



POLICY ADDRESSING ENROLLMENT IN AN ADVANCED COURSE AND CHALLENGING CURRICULUM

The Torrington Board of Education (the “Board”) understands the importance of providing opportunities for students to enroll in an advanced course and offering students challenging curriculum in the Torrington Public Schools (the “District”). In accordance with Connecticut law, this policy shall explain the manner in which the District determines eligibility for enrollment in advanced courses and creates academic plans for students in the District.

I. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

"Advanced course" means an honors class, advanced placement class, dual enrollment, dual credit, early college or any other advanced or accelerated course offered by the Board in grades nine to twelve, inclusive.

“Advanced placement” program is a program authorized by the College Board that offers college-level courses and exams that students take in high school.

“Dual credit/Dual enrollment” courses are college courses offered by high schools in partnership with a college or university. Students taking these courses in high school are simultaneously enrolled with the partner higher education institution. Students who successfully complete a dual credit/dual enrollment course earn credit toward high school graduation as well as college course credit that appears on a student transcript issued by a college or university.

"Prior academic performance" means the course or courses that a student has taken, the grades received for such course or courses and a student's grade point average.

II. Eligibility Criteria

Consistent with state law, the District will identify students in grades nine who may be eligible to take or enroll in an advanced course. Students will be eligible to enroll

in advanced courses throughout their high school career, even if they are not identified as eligible in grade nine.

Eligibility for enrollment in an advanced course shall not be based exclusively on a student's prior academic performance. There are multiple methods by which a student may satisfy the eligibility criteria for enrollment in an advanced course, including:

- Recommendations from teachers, administrators, school counselors or other school personnel.
- A student's prior academic performance, as determined by evidence-based indicators of how a student will perform in an advanced course.
- The District administration may, in its discretion, identify and publicize additional criteria, including but not limited to meetings with students and/or parents who request AP course eligibility. Any such criteria shall be established prior to the commencement of an academic term.

III. Creation of an Academic Plan/Challenging Curriculum

The District will create an academic plan for each student who is identified in grade eight or nine as eligible for enrollment in an advanced course. Such plan will be designed to enroll the student in one or more advanced courses and allow the student to earn college credit or result in career readiness. Such academic plan will also be aligned with:

- The courses offered by the Board,
- The student's student success plan, created pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221a(j),
- High school graduation requirements, and
- Any other policies or standards adopted by the Board relating to the eligibility for student enrollment in advanced courses.

The academic plan may be part of the student's success plan, which plan is required for each student by Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-221a.

A student, or the student's parent or guardian, may decline to implement the provisions of an academic plan created for such student.

IV. Guiding Principles and Implementation

The Board recognizes that course access and academic planning should be guided by considerations beyond traditional course eligibility criteria. Specifically, the Board recognizes that academic achievement and engagement in middle school are strong precursors to high school success. In addition, the Board recognizes the importance of engaging with a student's parents and/or guardians throughout the student's educational

experience, reducing barriers to opportunities for advanced courses, and providing a wide range of advanced courses that appeal to students with various interests.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for implementing this policy and developing procedures in furtherance of this policy and in accordance with guidance provided by the Connecticut Department of Education.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221w

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221x

Connecticut State Department of Education, *District Guidance for Developing an Advanced Course Participation Policy* (April 2022)

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