

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Category: R

Related Policies: IC, IFA, IHBI, IK, IKF IMBC

“Distance education” means and includes any instructional mode that is not in-person instruction including, but not limited to, correspondence, video-based, internet-based, online courses, remote instruction, or any combination thereof. It also includes hybrid instructional models that utilize elements of distance education and traditional instruction in any combination.

Under rules of the N.H. Department of Education, distance education may be offered only:

- (1) When inclement weather, makes it unsafe to safely transport students to or from in-person instruction (i.e., remote learning day); or
- (2) As an option for a parent/guardian or adult student making a request for distance education (e.g., online courses).

A. District/School-Wide Distance Education During Inclement Weather.

When inclement weather makes it unsafe to safely transport students to or from in-person instruction, the District or school may elect to provide instruction remotely, pursuant to Board policy IC.

B. Individualized Distance Education.

The Board encourages students to take full advantage of distance education opportunities as a means of enhancing and supporting their education.

1. Extended Learning Opportunities and Alternative Learning Plans. Such opportunities will be implemented under the provisions set forth in Policy IHBH, Extended Learning Opportunities and Policy IHBI, Alternative Learning Plans.
2. Alternative Credit Options. If the course is to be taken for credit, then Policy IMBC, Alternative Credit Options, will apply. Students must have distance education courses approved by the school principal ahead of time in order to receive credit.
3. Pre-conditions for Online Enrollment. The written approval of the building principal is required before a district student enrolls in an online or virtual course that is intended to become part of their educational program. Students applying for permission to take an online course must complete prerequisites and provide teacher/counselor recommendations to confirm the student possesses the maturity level needed to function effectively in a distance education learning environment.
4. Approved Courses. Approved distance education courses must satisfy both state and local standards; be delivered by staff licensed in the state where the course originates; and contain provisions for feedback and monitoring of student progress. The district requires that a syllabus, including prerequisites, specific learning goals/activities, student evaluation criteria, and teacher responsibilities be submitted for review before the course is approved.
5. Student Enrollment Requirements. Students taking approved online courses must be enrolled in the district and must take the courses during the regular school day at the school site, unless the administration has granted approval for remote access based on special circumstances. Online courses may be taken in the summer under the same conditions as during the school year.

6. Staff supervision. The principal will assign a teacher to monitor student progress, grading of assignments, and testing. One teacher may supervise no more than ten students participating in distance education courses.
7. Privacy and Confidentiality. Approved distance education courses must comply with all federal and state statutes pertaining to student privacy and to public broadcasting of audio and video. Confidentiality of student record information will be maintained throughout the process. This includes information shared between school district representatives and the virtual school or online teacher, information shared between the school district or online teacher with students and parents, and information shared between school district representatives, the virtual school or online teacher and others.
8. Safeguards. The school district will provide safeguards for students participating in online instruction activities and School District Internet Access for Students, will apply.
9. Earning of Credit. Students earning credit for distance education courses shall participate in all assessments required by the statewide education improvement and assessment program. Credit courses will require students to meet similar academic standards as required by the District. Credit for the course is not recognized until an official record of the final grade has been submitted to the principal or designee with feedback from the online teacher.

10. Educational Progress and Policy Violations.

If a student participating in distance education is not making educational progress, as determined by educational assessments, the option to participate in distance education may be rescinded by the district. A parent or guardian may appeal this determination to the Superintendent for review. If the Superintendent upholds the determination, the parent/guardian has a right to appeal to the state board of education per N.H. Department of Education Rules Ed 306.22(f).

Students who violate any part of the policy or engage in any other activity that school authorities consider inappropriate are subject to disciplinary action consistent with Board policies and the student handbook.

Legal References:

Ed 306.04(a)(12), Distance Education

Ed 306.22, Distance Education

Colebrook School Board: Adopted – May 5, 2020
Pittsburg School Board: Adopted – May 11, 2020
Stewartstown School Board: Adopted
May 4, 2020

Pittsburg School Board: Revised - November 14, 2022

Colebrook School Board: Revised - November 15, 2022

Clarksville School Board: Revised - December 12, 2022

Columbia School Board: Revised – January 3, 2023

Stewartstown School Board: Revised - January 4, 2023