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POLICY CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS ACADEMIC CREDIT AND GRADING

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum curriculum standards for American Leadership Academy elementary and secondary schools and to establish high school graduation requirements, including academic grading.

COURSE DESCRIPTION STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES

The Utah State Board of Education establishes minimum standards and objectives for course descriptions for each course in the required general curriculum. Course descriptions for required and elective courses are developed cooperatively by the school and the Utah State Board of Education. The descriptions shall contain mastery criteria for the courses and shall stress mastery of the course material rather than completion of predetermined time allotments for courses. Implementation and assessment procedures for approved courses are the responsibility of American Leadership Academy administrative staff.

ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

1. Students in grades K-6 shall be taught according to the requirements found in Utah Admin. Code R277-700-4, as amended. The requirements are as listed:
 - a. Grades K-2:
Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, curriculum which includes the integration of literacy with science and social studies.
 - b. Grades 3-6:
Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Arts including visual arts, music, dance and theatre, Health Science, Physical Education, Educational Technology and Library Media
2. The school shall use USBE-approved summative adaptive assessments to assess student mastery of the following:
 - a. Reading;
 - b. Language Arts;
 - c. Mathematics;
 - d. Science; and
 - e. Effectiveness of written expression in grades five and eight.
3. The school shall provide remediation to elementary students who do not achieve mastery of the subjects described in this section.

JUNIOR HIGH CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

1. The school shall use evidence-based best practices, technology, and other instructional media in Junior High school curricula to increase the relevance and quality of instruction.
2. Students in grades 7-8 shall earn a minimum of 12 credits in accordance with Utah Administrative Code R277-700-5, as amended, to be properly prepared for instruction in grades 9-12.
3. The school may:
 - a. Offer additional elective courses;
 - b. Require a student to complete additional courses; or
 - c. Set minimum credit requirements.
4. Upon parental or student request, the school may, with parental consent, substitute a course requirement for a student in the grade 7 or 8 with a course, extracurricular activity, or experience that is:
 - a. Similar to the course requirement; or
 - b. Consistent with the student's plan for college and career readiness.
5. A parent or student requesting a course substitution must make the request to school counselor. Denial by the counselor of a student or parent's request may be appealed to the school principal.
6. The school shall use USBE-approved summative adaptive assessments to assess student mastery of the following:
 - a. Reading;
 - b. Language Arts;
 - c. Mathematics; and
 - d. Science.

HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

1. The general core and core standards for students in grades 9-12 are described in Utah Admin. Code R277-700-6. American Leadership Academy requires each student to earn a total of 26.0 units of credit from the following areas:
 - a. English 4.0 credits
 - b. Mathematics 4.0 credits
 - c. Science 3.0 credits
 - d. Social Studies 3.0 credits
 - e. Fine Arts 1.5 credits
 - f. Career & Technical Ed (CTE) 1.0 credits
 - g. Digital Studies 0.5 credits
 - h. Financial Literacy 0.5 credits
 - i. Health 0.5 credits
 - j. Physical Education 1.5 credits
 - k. Leadership 0.5 credits
 - l. Electives 6.0 credits

2. In addition to the requirements set forth in this policy, the Board requires that students in grades 9-12 earn sufficient additional elective credits to reach the number listed above to graduate and earn a diploma from the high school.
3. The school may modify a student's graduation requirements to meet the unique educational needs of the student if:
 - a. The student has a disability; and
 - b. The modifications to the student's graduation requirements are made through the student's IEP.
4. The school shall document the nature and extent of a modification, substitution, or exemption made to a student's graduation requirements in the student's IEP.
5. The school may modify graduation requirements for an individual student to achieve an appropriate route to student success if the modification is consistent with:
 - a. The student's IEP; or
 - b. The SEOP/Plan for College and Career Readiness;
 - c. Is maintained in the student's file and includes the parent's signature; and
 - d. Maintains the integrity and rigor expected for high school graduation, as determined by the USBE.
6. State Board approved assessments will be used to evaluate student mastery of the curriculum in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science.

