

Flexible Pathways Handbook

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Flexible Pathways at Montpelier High School

Overview

Flexible pathways is an encompassing term for opportunities that allow expanded voice and choice in one's education. Montpelier High School (MHS) is proud to offer flexible pathways to all learners. When learners pursue experiences outside of our course listings, they consult with their school counselor for a discussion of options, prior approval and appropriate next steps as outlined in this handbook. The costs associated with flexible pathways experiences vary, are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and are provided to learners as funding allows.

Skills and Dispositions

Flexible pathways learning experiences require a strong commitment to utilizing and growing the following skills and dispositions, aligned with MHS Learning Expectations (LEs):

- Self-Management (LE 3.2)
- Responsibility (LE 2.2)
- Presentation (LE 1.2)
- Mindset (LE 3.4)
- Flexibility and Risk Taking (LE 5.2)
- Preparedness (LE 6.1)
- Precision (LE 6.2)

An honest assessment of these skills and dispositions is important prior to, throughout, and upon completion of a flexible pathways learning experience. MHS strives to collaborate with all learners and partners to identify and provide assistance and supports (e.g., transportation, tuition costs, small group instruction, technology) necessary for success.

Flexible Pathways for Learners with Disabilities

While flexible pathways are available to all learners, placement decisions for a learner with disabilities are determined by the IEP/504 team. The IEP/504 team decides whether or not the flexible pathways learning opportunity is an appropriate educational setting. When the IEP/504 team decides that a flexible pathways learning experience is appropriate, the case manager, the learner, the school counselor and the appropriate faculty advisor(s) collaborate throughout the experience.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment of all flexible pathways learning experiences is based on local, state, and national proficiency indicators. Assessment for individual pathways is articulated in the relevant sections of this handbook. All flexible pathways become part of the learner's MHS transcript, and in the case of higher education through VT's Dual Enrollment/Early College programs, college transcript. Any necessary grade conversions utilize the MHS Conversion Chart.

Flexible Pathways Options at MHS

Community Based Learning

The Community Based Learning (CBL) course provides learners with an opportunity to use the community as an extension of the classroom in order to add authenticity to learning. CBL advisors work one on one with students to design an individualized experience, which may include working with a Community Partner. Community Partners are adult mentors who work in any variety of professional businesses and/or community organizations. As a result of this partnership, learners' experiences expand beyond high school walls; their perspectives on themselves as engaged young adults and responsible community members change and mature.

- There are three main types of CBL Experiences:
    - **Work-Based Learning:** Job shadows and traditional intern work with professional(s) in the workplace in order to learn more about a specific career.
    - **Service-Based Learning:** Volunteer work on a project that benefits our community.
    - **Community-Based Personal Studies:** Similar to a personalized learning study, students explore specific topics in order to learn something they typically don't have access to at MHS. The study is conducted using community resources including Community Partners.

A learner may enroll in a Personalized Learning Study in conjunction with CBL. For more information contact a school counselor and meet with a CBL advisor.

Expectations

The CBL course is open to all learners who have room in their schedules

to be engaged in the community on a weekly basis. The CBL course relies on the relationships we build and maintain year after year with our Community Partner network. The students, as ambassadors of MHS and the CBL course, need to be able to demonstrate excellent preparedness skills and be willing to grow the skills of preparedness through the CBL experience.

All CBL students are required to meet either individually or in small groups throughout the semester with their advisors. The individual/small group meetings provide a structured environment in which learners complete performance tasks, share and reflect on their experiences, and learn from the experiences of their peers (for small group meetings). A Preparedness LE (6.1) grade is assessed based on attendance and engagement.

The hours learners devote to their individual CBL experiences vary greatly depending upon the particular placement. Learners are expected to communicate regularly and in a professional manner with their CBL advisor and community partner, specifically using their school email.

Assessment

All CBL learners are assessed on the LEs for Responsibility (2.2) and Self-Awareness (3.1) and Preparedness (6.1).

Proficiency/Credit

Community Based Learning is a graded course, 1-4, where elective credit is awarded based on the demonstration of proficiency in the course LE indicators, and the successful completion of the performance tasks, assessments and activities outlined in the course syllabus.

Additional Resources

- Financial support may be available for studies as needed (up to $350.00/semester)

Personalized Learning Study

All learners interested in earning proficiency-based content credits through flexible pathways initially meet with their school counselor to express interest. When a Personalized Learning Study (PLS) is chosen, a Personalized Learning Study Proposal is developed in collaboration with the designated PLS content-specific advisor(s). The proposal ensures that both faculty advisors and learners have clear expectations for what will be done during the semester and how proficiency-based credit will be earned. PLS plans may be revised during the course of a PLS based on formative feedback and assessment.

Participation

Personalized Learning Studies are open to all learners. Requirements include:

- Independent and collaborative identification of resources needed for the PLS
- Weekly/regular meeting(s) with PLS faculty advisor
- Weekly goal setting, documentation and reflection
- Creation of a body of evidence to demonstrate proficiency
- PLS courses follow the MHS semester dates.

** If a learner fails to meet regularly with the content-specific teacher(s) and/or doesn't complete planned tasks, the content-specific teacher(s) will meet with the learner to determine whether the study should be amended or discontinued. This meeting will be held no later than the midpoint of the PLS. After the midpoint of the course, the study will become part of the transcript.*

Learners may pursue a personalized learning study in the following areas:

Global Citizenship, Fine Arts, Science-Technology-Engineering- Math (STEM), English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA), and Physical Education/Health

- Personalized Learning Studies are not meant to replace a specific course for which a student can take at MHS. If extenuating circumstances exist for the student, a discussion can happen to review the eligibility for this replacement.

