

PERSONAL CURRICULUM

Adopted by the Gibraltar Board of Education on 05.13.09

WHAT IS A PERSONAL CURRICULUM?

The personal curriculum (PC) is an option initiated by the parent/guardian or an emancipated student that modifies certain requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) and allows a district to award a regular high school diploma to students who successfully complete their personal curriculum. A personal curriculum must include as many of the content expectations of the MMC as practicable.

The legislative intent of the PC is to increase the rigor and relevance of the educational experience. In this context, “practicable” is an inclusive term meaning as much of the subject area content expectations as possible during high school instruction for the individual student.

A PC allows a student to earn additional credit in specific subject areas, or, for students challenged with Algebra II, the personal curriculum allows a student to adjust his or her remaining mathematics credits. The PC may also be an option for students with disabilities requiring specific modifications of the MMC to ensure progress with the career pathway and post-secondary goals. The PC is also an option for students transferring to a district from out of state or from nonpublic schools that allows modifications of requirements under certain conditions.

While the PC option is available to any student, the legislative intent is that districts will make curriculum modifications only when it is clear that a modification is necessary for the student to achieve graduation requirements. For example, students in alternative education settings, at-risk students, and students with a qualifying disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, may request and be granted a PC modification, only if there is documented evidence that the student may not meet the graduation requirements.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ELIGIBILITY

The board of a local school district or public school academy may award a diploma to a student successfully completing a PC. However, each variance from the MMC will need to be considered individually. The MMC requires the student to earn credits in certain subject areas in order to earn a Michigan diploma. The student must demonstrate competencies in core subject areas. Modifications via the PC may limit the student’s ability to:

- Be admitted to college
- Be eligible for college scholarships
- Enter trade school
- Secure a job in a career choice
- Be eligible for NCAA athletic programs

Major modifications to the Michigan Merit Curriculum may not result in a Michigan diploma.

PERSONAL CURRICULUM ELIGIBILITY

A personal curriculum modification can only be requested for one of four reasons:

- To modify the mathematics requirement.
- To extend academic credit requirements by adding more math, science, English language arts, or world language credit.
- Eligibility for special education services and a documented need to make modifications determined to be necessary because of the student's disability.
- Transferring from out of state or from a nonpublic school after successful completion of the equivalent of two years of high school credit.

WHEN CAN A PERSONAL CURRICULUM BE IMPLEMENTED?

A PC can be requested any time, however, a modification to math or social studies cannot go into effect—except for a Student with a Disability—until after the student has earned two credits in social studies or 2.5 credits in math. Other allowable modifications can start as early as the beginning of high school for a Student with a Disability. Modifications for transfer students can go into effect immediately upon enrolling in school if they have acquired the equivalent of two years of high school credit.

Parents of students entering 9th grade who request a PC in order to have their students exempted from Physical Education, Health or Visual, Performing and Applied Arts so that their students, later on in high school, can use the exemption in order to take additional classes in ELA, math, science, or world language, must provide a written four-year plan that clearly shows the additional credits a student intends to take in place of the required credits. If the student does not fulfill the PC and does not take the additional credits, the PC is null and void and the student would be required to take the PE/Health/VPAA credits.

PERSONAL CURRICULUM PROCESS

1. A parent, legal guardian, or a student who has adult status may request a Personal Curriculum for the following school year by submitting the Personal Curriculum Request Form to the Counseling Department by first Friday in May.
2. The Personal Curriculum Eligibility Team will review the request for approval. The following materials will be used to make the eligibility determination:
 - Current Educational Development Plan (EDP);
 - Individualized Education Program (IEP) – *for students eligible for special education*;
 - Attendance, disciplinary, and grading records; and/or,
 - All other current and relevant assessment information.
3. If approved, a planning meeting will be scheduled to discuss details of the PC. This meeting will review the Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements, the intent of a PC, guidelines, and requirements. This meeting is to ensure all parties have a clear picture of the relevance of high

school coursework. The course of study will be aligned with the student's education and/or employment goals as identified in the EDP and/or IEP.

4. The parent/legal guardian is responsible for monitoring student progress each quarter in collaboration with the school district.
5. If a student does not fulfill the approved Personal Curriculum, the PC is null and void. The student is obligated to make up the class(es) that were waived by the PC in order to be eligible to graduate.

ALLOWABLE MATHEMATICS MODIFICATIONS

The math modification requires students to complete a minimum of 2.5 math credits including Algebra I, Geometry, and ½ credit of Algebra II, or the equivalent of these credit requirements in an integrated math or Career and Technical Education program (CTE). Once this requirement has been met, a modification may allow a student to take the remaining 1.5 credits in a math or math related course.

*** For additional information, see "Personal Curriculum Modifications Options" from the Michigan Department of Education.

ALLOWABLE MODIFICATIONS TO GO BEYOND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to meet all proficiency requirements for all credits in ELA, math, science, and world languages prior to requiring a PC to go beyond these academic requirements. If a PC is requested and granted and the student does not achieve proficiency in the required credits, the PC is null and void and the student will have to take the substituted credits to graduate.

SOCIAL STUDIES MODIFICATION (MMC: 3 CREDITS)

- Substituting credit requirements for one social studies credit for students who have successfully completed two required social studies credits (which must include Civics), to acquire additional credits in English language arts, mathematics, science, or world languages. **This modification will impact receiving of the Michigan Promise Scholarship.*

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION MODIFICATION (MMC: 1 CREDIT)

- Substituting credit requirements for one health and physical education credit to acquire additional credits in English language arts, mathematics, science, or world languages.