DIPLOMAS

1. In accordance with Utah Admin. Code R277-705, American Leadership Academy offers high school diplomas indicating that a student successfully completed all state and school course requirements for graduation.
2. Diplomas are printed by a third party contractor. The school does not maintain copies of diplomas and does not issue replacement copies.
3. A certificate of completion may be awarded to a student who:
 - a. Has completed the student's senior year;
 - b. Is exiting or aging out of the school system; and
 - c. Has not met all state or school requirements for a diploma.
4. A student with a disability served by an individualized education program (IEP) shall be awarded a diploma if the student has satisfied the graduation criteria set forth in the student's IEP consistent with state and federal law.
5. The school may award an alternate diploma to a student with a significant cognitive disability if:
 - a. The student accesses grade-level Core standards through the Essential Elements;
 - b. The student's IEP team makes graduation substitutions in the same content area, from a list of alternative courses approved by the Executive Director; and
 - c. The student meets all graduation requirements prior to exiting the school.
 - d. The alternate diploma issued may not indicate that the recipient is a student with a disability.
6. Diplomas or unofficial transcripts may not be withheld from students for non-payment of school fees.
7. In order to participate in high school graduation exercises, students must meet the standards established by American Leadership Academy in this policy. Students who have earned a high school Diploma may participate in graduation exercises as long as they are in good standing with the school.

SECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT

1. A credit or fraction thereof shall be given upon satisfactory completion of a course or learning experience in compliance with state or school course standards. Students may also complete a course on a performance basis, in which case assessment of mastery will be the responsibility of the school administration. Credit may be awarded only once for a specific required core course with the same content during the secondary school experience. Credits are generally awarded in increments of a quarter credit (0.25). A successfully completed one semester course will result in the earning of a half credit (0.50). Passing a two-semester course will result in the granting of a full credit (1.0). An appropriate fraction of the whole credit for a course is granted at the end of each grading period in quarter credit increments.
2. High School students enrolled in American Leadership Academy may earn graduation credit by the following methods:
 - a. Successful completion of secondary school courses (grades 9-12).
 - b. Successful completion of concurrent enrollment classes, advanced placement courses, and distant learning courses consistent with Utah Code Ann., §53A-17a-120, et seq.
 - c. Demonstrated competency, as determined through use of an assessment instrument approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee.
 - d. Review of student work or projects (portfolio) consistent with procedures and criteria approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee.
 - e. Successful completion of correspondence or electronic course work offered by an accredited education institution.
 - f. Home School Instruction – On an individual basis, transfer of credit may be allowed through student testing or other appropriate education measures as determine by the Executive Director. The school may require documentation of compliance with Section 53G-6-204 prior to reviewing a student’s home school or competency work, assessment or materials.
 - g. The school has the final decision-making authority for the awarding of credit and grades from a non-accredited source consistent with state law, due process, and this rule.

Transcripts of Credit

1. All credit earned or attempted through any of the above options will be posted to an official student transcript of credits. The transcript will include the title of the course and grades and credits earned. Failed courses will also be posted to the student transcript even though credit is not earned.
2. Credits earned through a concurrent enrollment agreement with an institution of higher learning will be posted to the student's public school transcript according to the following formula: 3 college semester credits = 1 high school credit.
3. Work-Based Learning Credit. Eleventh and Twelfth grade students may earn up to a maximum of four (4) credits through Work Based Learning programs. Credit may be earned through approved internships or apprenticeships or through general work experience. A maximum of 0.5 credits may be earned through general work experience.

Acceptance of Transfer Credit

1. American Leadership Academy accepts transfer credit from any accredited public or private school. American Leadership Academy will not change or re-evaluate any credit which has been

placed on an official student transcript from an accredited public or private school. Graduation requirements may be adjusted on an individual basis to accommodate the differences in course offerings available in the district or school where the student previously attended.

2. American Leadership Academy does not accept previously earned credits from any non-accredited institutions within the United States. Students who enter American Leadership Academy after transferring from a public or private non-accredited school or home school must meet the same requirements for graduation as outlined in this policy.
3. When a student transfers to the school from outside the United States, the student's transcript will be evaluated on an individual basis by the school's counseling department to determine which credits will be accepted by the school.

