

Challenging Curriculum – Advanced Courses

LEARN schools are theme-aligned, college and career preparatory, and inclusive learning environments. Through high-quality instruction, a challenging curriculum, professional learning with staff, family and community engagement, and the development of student-centered success plans, schools will support students' academic and career goals and provide equitable access to advanced coursework.

Academic rigor and the opportunity to accelerate learning are powerful motivators for students to meet intellectual challenges and excel in the academic environment. LEARN supports advanced courses and programs that promote academic acceleration and encourages students to pursue rigorous, challenging academic coursework such as, but not limited to, honors classes, dual enrollment, dual credit, advanced placement classes, International Baccalaureate courses, and the Cambridge International Program.

In order to encourage student participation, LEARN will communicate information about advanced courses or programs to students and parents; offer district-wide counseling to students about the benefits of advanced level courses and programs; and annually evaluate the progress toward increasing students' readiness and participation for advanced courses or programs. Additionally, LEARN will:

1. Provide a course sequence and foundation-building in earlier grades, making later advanced coursework a viable option.
2. Create multiple access points to advanced courses and programs, allowing students to access them at various points of their high-school experience.
3. Use only enrollment access criteria that are educationally necessary.
4. Use multiple methods by which a student may satisfy eligibility criteria for enrollment, including but not limited to:
 - a. Recommendations from teachers, administrators, school counselors, or other school personnel;
 - b. Criteria that are not exclusively based on a student's prior academic performance;
 - c. Evidence-based indicators of how a student will perform in an advanced course or program;
 - d. GPA improvement over time;
 - e. Scoring near benchmark on local assessments;
 - f. Student interests and persistence.
5. Offer a robust set of student supports, including tutoring, access to technology, and support from school counselors, that help all students succeed in advanced courses or programs.
6. Publish and disseminate materials that encourage all students to participate in advanced courses and programs, making these materials available in multiple languages.

Student Success Plans

Beginning in grade six, each student will have a student success plan which will include the student's career and academic choices in grades six to twelve, inclusive. Such plan will be reviewed and updates as necessary, but at least annually, and must:

- provide evidence of career exploration in each grade, including, but not limited to, careers and academic choices in manufacturing, computer science, science, technology, engineering and mathematics;
- be created in collaboration with the student and the parent/guardian of such student and with the advice and recommendations of school personnel;
- to the extent it does not conflict with the career choices of the student or parent/guardian, include an academic plan consistent with this policy. Such plan shall be designed to enroll the student in one or more advanced course or programs and allow the student to earn college credit or result in career readiness; align with the courses or programs offered by LEARN; and align with the high school graduation requirements.

Evaluation

LEARN will review annually data on student participation in advanced courses or programs. Such data will be used during the planning process for course and program offerings in the upcoming school year.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221a High school graduation requirements. Student support and remedial services. Student success plans.

10-221r Advanced placement course program. Guidelines.

P.A. 21-199 An Act Concerning Various Revisions and Additions to the Statutes relating to Education and Workforce Development

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LEARN