

## **A SAMPLING OF SCHOOL/DISTRICT POLICIES RELATED TO COURSE CHANGES AND COURSE WITHDRAWALS**

### **plus a few other course-related policies that impact scheduling**

*This resource is also included in Stage 2: Pathway Program of Study Selection, Course Selection, and Tallies AND Stage 5: Fine-tuning, Readjustment, and Assessment.*

*Includes examples/resources from the following schools/districts:*

- *Berkeley High School, Berkeley Unified School District, Berkeley, California*
- *Evergreen School District, Evergreen, Washington*
- *Noble High School, Msad 60 North Berwick School District, New Berwick, Maine*
- *J.E.B. Stuart High School, Fairfax County Public Schools, Falls Church, Virginia*
- *Adlai E. Stevenson High School, District 125, Lincolnshire, Illinois*
- *Luther Burbank High School, Sacramento City Schools, Sacramento, California*

#### **Berkeley High School**

Berkeley Unified School District  
Berkeley, California

##### *Schedule Changes Policy*

“Any requests for schedule changes must be completed during registration prior to school starting. A change request is only accepted if the school has made a mistake or a student has been assigned a wrong level. Most courses are year-long and students must select all of their courses prior to the start of the school year. Students may not change courses mid-year. Students are not allowed to have gaps in their schedules. They must continue to attend the courses on their schedule until an official program change has been made and the counselor gives them a new schedule. Students who do not receive an official schedule change before changing classes risk invalidation of an approved change and a failing grade on their transcript.” -- Berkeley High School, Berkeley, California

##### *Course Withdrawal Policy*

“Students may apply to withdraw from a course up until the 7<sup>th</sup> week of classes. The request may or may not be honored. Drops granted in the first 15 days of school will not appear on the permanent record. Up until the 7<sup>th</sup> week, the transcript will reflect a “W” with no credit for the dropped class. A student who drops a course after the 7<sup>th</sup> week of the semester shall receive an “F” grade on his/her permanent record. Students must obtain a proctor assignment to replace the dropped course.

IB/AP Courses

“Students may not drop an IB or AP course.”

PE Waivers

“Students who participate in a nationally sponsored sports activity including a professional dance company can request a waiver of the Physical Education requirement from the Berkeley High School administration. In order to qualify for a PE waiver a student must participate at least five hours a week in their sport or activity. Should a waiver be granted, the coach and/or supervisor of the activity will be required to sign an assurance that the student is meeting state and physical standards through participating in the activity, and provide an official letter describing their program. Students who apply for a PE waiver must do so at the beginning of each semester. PE waivers are available in the attendance office. “

**EVERGREEN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Evergreen, Washington

Class Scheduling and Dropping of Classes

“Classes are selected and the master schedule is built upon students registering for classes as part of a student’s career path and educational goals. Students commit to their chosen classes at the time of forecasting. STUDENTS MUST SEE THEIR COUNSELOR TO MAKE ANY SCHEDULE CHANGES.

Schedule changes will be considered during the first five days of a semester for the following reasons only: 1) A required course is needed this year. 2) Skill level/placement is inappropriate. 3) A prerequisite has not been met. 4) The same course was previously passed. 5) Failed the same subject with the same teacher. 6) Scheduling Error (missing periods, double scheduled periods, canceled or newly formed classes). Please see chart below for consequences for withdrawing on or after the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the semester.

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 6 – 15 days<br>Nothing posted to transcript<br>.50 credit for new class | 16 – 50 Days<br>W or F posted to transcript<br>.25 credit for new class | 51+ days W or F posted to transcript ) credit for new class |
|---|---|---|

*Also, one of the graduation requirements is that every graduate in the class of 2015 and beyond needs to complete at least .5 credits of a qualifying on-line course.*