Other Credit Guidelines

1. The school may grant a half (0.5) credit for participation on a high school athletic team or fine arts program. A student may be awarded no more than one (1.0) credit on the high school transcript for participation on athletic teams or fine arts programs.
2. Students may earn credit through the Mountainland Technology College (MTEC).

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

1. The school offers a concurrent enrollment program to provide a challenging, college-level experience in high school and to provide transition courses that can be applied to postsecondary education.
2. A concurrent enrollment program will comply with applicable state laws, including UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-701.
3. A student participating in a concurrent enrollment program shall:
 - a. Be enrolled in the school and counted in average daily membership, as required by UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-10-301;
 - b. Have a current Plan for College and Career Readiness (CCR Plan).
 - c. Have completed a concurrent enrollment participation form, including a parent permission form and acknowledgment of program participation requirements, as required under UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-10-304;
 - d. Be enrolled in grade 9, 10, 11, or 12.
4. Credit earned through a concurrent enrollment course:
 - a. Has the same credit hour value as when taught on a college campus;
 - b. Applies toward graduation on the same basis as a course taught at the institution to which the credits are submitted;
 - c. Generates higher education credit that becomes a part of a student's permanent college transcript; and
 - d. Generates high school credit that is consistent with ALA policies for awarding credit for graduation.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1. A student with disabilities served by special education programs shall satisfy completion or graduation criteria, consistent with state and federal law and the student's Individual Education Plans (IEP).
2. Graduation issues must be addressed by the IEP team on an individual basis. The IEP is the vehicle for making changes to graduation requirements to meet the unique educational needs

for a student with disabilities. A student may be awarded a certificate of completion or a differentiated diploma, consistent with the state and federal law and the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

ACADEMIC GRADES

1. Academic grading is a teacher responsibility and should reflect academic progress toward the mastery of the course curriculum. Teachers must honestly and accurately grade the work of each student based upon the standards and objectives established for the course. Academic grades must reflect the actual competency or academic growth of a student, and proficiency at the end of a term or unit should be the major consideration in determining a student's grade.
2. In secondary schools, letter grades are given by teachers to reflect mastery of the subject matter of a course. Credit is granted for letter grades A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and for P (pass) grades.
 - a. Credit is not granted for F (fail), NG (no grade), and WF (withdraw failing). The student must arrange in advance with the teacher to take a course on that basis.
 - b. "P" grades and the resulting credit will not be counted when calculating grade point averages. Outside entities such as universities might assign a grade point to a "P" grade that alters the entity's interpretation of the GPA
 - c. "NG" grades may be given if there is a valid extenuating reason why a student has not completed the course work required for a passing grade by the end of the grading period. "NG" grades may be made up and changed to another grade within one calendar year from the date the grade was issued if the student remains enrolled. A student who graduates or is otherwise no longer enrolled in the school may not make up an "NG" grade. "NG" grades that are not made up within one calendar year will be changed to "F" grades.
3. Monitoring of academic growth is a critical step in the educational process. Student work will be corrected promptly, scores posted to the Student Information System (SIS) grading system, and work returned to students in a timely manner. Teachers and parents have a shared responsibility to monitor student progress. Parents and students may review student academic progress as well as attendance information by accessing SIS. Communication with the parent/guardian will be made when a student is doing D or F work, allowing an opportunity for improvement before the grading period ends.
4. Attendance and punctuality may be factors in grading only to the extent allowed by American Leadership Academy administration. Academic grades may be impacted by attendance and in participation-based classes, such as band, choir, orchestra, dance, drama, physical education, etc. The teacher shall then provide written disclosure to students and parents that participation, attendance, and punctuality will be considered factors in assessing the student's grade. The specific percentage of the grade attributable to participation, attendance, and punctuality shall be specified in the written disclosure document. In addition, any negative impact on the student's grade as a result of lack of participation, absences, and tardies shall be specified in the written disclosure document.
5. Grades may not be changed for the sole purpose of allowing a student to become eligible for activities or for the sole purpose of earning a diploma.
6. Grades that have been posted for more than one (1) calendar year cannot be changed. All grade changes must be made by the teacher and approved by the school principal or his/her designee. Once issued, grades may be changed, during a one (1) year time limit, for the following reasons.
 - a. A calculation or other grading error on the part of the teacher was discovered.

