ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PLANS

Pursuant to RSA 193-1, compulsory attendance to the age of eighteen, the Salem School Board directs the Superintendent of Schools to provide a process by which a student interested in leaving public school after age 16 can develop an alternative learning plan. The purpose of this policy, and the objective of this process, is to further minimize the number of students who otherwise would leave school without earning a high school diploma or its equivalent.

In addition to options provided by our School of Continuing and Alternative Education, learning plans may include, but are not limited to, extended learning opportunities, independent study, private instruction, internships, work credit, apprenticeships, online courses/distance education, or other opportunities approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and consistent with this policy.

Alternative Learning Plans will provide students with meaningful educational experiences that meet State and District requirements to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent. In order to maximize student achievement, this policy permits students to employ alternative learning plans that fulfill or exceed the expectations set forth by School Board policy.

Any credit for extended learning opportunities as defined in policy IMBC must be authorized by the high school principal and a certified teacher. If credit is not granted, the extended learning opportunity may be used to fulfill prerequisite requirements for other courses.

Alternative learning plan components shall have specific instructional objectives aligned with the district curriculum standards. All alternative learning plans will comply with applicable laws and regulations, including child labor laws and regulations governing occupational safety.

Students expressing interest in pursuing such a plan or program should be referred to the Director of Continuing and Alternative Education, the Dean of Guidance Services, or to the school principal. The Director of Continuing and Alternative Education will help the student’s counselor assist students and their parents or guardians in identifying plan components. The completed plan will outline the credits to be earned, the activities to be completed to earn the credits, and the authority for certifying that the conditions of the plan have been met. The District reserves the right to determine the number of credits to be awarded. Course names and earned grades will be noted on the student’s official transcript. Once completed, the student will meet with the principal who will have ten (10) days to approve or disapprove the plan. Parents or guardians of students whose plans are not approved by the principal can appeal the decision to the Superintendent of Schools who will render a decision within ten (10) days of receipt of the paperwork. A parent or guardian may appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the Salem School Board. The Board shall hear the appeal in either public or non-public session as requested by the parent or guardian. The Board shall render a decision within ten (10) days. A parent or guardian may appeal the decision of the local school board to the State Board of Education consistent with the provisions of RSA 21-N:11,III.

For plan components that require off-campus attendance, the District will require a signed agreement among the school, the student, and a designated agent of the third-party host. The agreement should specify the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Students engaged in alternative learning plans will remain as enrolled students in the Salem School District. It will be incumbent on the School District to facilitate implementation of any plan approved by the school principal or Superintendent of Schools.

Students not meeting their obligations under the provisions of the alternative plan may re-enroll in district courses but not until such time new courses begin.

Approved 1/27/09