

Transfer of Credit Policy

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is committed to ensuring every student feels loved, challenged, and prepared to positively influence society and thrive in life by providing rigorous and inclusive learning environments for all students. When a new student transfers into DCPS from another school district, DCPS will work to ease and support this transition in several ways, including the evaluation of any available transcripts or other educational records to create an accurate record of the student’s academic progress and continue their education and journey towards graduation in DCPS.

The DCPS transcript serves as the official legal record of a student’s progress toward a high school diploma, and DC regulations establish the minimum graduation requirements for students enrolled in DCPS to earn a high school diploma.¹ Transfer transcripts and other authorized documents are evaluated to apply credits to graduation requirements and maintain an accurate record of students’ academic history.

This policy conveys DCPS requirements on the process for transferring credits of students who are new or returning to DCPS (i.e., transfer students) to their DCPS transcripts. It describes required documentation for the transfer of credits, grades, and community service hours; the processes for converting credits and grades to the DCPS transcript; and rules for transferring records of course work completed by students who were previously homeschooled or educated outside of the United States.

This policy rescinds and supersedes all previous policies, memoranda, directives, and guidance promulgated by DCPS on this subject matter.

II. AUTHORITY AND APPLICABLE LAW²

Source	Citation
District of Columbia Municipal Regulations	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) - 5-A DCMR 2200 <i>et seq.</i> – Graduation
	DC Public Schools (DCPS) - 5-B DCMR 2200 – Reporting
	Original Title 5 - 5-E DCMR 2202 – Graduation: General Policy - 5-E DCMR 2602 – Challenge to Contents of Official Records - 5-E DCMR 2603 – Protection of the Right to Privacy and Student Records

¹ 5-A DCMR 2200 *et seq.*

² Nothing in this policy shall supersede federal, state, or local law or regulations.

III. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Accredited School means a school that is accredited by a regional or national education accreditation organization.

Course Weight means a greater numerical value given to a grade earned for a course that is a higher level and more rigorous. Higher-level courses in DCPS are identified as Honors, Pre-AP, AP, IB, or Dual Enrollment.

Credit means a metric used by schools to indicate that a student has successfully completed a course. DCPS awards 1.0 credit for a course equivalent to one Carnegie Unit.

Grade Point Average (GPA) means an average of a student's grades accumulated during the term or school year. GPAs are calculated according to this policy and DCPS' guidance on *Calculating High School Grade Point Averages*.³

Transfer Transcript means a transcript received from a school outside of DCPS used to update a student's DCPS transcript record.

Portfolio means documentation of coursework completed while a student was homeschooled including graded assignments and assessments, curricula, and syllabi.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

A. General Requirements

Students entering grades 9 through 12 who transfer to DCPS from another school district will have their past educational records and transcripts evaluated to populate their DCPS transcript with the credits and grades earned. Transfer students in grades 7 through 8 may also request to have their educational records and transcripts evaluated for transfer credits if they have previously received high school credit.

For additional information on what courses students will be placed in after transferring into DCPS while a term is in progress, please see Section F of the *Secondary Grading and Reporting Policy*.⁴

B. Documentation to Transfer Credits to a DCPS Transcript Record

DCPS requires at least one of the following documents in order to evaluate a student's academic record and transfer credits to a student's DCPS transcript record:

- An official transcript from a public school or private school that is accredited by a nationally or regionally recognized education accrediting agency. A transcript is official if it is signed and received via email, fax, or mail directly from the transfer school. If the transfer transcript is provided by a student's family, it must be signed and in a sealed envelope from the transfer school.
- A report card and a letter on letterhead from the transfer school signed by an administrator

³ Available at <https://dcps.dc.gov/publication/calculating-high-school-grade-point-averages>.

⁴ Available at <https://dcps.dc.gov/node/1556466>.

stating that the student completed a high school level course and was awarded high school credit. This documentation is **only** acceptable for high school-level courses completed in middle schools that do not generate transcripts.

- Portfolios of coursework completed for each course/subject completed if a student was homeschooled and did not complete work through an accredited online school.

At least one of these documents should be provided to the school upon enrollment. However, a student's enrollment cannot be delayed if their family cannot provide these documents. If a student is unable to provide one of these documents, the school will work with the family on the appropriate next steps to obtain the appropriate documents to evaluate the student's academic record.

C. Transferring Grades and Course Levels to a DCPS Transcript

All grades on the transfer transcript must be entered on the DCPS transcript, including grades of "F." If the transfer transcript contains numeric instead of letter grades, the sending school's grade scale will be used to determine the letter grade that will be detailed on a student's DCPS transcript record.⁵

However, as the DCPS grade scale does not include a "D-" or an "A+" the following exceptions apply:

- If a transfer transcript contains a grade of "D-", a grade of "D" will be entered on the student's DCPS transcript for the associated course and credit.
- If a transfer transcript contains a grade of "A+," a grade of "A" will be entered.

All course levels (e.g., Honors, Advanced Placement (AP)) on the transfer transcript must also be entered on the DCPS transcript. As described in the following section, the course level determines the weight of a course when calculating a student's grade point average (GPA). DCPS recognizes and assigns additional weight to grades earned in Honors, AP, Pre-AP, International Baccalaureate (IB), and Dual Enrollment courses.

The course level must be entered on the DCPS transcript record even if DCPS does not offer the same level for the course. For example, if a transfer transcript lists an Honors level choir course, the course must be entered on the DCPS transcript as an Honors course even though DCPS does not offer such an Honors-level choir course.

