

Westchester Public Schools
District 92½

College Coursework Approval Guidelines for Lane Changes

**Non-Master's Degree
Coursework**

Effective: April 25, 1995

Revised: August 2022

Westchester Public Schools, District 92½

April 28, 1995

Coursework Approval and Lane Change Procedures

(Effective April 25, 1995)

TO: All Certified Staff
FROM: Tom Cusack, Superintendent

The enclosed information is intended to assist you in your selection of Graduate Coursework for Professional Growth and Salary Schedule Lane Changes in the months ahead. It is also intended to allow for much faster approval of coursework "pre-approvals."

Our District reimburses tuition costs for certified staff, for pre-approved coursework, up to \$2,000.00 per year. Additionally, for each 15 hours of pre-approved coursework, a horizontal lane change is possible within the requirements of each B.A. or M.A. lane on the salary schedule.

For the past several years, colleges, universities, and workshop or conference programs have become much more creative and flexible in the types of course offerings that are available to educational professionals for professional growth. The traditional semester courses with traditional departmental names and numbers are now the exception rather than the norm.

In an effort to provide the entire staff with consistent guidelines for the individual professional growth through coursework we will use the attached guidelines to pre-approve coursework.

The intent of this "**categorical system**" is to provide a uniform approach for all staff to the variety of coursework offerings now available, to create a more "automatic," efficient, and quick approval process, and to create balance in professional growth throughout the District.

NOTE: The "limits" per category apply to coursework **other than Master's Degree Program courses**, and they apply to each lane change (+15 and +30) separately on both the Bachelor's and Master's levels. (In other words, for each new lane change, you start over with all the course opportunities available to you in each category.)

Westchester Public Schools, District 92½

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 25, 1995

Salary Schedule Lane Change Approval Process

General Procedures:

1. All pre-approvals must be submitted on the Graduate Credit Approval/Reimbursement/GCAR form attached and available in each school office and on the District website.
2. All previous contracts and procedures remain in effect in concert with this categorical system of course approvals.
3. This system is in effect whether the course taken for a lane change is also submitted for tuition reimbursement or is paid for exclusively by the certified staff member.

Lane Change Criteria:

1. Courses must fall within the prescribed areas of **the Course Approval Categories as indicated** on the following page. A teacher is to secure and complete Section I of the Graduate Credit Approval/Reimbursement/GCAR form. The form shall be submitted, no later than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the date of the first class session, to the Principal for his/her recommendation and forwarded to the Superintendent for final approval. For extenuating circumstances related to unforeseen scheduling issues that affect the requested course, the Superintendent may grant pre-approval to a teacher with less than the required fourteen (14) calendar day notice.
2. To receive credit and/or reimbursement upon completion of pre-approved course, a teacher must submit Section II of the Graduate Credit Approval/Reimbursement/GCAR form, and attach a tuition receipt and grade report or transcript.
3. Horizontal advancement to another lane may occur annually, provided a teacher eligible for advancement notifies the Superintendent by June 15 in writing of the anticipated lane change and submits by October 31 to the Superintendent an official transcript of "C" or better credits or a "pass" grade in pass/fail courses, which were previously approved by the Superintendent, along with a completed Lane Change Status Sheet. A teacher is responsible for completing and maintaining his/her Lane Change Status Sheet.
4. All courses must be clearly a non-duplicate course from other previously credited courses. (This is often difficult to determine in "tool" type course areas.)

To be eligible for a lane change, upon the completion of fifteen (15) hours of pre-approved graduate credits, the coursework must reflect approvals distributed with the following categories and credit allowances. Please see the next page for a description of the categories and allowances of hours for horizontal advancement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 25, 1995

Salary Schedule Lane Change Approval Process

Course Credit Categories: (Non-Master's Program Courses)

- A. General Courses** – Up to 15 credits.
- All courses approved prior to April 25, 1995.
- B. Traditional Semester Classes** (meeting weekly for a semester) – Up to 15 credits.
- Example: Elmhurst College, Northern Illinois, U.I.C. (Non-Master's Program).
- C. Television/Video Tape Courses** – Up to 6 credits.
- Courses must be taken in a District 92½ school with a cohort peer group of staff.
- D. "Tool Area" (Behavior/Learning Style) Workshop /Weekend Courses** – Up to 9 credits.
- Courses that are centered on a specific theme (student management or learning styles) or have a "hands on" product approach (math manipulatives/games development) and are completed in a concentrated effort of 6 to 8 hours per day for 2 to 4 days.
- E. Workshops Funded as a District Staff Development Conference and Also Providing Graduate Credit** – Up to 3 credits.
- Course credits earned while attending a District approved conference or workshop and paid for by the District. These courses are eligible for lane movement, and must be pre-approved, but they are not eligible for tuition reimbursement. The course may or may not be during school hours and require a substitute for attendance. Note: Specialist areas, such as technology, home economics or special education may be allowed to accumulate up to 9 hours in this area due to the nature of their specific coursework offerings through West 40, etc.
- F. Undergraduate or "Out of Field" Courses** – Up to 3 credits.
- Courses what are specifically approved by the administration based on a specific need of a staff member that is specially requested and justified on an individual basis.
- G. Independent Study/Internship Courses** – Up to 3 credits.
- Courses that are specifically approved by the administration based on a specific need of a staff member that are taken independently, or as an internship through a college or university, but not part of a Master's program.

Any combination of courses within the categories and hour allowances above can be included in a lane change. Then a second lane change starts fresh with any combination, again, from all categories.