

Extended Learning Opportunities

The Portsmouth School District shall allow students to request extended learning opportunities (“ELOs”) at the high school level as a means of meeting their diverse learning styles, talents, and interests. ELOs may include, but are not necessarily limited to, internships, independent study, on-line courses and community service. All ELOs must be aligned with District educational goals and objectives, as well as Portsmouth High School’s established academic competencies. It is anticipated that this policy will be revisited as ELO’s become recognized by more post secondary education programs.

Awarding of Credits for ELOs:

In general, students will be encouraged to take no more than a total of four credits for ELOs. ELO credit will generally only be approved for elective graduation credits and not as a replacement for Portsmouth High School core subject area graduation credits. This does not apply to New Hampshire accredited online high school programs.

In order for core, subject area graduation credits to be approved for an ELO, one of the following conditions must apply:

1. The ELO is being utilized as a credit recovery opportunity for a course, which the student did not pass. In such cases, the course may fulfill a subject area credit requirement, but the grade will not be computed in the student’s GPA or class rank.
2. The course of study is not available at Portsmouth High School, but is offered on-line and is aligned with New Hampshire State education standards, the Common Core State Standards and is overseen by a New Hampshire public or charter school.. In such cases, the course may fulfill a subject area credit requirement, but the grade will not be computed in the student’s GPA or class rank.
3. A student completes a Portsmouth High School course as an independent study because the course is not offered due to low enrollment or when a student has a schedule conflict that prevents him/her from taking the course. In such cases, the course may fulfill a subject area credit requirement and the grade will be computed in the student’s GPA and class rank.

Exceptions to the conditions above may only be made with the recommendation and support of both the Principal and Guidance Director.

ELO Standards and Approval Process:

For an ELO to be approved for credit, it must meet rigorous, measurable standards comparable to Portsmouth High School course competencies. A student must have the permission of his/her parents and have a sponsoring teacher or guidance counselor (except that a sponsoring teacher/guidance counselor is not required for on-line courses taught by certified teachers).

All ELO requests require the recommendation of the Guidance Director and approval of the Principal. In cases where ELO requests are not approved for credit purposes, the Principal has the discretion to allow the ELO to be used as a prerequisite for advanced courses if the student can demonstrate the appropriate competencies for the particular course.

ELO Expenses:

Students and/or their parents shall be responsible for ELO expenses, including but not limited to tuition, textbooks, supplies and transportation and extraordinary administrative experiences. In extenuating circumstances, the District may pay a portion of the expenses. The Principal and the Superintendent must approve any such request.

Procedures:

The Portsmouth High School Principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, shall develop procedures to implement this policy. All such procedures must be consistent with applicable laws and this policy, and be approved by the Superintendent.

Legal References:

NH Code of Admin. Rules 306.04 (a) (4); 306. 22; 306. 26(f); 306.27 (b) (4); 306.27 (q)