D. GPA Calculations for Transfer Students

GPAs for DCPS students are calculated based upon the grade earned for the course (e.g., A, B+, C-); the credit value of the course (e.g., 1 credit); and the level of the course (e.g., Honors, AP), which determines the weight.

DCPS GPA calculations may differ from the student's GPA on the transfer transcript. The official GPA of the student will be based upon the DCPS GPA calculation,⁶ rather than the transfer school's calculation. Similarly, the GPA used to determine eligibility to play sports will be based upon the DCPS GPA calculation.

Any high school courses that the incoming transfer student completed while in a middle school grade

⁵ If the sending school does not have a grading scale, the DCPS grading scale will be used to determine the letter grade that will be detailed on a student's DCPS transcript record.

⁶ Available at <https://dcps.dc.gov/publication/calculating-high-school-grade-point-averages>.

(i.e., grades 6, 7, and 8) are not included in the DCPS GPA calculation, although they may count towards DCPS graduation requirements. This mirrors the GPA calculation process for non-transfer DCPS students and is done so as not to discourage students from challenging themselves academically during middle school.

E. Transferring Credits to a DCPS Transcript

It is the sole discretion of DCPS to determine whether credits earned at a non-DCPS school will count towards DC graduation requirements. All credits reflected on the transfer transcript, including partial credits, will be entered on a student's DCPS transcript record.

If the transfer school uses a different credit scale than DCPS does, credits from the transfer transcript will be converted to the DCPS credit scale. For example:

- Some public schools award two (2) credits for the completion of core courses. Therefore, two (2) credits for these high school courses equal one (1) credit course in a DCPS high school. Similarly, one (1) credit in these high school courses equals one-half (0.5) credit in a DCPS high school.
- Other public high schools award 10 (ten) credits for the completion of a core course. For these high schools, ten (10) credits equals one (1) DCPS credit, and five (5) credits equals one-half (0.5) DCPS credit.

If credit was not awarded by the transfer school and is not reflected on the transfer transcript for a course, a credit will not be entered on the DCPS transcript record regardless of the grade earned. For example, although DCPS does award credit for grades of "D" earned in a DCPS course, no credit will be entered on the DCPS transcript for grades of "D" earned in a transfer course taken at a transfer school that does not award credit for "D" grades.

1. Transferring Credits for Homeschooled Students

If an incoming transfer student was homeschooled through an accredited online school that provided a transcript, credits will be entered on the DCPS transcript following the guidelines outlined throughout this policy.

If the incoming transfer student was *not* homeschooled through an accredited school, the student must submit portfolios of their work to be evaluated for credit. Families should provide these portfolios of work to the school counselor upon enrollment into a DCPS school, and the portfolio will be evaluated by DCPS' Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) to determine if the student is eligible for high school credits and what credits those are. A grade of "P" (i.e., pass) will be entered on the student's transcript for every course completed for which OTL determines that credit should be awarded. "P" confers credit for the course but is not included in the GPA calculation.

2. Transferring Credits Earned Outside of the United States

If an incoming transfer student⁷ has a transcript from a school outside of the United States (US) and US territories, this transcript will be evaluated by DCPS' Language Acquisition Division (LAD) to determine what credits will be awarded. Once completed, LAD will document the results and communicate with

⁷ DCPS does not conduct foreign transcript evaluations for foreign exchange students who will only be enrolled temporarily with DCPS.

the school counselor so that the appropriate credits can be entered on a student's DCPS transcript.

If a student is unable to provide transcripts from their previous education, the LAD will work with the student, family, home school, and potentially the Ministry of Education (or comparable agency) from the student's home country to determine if an evaluation can be conducted.

All questions related to transcript evaluation for credits earned outside of the US should be directed to LAD at [LAD at LAD.testing@k12.dc.gov](mailto:LAD.testing@k12.dc.gov).

F. Transfer of Community Service Hours

Community service hours reflected on transfer transcripts will be accepted by DCPS and will be entered on students' DCPS transcripts. Incoming transfer students can also submit proof of prior community service hours by sharing documentation of those hours from the community service site supervisor.

For additional information on DCPS community service hour requirements for graduation, please see <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/community-service>.

G. Appeals and Due Process

A parent or student has the right to seek to amend educational records believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of a student's privacy. An initial appeal shall be made in writing and directed to the school principal.

For additional information on appealing transfer credit determinations and challenging the contents of official student records, please see Section E.2 of the *Secondary Grading and Reporting Policy*.⁸

V. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

All DCPS employees are required to comply with the guidelines set forth in this document. In order to support its implementation, the School Academic Scheduling and Support Team (SASS) will ensure that all counselors and other personnel responsible for entering DCPS transcript information understand these transfer credit guidelines. The SASS team also reviews the transcript records of all transfer students to ensure accuracy and compliance with all guidelines that govern the transfer of credits.

DCPS is committed to serving every student with equity, excellence, transparency, and accountability. Questions or concerns regarding this policy should be directed to the DCPS Office of Secondary Schools or Office of the Chief Integrity Officer. For any concerns about or violations of this directive, contact the Chief Integrity Officer by completing the Online Referral Form⁹ or sending an email to dcps.cio@k12.dc.gov.

⁸ Available at <https://dcps.dc.gov/node/1556466>.

⁹ Available at <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/office-integrity>.