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MSBA/MASA Model Policy 624

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624 ONLINE LEARNING OPTIONS

[Note: The provisions of this policy substantially reflect the statutory requirements of Minn. Stat. § 124D.095 (2003), the Online Learning Option Act.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize and govern online learning options of students enrolled in the school district for purposes of compulsory attendance.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The school district shall not prohibit an enrolled student from applying to enroll in online learning.
- B. The school district shall grant academic credit for completing the requirements of an online learning course or program.
- C. The school district shall allow an online learning student to have the same access to the computer hardware and education software available in the school district as all other students in the school district.
- D. The school district shall continue to provide non-academic services to online learning students.
- E. Online learning students may participate in the extracurricular activities of the school district on the same basis as other enrolled students.
- F. To the extent the school district provides curriculum to resident students that has both physical and electronic components, the school district must make the electronic component accessible to a resident student in a home school at the request of the student or the student's parent or guardian, provided that the school district does not incur more than an incidental cost as a result of providing access electronically.

[Note: The school district may itself offer online learning. If it does, it is subject to numerous reporting and review requirements but may also be eligible for state funding. To the extent online learning is offered by the school district to its enrolled students, it is not subject to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) reporting or review requirements and cannot generate online learning funds. See Minn. Stat. § 124D.095, Subd. 4(e).]

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Full-time online provider” means an enrolling school authorized by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to deliver comprehensive public education at any or all of the elementary, middle, or high school levels.
- B. “Online learning” is an interactive course or program that delivers instruction from a teacher to a student by computer, is combined with other traditional delivery methods that include frequent student assessment and may include actual teacher contact time, and meets or exceeds state academic standards.
- C. “Online learning student” is a student enrolled in the school district for purposes of compulsory attendance and enrolled in an online learning course or program delivered by an authorized provider.
- D. “Online learning provider” is another school district, an intermediate school district, or an organization of two or more school districts operating under a joint powers agreement, or a charter school located in Minnesota that provides online learning to students.
- E. “Supplemental online learning” means an online course taken in place of a course period during the regular school day at a local district school.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Dissemination and Receipt of Information
 - 1. The school district shall make available information about online learning to all interested people. The school district may utilize the list of approved online learning providers and online learning courses and programs developed, published, and maintained by MDE.
 - 2. The school district will receive and maintain information provided to it by online learning providers.
- B. Students
 - 1. A student may apply for full-time enrollment in an approved online learning program or for supplemental online learning. The student must have the written consent of a parent or guardian to do so if the student is under eighteen (18) years of age.

2. The student and the student's parents must submit an application to the online learning provider and identify the reason for enrolling in online learning. The online learning provider that accepts a student under this section must within ten days notify the student and the school district in writing if the school district is not the online learning provider. The student and family must notify the online learning provider of their intent to enroll in online learning within ten days of acceptance, at which time the student and parent must sign a statement of assurance that they have reviewed the online course or program and understand the expectations of online learning enrollment. The online learning provider must notify the school district of the student's enrollment in online learning in writing on a form provided by MDE.
3. Supplemental online learning notification to the school district upon student enrollment in the online learning program will include the courses or program, credits to be awarded, the start date of online enrollment, and confirmation that the courses will meet the student's graduation plan. A student may enroll in supplemental online learning courses up to the midpoint of the school district's term. The school district may waive this requirement for special circumstances and upon acceptance by the online learning provider.
4. An online learning student may enroll in supplemental online learning courses during a single school year to a maximum of 50 percent of the student's full schedule of courses per term. A student may exceed the supplemental online learning registration limit if the school district grants permission for supplemental online learning enrollment above the limit, or if an agreement is made between the school district and the online learning provider for instructional services. To enroll in more than 50 percent of the student's full schedule of courses per term in online learning, the student must qualify to exceed the supplemental online learning registration limit or apply for enrollment to an approved full-time online learning program following appropriate procedures in Paragraph IV.B.2. above. Full-time online learning students may enroll in classes at a local school per contract for instructional services between the online learning provider and the school district.
5. An online learning student may complete course work at a grade level that is different from the student's current grade level.

6. An online learning student may enroll in additional courses with the online learning provider under a separate agreement that includes terms for payment of any tuition or course fees.

C. Classroom Membership and Teacher Contact Time

1. The school district may reduce an online learning student's regular classroom instructional membership in proportion to the student's membership in online learning courses.
2. The school district may reduce the course schedule of an online learning student in proportion to the number of online learning courses the student takes from an online learning provider other than the school district.
3. A teacher with a Minnesota license must assemble and deliver instruction to enrolled students receiving online learning from an enrolling district. The delivery of instruction occurs when the student interacts with the computer or the teacher and receives ongoing assistance and assessment of learning. The instruction may include curriculum developed by persons other than a teacher with a Minnesota license.

D. Academic Credit; Graduation Standards or Requirements

1. The school district shall apply the same graduation requirements to all students, including online learning students.
2. The school district shall use the same criteria for accepting online learning credits or courses as it does for accepting credits or courses for nonresident transfer students under Minnesota law.
3. An online learning provider must make available to the school district the course syllabus, standard alignment, content outline, assessment requirements, and contact information for supplemental online courses taken by school district students.
4. The school district may challenge the validity of a course offered by an online learning provider. Such a challenge will be filed with MDE.
5. The school district shall count secondary credits granted to an online learning student toward its graduation and credit requirements.

6. If a student completes an online learning course or program that meets or exceeds a graduation standard or grade progression requirement at the school district, that standard or requirement will be met.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 123B.42, Subd. 1 (Curriculum; Electronic Components)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.03 (Enrollment Options Program)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 (Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.095 (Online Learning Option Act)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 509 (Enrollment of Nonresident Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 605 (Alternative Programs)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 608 (Instructional Services – Special Education)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 620 (Credit for Learning)