VISUAL, PERFORMING, AND APPLIED ARTS MODIFICATION (MMC: 1 CREDIT)

- Substituting credit requirements for one visual, performing, and applied arts credit to acquire additional credits in English language arts, mathematics, science, or world languages.

*** For additional information, see "Personal Curriculum Modifications Options" from the Michigan Department of Education.

ALLOWABLE MODIFICATIONS FOR A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY

The parent of a student with a disability may request a modification to the MMC that is not *otherwise* allowable if the student has a disability as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA 2004). This allows for additional credit substitution or content modification if the changes are based on the student's disability and the IEP.

IDEA 2004 guarantees a free appropriate public education (FAPE) but does not establish an entitlement to a diploma. Every effort must be made to provide students with disabilities full access to the MMC before making modifications. Modifications to state standards may affect a student's opportunity to receive a diploma. For a student eligible for special education services, the personal curriculum modifications must:

- Incorporate as much of the subject area content expectations as practicable for the student.
- Be consistent with both the Educational Development Plan (EDP) and the Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Modify components of the content expectations within each credit requirement.

It is important to remember that while we may be making modifications to the expectations for a student with a disability, we are doing so within the context of the high school content. The curriculum any student receives must be comprised of the content expectations outlined in the Michigan Merit course/credit requirements. Assumptions about what students are capable of should be carefully considered given the possible impact modifications could have on granting a diploma.

**** For additional information, see "Personal Curriculum Modifications Options" from the Michigan Department of Education.*

ALLOWABLE MODIFICATIONS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

The parent or legal guardian of a transfer student from out of state or from a nonpublic school may request a PC to modify the requirements of the MMC not otherwise allowed, providing the following are met:

- The student has completed the equivalent of two years of high school credit. The school district or public school academy may use appropriate assessment examinations to determine credits the student has earned to satisfy the curricular requirements of the MMC.
- The student's PC includes as much of the subject area content expectations as practicable for the student.
- The student completes one mathematics course in the final year of high school enrollment. If the student is enrolled in the district for one full year, the final year of math must be the equivalent of Algebra I or higher in the normal sequence of mathematics.
- The student PC must include a Civics credit.

**** For additional information, see "Personal Curriculum Modifications Options" from the Michigan Department of Education.*

SECTION 3 – MODIFICATION REQUEST (CONT.)

EXTENDED CORE REQUIREMENTS (*check area[s] where modification is requested*) (cont.)

| | |
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| Physical Education & Health – 1 credit | <input type="checkbox"/> Modified only if student takes additional credits beyond required credits in English language arts, math, science, or world languages. <input type="checkbox"/> Additional modifications available for students with disabilities. |
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| Visual, Performing, or Applied Arts – 1 credit | <input type="checkbox"/> Modified only if student takes additional credits beyond required credits in English language arts, math, science, or world languages. <input type="checkbox"/> Additional modifications available for students with disabilities. |
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MODIFICATIONS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ONLY
(*check area[s] where modification is requested*)

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| English language arts – 4 credits | <input type="checkbox"/> Modifications available for students with disabilities. |
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| Science – 3 credits (Biology, Chemistry or Physics, Additional Science) | <input type="checkbox"/> Modifications available for students with disabilities. |
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| Online Learning Experience Online course or learning experience OR incorporated into the required credits | <input type="checkbox"/> Modifications available for students with disabilities. |
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| World Language – 2 credits (beginning with class of 2016) | <input type="checkbox"/> Modifications available for students with disabilities. |
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TRANSFER-IN

The parent or legal guardian of a transfer student from out-of-state or from a nonpublic school may request a personal curriculum to modify the requirements of the MMC not otherwise allowed, providing the following are met:

- The student has completed the equivalent of two years of high school credit. The school district or public school academy may use appropriate assessment examinations to determine credits the student has earned to satisfy the curricular requirements of the MMC.
- The student's PC includes as much of the subject area content expectations as practicable for the student.
- The student completes one mathematics course in the final year of high school enrollment. If the student is enrolled in the district for one full year, the final year of math must be the equivalent of Algebra I or higher in the normal sequence of mathematics.
- The student's PC must include a Civics credit.

SECTION 4 – DISCLAIMER AND SIGNATURE

The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) requires that the student earn specific credits in order to graduate from high school. Credits are earned when the student demonstrates competencies in content expectations in the given subject areas. The law allows certain modifications of these credits and/or expectations through the development of a Personal Curriculum (PC).

A Personal Curriculum Eligibility Committee will meet to determine eligibility.

I understand that modifications to the Michigan Merit Curriculum may limit the student's readiness to be admitted to college, be eligible for college scholarships, enter trade school, secure a job in a career choice, or be eligible for NCAA athletic programs.

I understand major modifications to the MMC may not result in a Michigan diploma.

As an emancipated student, parent, or legal guardian who has chosen to participate in a PC, it is my responsibility to maintain communication quarterly with teachers regarding the areas of modification.

I understand that the student may or may not be eligible for further consideration of a PC, even though a PC is requested.

I understand that if the student does not fulfill the approved Personal Curriculum, the PC is null and void; the student is obligated to make up the class(es) that were waived by the Personal Curriculum in order to be eligible to graduate.

| | |
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| Signature | Date |
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