**NOBLE HIGH SCHOOL**

Msad 60 North Berwick School District  
New Berwick, Maine

Course Withdrawal

“Students are expected to make any necessary changes to their schedule during the add/drop period. Extenuating circumstances may warrant course withdrawal after the add/drop period is over. THIS CAN HAPPEN ONLY BEFORE THE SECOND PROGRESS REPORT. In this case, the student must discuss any extenuating circumstances with his or her counselor. At the counselor’s discretion, any or all of the following steps will be required. A conference with parents or guardians, a conference with the teacher or a conference with the dean or the assistant principal. Students must attend the class until the add/drop form is completed and textbooks are returned. AFTER THE SECOND PROGRESS REPORT, COURSE WITHDRAWAL IS NOT POSSIBLE>”

School Policy regarding grades for dropped (or) withdrawn courses is as follows:

“If the withdrawal occurs before the first progress report, the student receives a WP (Withdraw Passing) or a WF (Withdraw Failing) on the transcript. If the withdrawal occurs after the first progress report, the student receives a WP or WF and the student’s letter grade at that point is figured into the GPA. The grade will be factored in as  $\frac{1}{4}$  credit rather than  $\frac{1}{2}$ .”

*Also, Noble High School offers Dual Enrollment Program for juniors and seniors. Tuition assistance is available.*

*AND “Academ-E – Early college distance education program offered through the University of Maine. Students may earn university credit through on-line, video-conferencing and on-campus courses....”*

*And “An Honors option is offered in most classes. Students must develop a contract with each of their teachers in order to earn the honors distinction. An “H” will designate honors work on the transcript after the relevant course.”*

## **J.E.B. Stuart High School**

Fairfax County Public Schools  
Falls Church, Virginia

### **Withdrawal Policy**

“For the first grading period only, a student has five days after the date on which report cards are sent home in which to drop a course without having a grade recorded. Courses dropped are not counted in the grade point average except when an F is received for the course..... Unless the principal approves an exception, a student may not withdraw during the final quarter of a course if he or she is passing the course. If a student drops a course during the

1<sup>st</sup> quarter – No penalty – nothing is marked.

2<sup>nd</sup> quarter – WP (withdrawn passing) or WF (withdrawn failing) is recorded. Exception: For semester courses a WP or F for failure is recorded.

3<sup>rd</sup> quarter – WP or WF is recorded

4<sup>th</sup> quarter - WP or F for failure is recorded”

*Also, J.E.B. Stuart High School offers a Late Start Option for Students “Students may take up to two online courses that can be scheduled in the first block of the day to allow for additional time to sleep. Transportation arrangements for a student in this modified schedule are the responsibility of the family. Students who wish to pursue the option should indicate their intent at the time of course registration. Online courses have a different course code than the live class with the same title. The correct code must be entered into the student information system and the required paperwork for an online class must be completed by May 1...in order to pursue the option.”*

## **Adlai E. Stevenson High School**

District 125

Lincolnshire, Illinois

### Schedule Changes

“Each year, in December, January and February a new master schedule is created to accommodate students' course requests. Faculty members are employed, textbooks are purchased, and rooms are assigned on the basis of these requests.

Students receive a copy of their tentative schedule prior to orientation in August. During this window of time students can request schedule changes, space permitting. Given the tentative nature of these schedules, students are informed that their schedules could change right up to the beginning of orientation if modifications to the master schedule must be made. While every effort is made to ensure students the opportunity to take desired courses, we cannot guarantee the periods of the day or semester students might wish to take those courses.

Students receive a copy of their final schedule at orientation. Upon receipt of the final schedule, students may not modify their schedules unless they are adding or dropping a course or changing levels in a course.

Once the semester has begun, schedule change requests must adhere to the following guidelines:

#### **Adding a Course**

Students may add a course in place of a free hour or study hall during the first three days of a semester if space is available in the course. Students must consult with the teacher regarding make-up requirements for any missed content.

#### **Dropping a Course**

Students may withdraw from a course until eight days after the end of the first six-week grading period. Please note that in a full-year course students will only have the first five days of the second semester to drop. Students who drop a class after this time will receive a grade of "WF" and have a failing grade included in their grade point average. Students must maintain a minimum of five courses for credit.

## Level Changes

On occasion, students may need to change the level of the class in which they are enrolled. In order to do so, students must:

- initiate a level change discussion with their teacher
- demonstrate that they have completed all homework and sought additional help from the teacher or resource area staff member
- request that their teacher complete the level change form. After the teacher contacts the parents, the request will be forwarded to the content area Director and counselor for approval.

