods and frequency of communication with students and families. Boards must collect performance data including, but is not limited to, the number of participating students, the total credits earned, and the extent to which student participation reflects diversity of the student body.