

## **SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

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*Section*                    PROGRAM

*Policy Name*            PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION                    609

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### **RATIONALE**

The Superior Greenstone District School Board recognizes that students acquire important knowledge, skills and competencies in a variety of settings outside, as well as inside, the formal education setting. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) allows students to have their skills and knowledge evaluated against the expectations outlined in Ontario curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of the Superior Greenstone District School Board to evaluate a student's skills and knowledge against the expectations outlined in current Ontario curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) through a challenge and equivalency process.

### **GUIDELINES**

- 1.0     In accordance with provincial Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No.129, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools, students may challenge for credit only Grade 10, 11, and 12 courses in provincial curriculum policy documents, (See Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2011, Section 7.2.5.1)
  
- 2.0     Each secondary school course calendar shall contain information regarding challenges for credit and opportunities for challenge. Schools may not charge students any fee for undergoing the challenge process.  
  
          Students may earn no more than four credits through the challenge process, including a maximum of two credits in any one discipline.
  
- 3.0     Students may use certificates or other records of accomplishment earned outside Ontario classrooms as reasonable evidence of eligibility to challenge for credit for a related course within the Ontario curriculum, if they wish to earn credit for the

course without taking the course. Students with music certificates that are accepted for credits in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12 Appendix 4, Music Certificates Accepted for Credits, however, are not required to challenge for credit for the appropriate music courses, but are granted credits in accordance with Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements, Appendix 4.

- 4.0 Students may challenge for credit for a course, only, if they can provide reasonable evidence to the school principal that they would likely be successful in the challenge process. The responsibilities of the student include:
  - a) initiating the PLAR challenge by approaching the school principal for information regarding the process;
  - b) completing the application process by gathering “reasonable evidence” to support the application;
  - c) completing the formal tests and other assessments as determined by the school.
- 5.0 Arrangements may be made with other boards to provide opportunities for eligible students to challenge for credit for courses that are not offered by the Board.
- 6.0 A record of all challenges for credit that were completed – that is, all challenges for which students earned a final percentage grade, whether a passing or a failing grade, shall be included in the Board’s September and March Reports to the Ministry.
- 7.0 The responsibility for PLAR shall be carried out under the direction of the school principal in the school in which the student is registered. A student must obtain permission from the principal of the school in which h/she is registered if h/she intends to apply for a PLAR at any other public school or inspected private school.
- 8.0 In cases where, a student who is an adult or the parent of a student who is not an adult, disagrees with the decision of the principal to allow or disallow the challenge, the parent or adult student may ask the appropriate supervisory officer to review the matter.
- 9.0 The challenge process is an evaluation process and shall not be used as a way for a student to improve a final course mark in a previously earned credit. Nor is it a way to obtain a credit for a course, h/she has failed.
- 10.0 Students who are eligible for equivalency credits are those who transfer to Ontario Secondary schools from non-inspected private schools or schools outside Ontario. Equivalency credits are granted for placement purposes only.
  - 10.1 The principal of the receiving school shall, in the process of deciding where the student should be placed, determine as equitably as possible the total credit equivalency of the student’s previous learning, and the number of compulsory and optional credits still to be earned.
  - 10.2 In cases where, a student who is an adult or the parent of a student who is not an adult disagrees with the principal’s placement decision, the adult student or

the parent may ask the appropriate supervisory officer to review the matter.

10.3 Principals shall ensure that equivalency is recorded in accordance with the Ontario Student Transcript (OST): Manual, 2010.

11.0 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary to support this policy.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**“Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)”** is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby students may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. Students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the secondary school diploma. The PLAR process involves two components: “challenge” and “equivalency”.

**“Challenge”** means the process whereby students’ prior learning is assessed for the purpose of granting credit for a Grade 10, 11, or 12 course developed from a provincial curriculum policy document published in 1999 or later.

**“Equivalency”** is the process of assessing credentials from other jurisdictions.

**“Credits”** Challenge for credit for courses based on provincial curriculum policy documents will be available to students only in courses that are actually taught in schools operated by the Board. All credits granted through the PLAR process – that is, through either the challenge process or the equivalency process – must represent the same standards of achievement as credits granted to students who have taken the courses.

**“Reasonable Evidence”** means documentation that the curriculum expectations of the course have already been achieved and that the student would likely be successful in the challenge process.

**“Mature student”** means a student who is 18 years of age or older and out of day school for a minimum of one full year. Mature students who entered secondary school in September 1999 or after will have their credit status assessed using PLAR for Mature Students. Students who entered an Ontario secondary school after 1984 and prior to 1999 will continue to have their placement determined according to the requirements set out in Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7-12/OACs): Program and Diploma Requirements, 1989, rev. ed. (OSIS), section 6.14: Equivalent Standing for Mature Students.

| <b>References</b>  |
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| Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2011 |