



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Series: 2008-2009

Circular Letter: C-10

TO: Superintendents of Schools
Executive Directors, Regional Educational Service Centers
Directors, Magnet and Charter Schools

FROM: Mark K. McQuillan
Commissioner of Education

DATE: April 13, 2009

SUBJECT: Granting High School Credit for Private World Language Courses

Subsection (e) of Sec. 10-221a of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning high school graduation requirements was amended by P.A. 08-138, in part, as follows:

- Only courses taken in grades nine through twelve, inclusive, shall satisfy this graduation requirement, except that a local or regional board of education may grant a student credit (1) toward meeting a specified course requirement upon the successful completion in grade seven or eight of any course, the primary focus of which corresponds directly to the subject matter of a specified course requirement in grades nine to twelve, inclusive; (2) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon completion of a world language course offered privately through a nonprofit provider, provided such student achieves a passing grade on an examination prescribed, within available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education and such credits do not exceed four; ... (4) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of coursework at an institution accredited by the Department of Higher Education or regionally accredited. One three-credit semester credit course, or its equivalent, at such an institution shall equal one-half credit for purposes of this section.

Pursuant to my authority to prescribe an examination for the purposes of awarding credit in a world language, I have prescribed the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) together with the ACTFL Written Proficiency Test (WPT), administered by LTI, the ACTFL Testing Office. In order to earn credits under this program, students must take the OPI and WPT in the same language. Pursuant to the amended statute, local and regional boards may only award up to four credits toward meeting the graduation requirement. The attached chart incorporates our recommendation as to the maximum credit to be awarded for each language category and test level. This recommendation is based on ACTFL's categorization of the difficulty of the language and the official OPI and WPT rating that is achieved. ACTFL's suggested credit equivalency appears on the chart in parentheses.

Granting High School Credit for Private World Language Courses

April 13, 2009

Page 2

For more information about the ACTFL test and test registration, please refer to http://www.languagetesting.com/acad_to_apply.htm.

Please note that in addition to passing the prescribed examination, a student must also complete a world language course offered privately through a nonprofit provider. We are aware of some of these courses which are currently being offered in Connecticut, but it may be that there are others of which we are unaware that are offered in your localities. It will be up to your board to determine which, if any, of these courses will be deemed acceptable for purposes of awarding credit in conjunction with successful passage of the prescribed examination.

Please also note that, in general, the awarding of credit under Sec. 10-221a of the Connecticut General Statutes, including the new provision, is discretionary for local and regional boards of education. Good practice dictates that your board adopts a written policy with regard to if, and when, credit will be awarded under this authority.

P.A. 08-138 also amended Sec. 10-221a to authorize me to identify and approve proficiency tests for other subject areas, which, upon achieving a passing grade thereon, can be the basis of the award of credit towards graduation. To date, I have not yet identified or approved any such test, but plan to address this issue in the context of the secondary school reform initiative. I will keep you advised as we plan how best to implement this amendment to the statute.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, including how to obtain information about the ACTFL testing process, please contact Mary Ann Hansen at 860-713-6753 or mary_ann.hansen@ct.gov.

MKM:kfw

cc: Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner, Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Leadership

Karen Flanagan, Director, Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs

Mary Ann Hansen, World Languages Consultant, Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction

Attachment