

**Piedmont Unified School District**

**M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Board of Education

**FROM:** Randall Booker, Superintendent  
Cheryl Wozniak, Assistant Superintendent

**DATE:** March 23, 2022

**RE: Revisions to Board Policy 6146.11 - Alternative Credits Toward Graduation**

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**I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

At the Board meeting on July 13, 2020, BP 6146.11 Alternative Credits Toward Graduation was revised to include provision #7: Concurrent Enrollment in an Outside Accredited School. PUSD was entering the 2020-21 school year in distance learning and the Board wanted to provide students with the greatest level of flexibility.

The Board approved revisions to BP 6146.11 to include the following new language:

During the 2020-2021 school year only, a student who is regularly enrolled and in attendance at a high school shall receive credit toward high school graduation for studies successfully completed at an outside accredited school if the instruction entails fields and subjects included in the high school's courses of study and curricula.

The student must be enrolled in a minimum of five (5) classes in the district.

An "accredited" school is one that has received accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or other statewide or regional commissions or, in the case of a school outside California, by the equivalent governmental or other regional accrediting agency in that jurisdiction.

The principal or designee shall be responsible for determining which of the student's credits are equivalent to district requirements. Guidelines for determining equivalency shall be developed by representative certificated staff familiar with the district's academic standards and graduation requirements.

Approved courses taken at an outside accredited school will be listed on the transcript and identified as having been taken at the outside accredited school.

## **Approval of Enrollment at Outside Accredited School**

The Principal or designee may approve high school students to apply for part-time enrollment in an accredited outside school when it is determined to be in the student's best interest and the student is adequately prepared for such coursework.

Upon recommendation of the principal and with parent/guardian consent, the Board may authorize a student to attend a community college or four-year college during any session or term as a special part-time student and to undertake one or more courses of instruction offered at the outside accredited school.

If the Principal denies a request for special part-time enrollment at an outside accredited school, the Principal shall issue a written recommendation and the reasons for the denial at least 30 days, but within 60 days, after the request has been submitted.

If denied, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Superintendent within 10 days of receiving the denial letter. The Superintendent will issue a decision within 5 school days. The Superintendent's decision is final.

At the Board meeting on March 9, 2022, District staff informed the Board that the revisions to BP 6146.11 have led to unintended outcomes that the PHS counseling staff, teachers, and site and district administrators believe are not good for students, staff, and the overall organization. The following list of issues resulting from the allowance for students to attend private institutions in addition to community colleges and four-year universities were presented and discussed:

### **Academic Stress/Student Wellbeing**

- High number of AP classes being taken at PHS and outside of PHS
- Required enrollment in five classes but doesn't limit number of courses taken off campus
- Students enrolling in AP level courses to replace courses such as Economics and Civics (non-AP level classes)
- Majority of courses students are taking outside of the district are online which means less social interaction, increased isolation

### **Equitable Access**

- Students whose parents have the financial resources can pay for their children to take online courses at a private institution where it is believed to be easier to earn a higher grade
- 9th graders taking AP classes to get a head start on increasing their GPAs

sooner

- Students asking for a scholarship to cover the cost a UC Scout class

### **The High School Experience/Earning a Diploma from PHS**

- Fewer students taking classes at PHS
- PHS transcript no longer reflects the full experience of getting an education from PHS
- Students taking courses outside of the district as a replacement for courses offered in PUSD—avoiding having a teacher they perceive to be harder, bumping up GPA, graduating early?
- Taking off-campus courses means less exposure to social justice/equity discussions (LCAP Goal 1)
- Students taking asynchronous online courses are not engage in “relevant learning experiences that foster lifelong curiosity, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and responsible citizenship” (LCAP Goal 2)

### **Procedural Challenges**

- Students not letting counseling office know they are taking an outside course until after completing it
- Some institutions not issuing transcripts with credits and grades listed, and those courses not approved to be added to the transcript.
- Students requesting they be given an open period in the middle of their day to take an online class
- Students needing a space on campus to take an online course

## **II. SUPPORT INFORMATION**

In response to the feedback provided by the PHS counseling staff, the following revisions to # 7 are being recommended:

### 7. Taking Courses at an Outside Accredited School

Students are highly encouraged to pursue their educational interests which may include taking courses at an outside accredited school.

An "accredited" school is one that has received accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or other statewide or regional commissions or, in the case of a school outside California, by the equivalent governmental or other regional accrediting agency in that jurisdiction.

Courses taken at community colleges may be added to the high school transcript. Concurrent or dual enrollment in college courses that are equivalent to a high school-level course will not earn the additional extra grade point. (Education Code 48800, 51225.3)

Concurrent or dual enrollment in upper division courses may receive an extra grade point as approved by the Superintendent's designee.

For students enrolled at Piedmont High School, courses taken at a fee-based or private accredited school, while enrolled at PHS, will not be added to the high school transcript.

For students enrolled at Millennium High School, courses taken at a fee-based or private accredited school, while enrolled at MHS, must be approved by the Superintendent's designee in order to be added to the high school transcript.

The full text of BP 6146.1 Alternative Credits Toward Graduation is attached or can be reviewed [here](#) or by accessing the following URL:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JozQbn-EK7mUhOVy3mRdITCX8LKNrgWN\\_1bdZo5NOE/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JozQbn-EK7mUhOVy3mRdITCX8LKNrgWN_1bdZo5NOE/edit?usp=sharing)

### **III. REVIEW AND ACTION**

Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Cheryl Wozniak, will present the recommended revisions to BP 6146.11 Alternative Credits Toward Graduation. Board members will discuss and provide feedback for the second reading at the Board meeting on April 27, 2022.