- b. Course work was satisfactorily completed following the issuance of an "I" grade.
- c. A student demonstrates competency during the next term.
- 7. Academic grades shall not be withheld, reduced, increased, or otherwise affected by a student's citizenship grade or behavior. Punctuality of assignments and work completion may factor into an academic grade if the teacher provides prior written disclosure to students and parents.
- 8. Course Grade Forgiveness
 - a. Consistent with UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-717, a student may, to improve a course grade received by the student may repeat the course one or more times, or enroll in and complete a comparable course.
 - b. A grade for an additional credit of a recurring course does not change a student's original course grade.
 - c. If a student repeats a course the school:
 - I. Shall adjust, if necessary, the student's course grade and grade point average to reflect the student's highest grade and exclude a lower grade;
 - II. Shall exclude from the student's permanent record the course grade that is not the highest grade; and
 - III. May not otherwise indicate on the student's current record that the student repeated the course.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR RECIPROCITY OF CREDIT

- 1. To prepare students to meet graduation requirements, the secondary school will implement a College and Career Readiness Plan (CCR) for every student.
- 2. The school shall provide remediation services for students in grades 7-12 who do not meet competency levels in a particular class. Students may be required to participate in remediation services before advancing to the next course in a subject sequence.

DROPOUT PREVENTION

Schools shall provide dropout prevention and recovery services for students in grades 9-12 with low academic performance. Services may include the following:

- 1. Engaging with the student;
- 2. Developing a learning plan to identify barriers to regular school attendance and achievement, an attainment goal, and a means for achieving the attainment goal;
- 3. Monitoring the student's progress toward reaching the attainment goal; and
- 4. Providing tiered interventions for a student who is not making progress toward the student's attainment goal.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

In accordance with UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-204, students shall, through an integrated curriculum, be taught honesty, integrity, morality, civility, duty, honor, service and obedience to law. Students shall be taught respect for and an understanding of the founding documents of Utah and of the United States, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitutions of the United States and of the State of Utah, as well as others listed in UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G10-302. Likewise, students shall be taught the

essentials and benefits of the free enterprise system and other values enumerated in UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-204.

CIVICS TEST

1. As required by Utah Code Ann., Section 53A-13-109.5, the school will administer a basic civics test.
2. Students must pass the civics test as a condition of receiving a high school diploma.
3. Students with disabilities may be administered an alternate assessment consistent with Utah Admin. Code Section R277-700-8.

GRADUATION CEREMONY

American Leadership Academy recognizes that a student's graduation is the culmination of years of planning and successful completion of state and school requirements. The wearing of the cap and gown and participation in the ceremony awarding the certificate of completion or diploma shall be reserved for students who have met those requirements. The Board of Trustees recognize the importance of the completion of the requirements for a certificate of completion or diploma from American Leadership Academy and view it as an achievement that improves the community as well as the individual. The Board of Trustees wishes to recognize that achievement in a publicly celebrated graduation exercise.

1. Participation in the graduation ceremony is an opportunity and not a protected property right. Participation may be denied if final student checkout is incomplete, as a disciplinary measure, or if a student refuses to comply with graduation ceremony standards established and developed at American Leadership Academy.
2. Participation in the graduation ceremony is optional and is not required.
3. Caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner as designated by the school administration.
4. Special needs students shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in ceremonies utilizing criteria based upon their unique circumstances.
5. ALA Policy: *Participation in Graduation Exercises* provides additional guidelines for graduation exercises.

REFERENCES

UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-2-304
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-3-401
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-4-205
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-10-301
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-10-304
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-9-803
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-204
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-302
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-402
UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-405
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-700
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-701
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-702
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-705
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-717