

## **TESTING OUT POLICY**

Okemos High School students may request to “test out” rather than enroll in a course by receiving a qualifying score on one or more assessments selected by the district that measure the student’s understanding of the subject area content expectations or guidelines specified in the Michigan Merit Curriculum as permitted by state law [and as outlined in board policy 6160 as well as the Okemos High School Guide to Curriculum for Students and Parents and the Okemos High School *Student-Parent Handbook*].

Testing out is also an option for students who have failed a course at OHS. If a student wishes to test out of the course he/she has failed, rather than repeat the course, the student must contact the school no later than a week after receiving the end-of-year report card.

In order to test out, students will need to exhibit mastery of the subject matter of the course by attaining a grade of not less than C+ (based on the OHS grading scale as cited in the Okemos High School *Student-Parent Handbook*) in a final examination-like test or final activity(ies) for the course. Other activities required for a course and by which the student may be asked to demonstrate mastery in the course for the purposes of testing out include but are not limited to portfolios, performances, papers, projects, or presentations. Testing out exams to determine mastery will be organized as follows:

1. A year-long course will employ a single test-out period of up to three hours, and a one semester course will employ a single test-out period of up to one and one-half hours.
2. In world language, two test-out periods will be employed: one for oral testing and one for written testing.

Where other activities are required to demonstrate mastery in a course for the purpose of testing out (in place of or in addition to a testing out exam, the student might be required to complete assignments in advance of the testing out period and submit those assignments at that time of the testing out period.

Testing out should not be viewed as a “correspondence course” experience, whereby students study material for a period of time and then attempt a final exam at a later date. The purpose of testing out is to enable students who have acquired a proficiency and skill in certain subject areas to demonstrate their proficiency and progress in the subject area without being required to enroll in courses which are composed of material the student has already mastered. Indeed, our experience has been that the percentage of students who successfully test out of a course is low.

Additionally, students and parents/guardians should be aware that by successfully testing out of a course, a student will miss participation in class discussions and opportunities to develop higher level thinking skills, which are nurtured by daily contact with the instructor.

A student successfully testing out of a course will be awarded credit in that class and a “pass” with no letter grade recorded on the transcript and no effect on the grade point average. A successful test out will be counted toward fulfillment of a requirement within a subject area and will be counted toward fulfillment of a requirement as to course sequence. For example, testing out of a math course will enable a student to take the next course in the math sequence as well as to satisfy one of the four credits in math required to graduate. The Board of Education has determined that successfully testing out of a course will not count toward the twenty-two (22) credits required for graduation from OHS. Students who successfully test out of a course may not receive credit thereafter for a course lower in course sequence in the same subject area.

If a student possesses competency in a world language, which is not offered by the district as a course, he/she may receive high school credit in that world language, if the student demonstrates proficiency in the world language by means of a test out experience and/or competency test. In the case of testing out of a world language that is not offered by Okemos High School, the requesting family may be required to assist in the process of identifying a qualified evaluator.

The procedure for testing out shall include:

1. It will be necessary for students to submit requests to test out of courses in order to be included in the test out opportunity. **The Testing Out Registration Form must be completed and returned to the student's guidance counselor by May 1.**

A student seeking to test out of a math course must have a signature from his/her current math teacher confirming the appropriate sequential nature of the request. If a student fails to apply for testing out by the deadline date and the student/parents believe extenuating circumstances exist and therefore seek an extension of the deadline date, an appeal can be made, in writing, to the principal. In hearing the appeal, the principal will, after conferencing with the area coordinator and any teacher in the department who has relevant information related to the request, determine whether a compelling reason to grant a variance exists.

2. Okemos High School does not distribute texts or supplemental resources for check out during the summer months. Instead, a list of texts along with supplemental resources will be made available. Students will receive information about the test and information about each course for which they register to test out. The information will include a course description, a course syllabus, and a description of test out requirements.
3. The dates for testing out will be the first week of August.
4. When a student successfully tests out of a course in August, a schedule change for the next school year will, in most cases, be necessary. This necessity occurs when the student has included in his/her schedule for the next school year, the course out of which he/she successfully tested. Since the schedule change will occur just days before the school year begins and perhaps after the scheduled drop-add days, a student might have to accept a revised schedule that does not include preferred teachers and/or preferred class hours.
5. Most often, admission into an advanced placement course in a particular department requires a certain grade (A or B) in all previously completed prerequisite courses. Therefore, students are advised that the achievement of a C+ grade for testing out of a course that is a prerequisite for an advanced placement course might not be adequate for admission to an advanced placement course to be taken later in the student's high school career. These prerequisite courses for advanced placement courses are listed in the advanced placement course descriptions found in the Okemos High School Guide to Curriculum for Students and Parents.

It is strongly recommended that a student not attempt to test out of a course that is an immediate prerequisite for an advanced placement course. Knowledge gained in an immediate prerequisite course is essential for success in advanced placement courses. Where a student does seek to test out of a course that is an immediate prerequisite for an Advanced Placement course, the score on the test out must be equivalent to the required prerequisite grade. For example, if the prerequisite grade is an A- or higher in a specific course, the test out score must be a 90% or higher for the same course to satisfy the prerequisite.

**Exams given during testing out are not a diagnostic tool. Exams are used for placement purposes only. Therefore, scores and exams/percentages will not be distributed to students/families for their review.**

If you have questions or concerns, please contact a guidance counselor.