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**Guidance for Educational Opportunities Outside the Classroom Through Sponsoring Entities**  
**January 2022**

**What is learning outside the classroom through a sponsoring entity?**

[NDCC 15.1-07-35](#), also known as House Bill (HB) 1478, passed during the 67<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly in 2021, permits schools to offer credit for educational opportunities that take place outside the school building through a sponsoring entity. The bill, nicknamed the “Learn Everywhere Bill,” allows students to learn outside the classroom walls in conjunction with a sponsoring entity (defined below) that provides educational opportunities in a more hands-on way than they may get in the classroom. This guidance document will serve as a quick reference for schools that have questions or are wondering about more information related to the program. [NDAC 67-19-04](#) further outlines the procedures for schools wishing to pursue this option.

**Definitions**

Sponsoring Entity- a business, for-profit organization, non-profit organization, community organization, or trade association that partners with a school district or non-public school to provide educational opportunities for students.

Educational Opportunity- learning outside of the classroom that meets course standards, as determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This includes work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, internships, industry certifications, and community programs.

**Is the program mandatory?**

No, schools do not need to offer this program. Allowing students to earn credit outside of the classroom through a sponsoring entity is a **local** school board decision.

**Does the hour requirement for credit still apply when using this program?**

Yes, students are still required to be engaged in learning for 120 hours to earn one credit (150 hours to earn one credit in Science or CTE courses), as defined in [NDCC 15.1-21-03](#).

**Does the learning experience need to take place during school hours?**

The learning experience may occur during school hours, outside of school hours, or a combination of both. The sponsoring entity should outline these parameters in the submitted proposal.

**From whom does the student learn?**

A teacher of record employed by the school and licensed to teach the course for which the student will be receiving credit must oversee the process. The teacher does not need to be physically present at the site where the student is performing the learning activities but must be instrumental in coordinating and communicating with the sponsoring entity. The teacher of record is also responsible for issuing the grade to the student. Because the student is learning through hands-on activity, the student would be learning from both the teacher of record as well as the sponsoring entity during the experience.

**What grades levels can participate in this program?**

The program applies to students from grades six through twelve.

**Can high school credit be awarded?**

Yes, high school credit may be awarded, provided that content standards are met, and the student has fulfilled the requirement of 120 hours of student engagement per credit (150 hours for science and CTE courses).

**What are the steps if we want to participate?**

School districts or non-public schools wishing to participate in this program must complete two main steps. The first step is to adopt a school board policy allowing educational opportunities outside of the classroom through sponsoring entities. The policy must address eligibility requirements for sponsoring entities, how proposals from the sponsoring entities will be submitted to and approved by the local board, and how the school will ensure the sponsoring entity will be accountable for the learning activities which students are receiving credit.

The second step is for the sponsoring entity to submit a proposal to the local school board. Sponsoring entities must only submit one proposal even if they provide more than one learning opportunity course. The school board must approve the proposal before submitting it to the state for final review and approval.

**What should the proposal include?**

The proposal must include:

- Name and information of the sponsoring entity
- Course title and state course code number for each course provided by the sponsoring entity
- A teacher of record employed by the school district that is licensed in the course being offered, and has agreed to be responsible for coordinating the educational opportunity
- Assurance that the course(s) will meet North Dakota Course Content Standards
- A statement of how students will demonstrate proficiency and be evaluated
- Information on how the proposal provides increased educational opportunities and improves academic success for the students who participate

**What are some examples of classes that may count?**

- A student could earn credit in Journalism (05081) by working at the local newspaper, learning hands-on skills and information
- A student could earn credit in Botany/Horticulture (13024) by working in a local greenhouse, learning hands-on skills and information
- A student could earn credit in Sports Officiating (08046) by working at their local YMCA-recreation center or park district, officiating youth sporting activities, learning hands-on skills and information
- A student could earn credit in Theater Arts (05061) by working at a local community theater, performing various tasks, and learning hands-on skills and information

Please note that these are just a few examples. We look forward to seeing what other ideas are submitted!

### **When can schools submit the proposal to the state?**

To be approved for use during the 2022-2023 school year, schools must submit proposals during either of the two windows:

- January 23-February 1, 2022
- May 23-June 1, 2022

To be approved for use during the 2023-2024 school year and beyond, schools must submit proposals during either of the two windows:

- October 23-November 1 of the previous school year
- May 23-June 1 of the previous school year

### **How can schools submit a proposal?**

Proposals may be emailed to [NDK12ECC@nd.gov](mailto:NDK12ECC@nd.gov) or mailed to:

Joe Kolosky  
Director, Office of School Approval and Opportunity  
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction  
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 201  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

### **What is the process for approval?**

Once the local school board has approved a proposal, send it to The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. The Department will share it with the K-12 Coordination Council. The K-12 Coordination Council will review the proposal and make recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Superintendent of Public Instruction then makes the final determination to approve the proposal.

### **Why are there limited windows for schools to submit proposals to the state?**

Two parts of HB 1478 call for timelines that have contributed to the necessity of having a short application window. One requirement is that all proposals received must be approved or denied by the Superintendent of Public Instruction within 90 days of receipt. The second requirement is that the K-12 Coordination Council review all proposals before being submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for final approval. The K-12 Coordination only meets four times per year. The application windows exist to meet both the requirement of the K-12 Council proposal reviews and the need to complete the entire review process within 90 days. The application windows are in place to allow the K-12 Coordination Council to review and still allow time for the Superintendent of Public Instruction to give final approval.

### **What must be reported to NDDPI once the proposal has been approved?**

No later than June 30 of each school year, school districts or non-public schools providing educational opportunities with sponsoring entities shall provide program evaluation data to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Program evaluation data submitted may include:

1. Academic indicators such as:
  - a. Proficiency scales
  - b. Self-assessments
  - c. Assessments from supervisor
  - d. Career-ready standards met

- e. Content standards met
2. Descriptions of how the program:
    - a. Improved the delivery of education
    - b. Improved the administration of education
    - c. Provided increased education opportunities for students
    - d. Improved the academic success of students
  3. Other evaluation measures such as attendance, disciplinary incidents, student engagement, student voice, student and parent surveys, and evidence of improved instructional practices.

**Who can I contact with questions?**

Schools may contact [Rebecca Duben](#) with the North Dakota School Boards Association at (701) 255-4127 with questions on writing and adopting a policy to allow for learning opportunities outside the classroom through sponsoring entities.

Schools may contact [Joe Kolosky](#) with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction at (701) 328-2755 with questions specific to the program itself.