Students must remain in class until the level change is made by the counselor.

Downward level changes will be allowed until eight school days after the end of the first six-week grading period of each semester. The letter grade at the time of withdrawal from the class is the grade that accompanies the student to his/her new class.”

## Independent Study option

The independent study option allows juniors and seniors with a special interest in a subject to pursue that area of interest in more detail or greater depth than the existing curriculum provides. Students who wish to undertake an independent study project must:

- Develop a proposal which includes clearly stated goals, the learning activities designed to achieve these goals and a schedule detailing the time line of the project
- Complete the Independent Study Form located on line
- Obtain parent, teacher, director, and counselor approval of the project
- Solicit the help of a teacher advisor to supervise the study
- Be scheduled into a course with the teacher advisor
- Attend that course everyday
- Pursue the project with a minimum of direction
- Complete the project and report its results as agreed upon in the project proposal.

Successful completion of an independent study project will result in a grade of “P” (Pass). Projects that are not completed will not receive a grade.

Credits will be determined by director and teacher.

## Course Retake Policy

“Students may retake any course. The original grade will remain on the transcript. The GPA will be determined by using the points from the higher of the two grades. Duplicate credit will not be issued. Students must complete a Course Retake Form available on line before beginning the course. Courses taken at a lower level are not considered course retakes. Students may retake a course at a higher level if it is an equivalent course in terms of content. The course being retaken does not count toward an

academic or athletic waiver. It does count towards the 300-minute supervision requirement.

Students wishing to retake a course in the summer at a different high school need to consult their counselor prior to registering to begin the approval process.

If a grade of “A-“ or higher was earned the first time, the course may not be retaken.” – Adlai E. Stevenson High School

#### Audits

“Audits do not count toward academic or athletic waivers but they do count toward the 300-minute supervision requirement.

Students who wish to audit a class may do so provided:

- They obtain an Audit Request Form from their counselor
- There are seats available in the classroom
- They request the audit within the first ten days of the semester
- Receive approval of the division Director
- They attend the class each day, complete all assignments, and take exams and finals and participate in all class activities.

Students will be assigned the grade of “AU” (Audit). They receive no credit towards graduation nor points for inclusion in their grade point average.

If a student fails to fulfill a requirement in a course taken on an audit basis, the student will be withdrawn from the course. No record of enrollment will appear on the student’s transcript.” - Adlai E. Stevenson High School

### **Luther Burbank High School**

**Sacramento City Schools  
Sacramento, California**

#### **Program/Schedule Change**

“The following transfer policy is designed to keep transfers to a minimum, and at the same time, to allow needed changes when there is sufficient reason. Students may not initiate class transfers unless it is a course the student has already completed in summer school. The teacher may initiate transfer for level changes only, based on factual written documentation, i.e. tests, quizzes, homework, etc.

1. SLC Lead/Admin: The SLC Lead or Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Instruction may make an administrative transfer when, in the individual's judgment, the personal welfare of the student, or the overall benefit to the instructional program, is involved. All changes will be based on specific circumstances involving the educational welfare of the student.
2. Administrative Transfer Procedure:
  - a. If the request occurs during the leveling of classes period, the request will be accepted and the schedule will change if the student meets the requirements listed above.
  - b. If the request occurs any time after, the SLC Lead or an Administrator will attempt to resolve with the student/parent by recommending that they first contact the teacher to discuss their issue(s). If the teacher contact does not resolve the issue, a problem-solving conference will take place involving the parent, student, teacher, counselor and/or an administrator.
  - c. In each case, students are told that the conference setting is a problem-solving one and that the outcome will not be to take the students out of the class, but rather to clarify expectations, get clear on procedures, and center the student back into a working relationship with their teacher.

**PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ANY AGREEMENTS WITH STUDENTS AS THEY ATTEMPT TO LOBBY WITH YOU FOR A POSSIBLE SCHEDULE CHANGE, BUT RATHER TELL THEM THERE IS A PROCEDURE THAT MUST BE FOLLOWED AND THEY NEED TO SEE THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION TO DISCUSS THEIR NEED."**