Assessment

Personalized Learning Study learners are assessed both formatively and summatively. In addition to formative feedback, learners receive regular Preparedness (LE 6.1) scores as well as summative content-proficiency grades. The content-specific teacher(s) are responsible for assessing learners' proficiency and entering all formative/summative scores into PowerSchool, following the school's procedures and deadlines for reporting and verifying grades.

Proficiency/Credit

Learners can pursue a proficiency-based grade (1-4) *or* credit earned as Proficient or Not Proficient (P or NP noted on the report card). Grading system is determined within each PLS discipline.

Additional Resources

- Personalized Learning Study Proposal
- Financial support may be available for studies as needed (up to $350.00/semester)

Online Learning

Learners have the opportunity to pursue coursework virtually; in some cases, a course is a blended-learning experience, involving both virtual and classroom-setting components. MHS supports learning experiences with two of our online partners, Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC), Brigham Young University (BYU). Because the online environment is a highly independent endeavor, learners who are most successful have the following skills and dispositions, aligned with the following MHS LEs:

- Initiative and self-advocacy (LE 5.3)
- Persistence to overcome challenges (LE 5.1)
- Time management (LE 5.7)
- Organization (LE 5.7)

Participation

As with all flexible pathways options, learners must seek prior approval from their school counselor before enrolling in an online course. Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools will not cover the cost of any online course if the course, or a nearly identical course, is taught as part of the MHS Program of Studies.
*Online courses taken by students that “replace” a course that is offered at MHS can be paid for by the student/caregiver and, upon request by the student, be reported by MHS as part of the student’s official MHS transcript.

- Montpelier High School does not pay for private driver education courses
- MHS students are allowed to take up to three (semester) online courses/school year. Student and/or caregivers must pay the tuition costs for any course over and above the three semester courses.
- Tuition for summer (only) online courses is not provided by MHS.
- For students who are participating in a domestic and/or international program, MHS will pay for (up to) two VTVLC classes.

- Last day for seniors to enroll in an online course is November 15th of their senior year.

Online learners and their parents/guardian(s) must read and sign the Online Contract Agreement before enrolling with an online learning provider. Additionally, each provider has its own unique policies that must be reviewed and followed. Learners who are enrolled in online courses may be required to meet during scheduled meeting times with the flexible pathways advisor. Support can be answering questions, assisting with problem solving, providing supplemental resources, assisting with technology needs/glitches, etc. Some learners' schedules have no open blocks, which means their online coursework falls almost exclusively outside the school hours. In these cases, students will be expected to meet (as required) with the flexible pathways advisor during Solon Block for support. Every online course requires regular and consistent attention and work completion.

The amount of oversight for online learning varies from learner to learner. Initially, there is frequent communication with the learner, electronically and in person, for course selection, enrollment, questions, and support. As the course unfolds, a gradual increase in autonomy may occur if progress is being adequately achieved. The flexible pathways advisor has the ability to monitor learners' progress at any time with electronic oversight, as well as by communicating with providers' contact staff. An online learner's approach and progress drives the flexible pathways advisor's degree of involvement.

Assessment

Assessment practices vary for online courses, depending upon the provider. Once a learner is enrolled in a course with a particular institution, the flexible pathways advisor reviews with the learner the institution's assessment practices and course policies.

Proficiency/Credit

Online course titles and grades (regardless of academic outcomes) are put on transcripts upon course completion; this is done by the flexible pathways advisor and the MHS registrar. Necessary MHS grade conversions are made and transcripts are updated at the close of each semester.

Dual Enrollment

Vermont's Dual Enrollment program allows high school learners to take courses at several Vermont colleges and universities while still in high school. Participating learners challenge themselves through college-level curriculum and earn up to eight college credits, potentially reducing the time and costs required for earning a college degree. Vermont high school learners are eligible for two Dual Enrollment vouchers, each good for one course tuition free. Learners may request their vouchers in their junior and/or senior years of school, including the summers before junior year and senior year. Books and/or any related fees are not covered by MHS.

***For Governor Institutes of Vermont (GIV) programs, MHS will ONLY award transcripted learning experiences for those institutes that are officially recognized as Dual Enrollment eligible programs. Students seeking to gain MHS and college credit for an eligible Dual Enrollment GIV program should contact their school counselor. All other GIV programs are not eligible to be transcripted on a student's MHS transcript.*

Participation

As with all flexible pathways options, dual enrollment begins with an initial meeting with one's school counselor. The learner then meets with the flexible pathways advisor to complete the voucher request process and the respective college application and registration process.

Assessment

Assessment practices vary for each course and each institution. Once a learner is enrolled in a course with a particular institution, the flexible pathways advisor reviews with the learner the institution's assessment practices and course policies. A course grade is aligned with the MHS Conversion Chart and the relevant content area (e.g., English Language Arts & Literacy) as determined by the flexible pathways advisor, school counselor, and administration (if needed).

Proficiency/Credit

The college sends MHS a transcript. Depending upon which college, sometimes the learner has to request it be sent to MHS from the college's registrar's office. MHS's school counseling department adds the course name and grade to the learner's MHS transcript. The grade earned in a college course is averaged into one's high school GPA. Dual Enrollment grades are reflected on ***both*** the learner's permanent high school ***and*** college transcripts.

Additional Resources

- Dual Enrollment Voucher Application

Early College -

Vermont's Early College Program is a full-year alternative to one's senior year of high school. Learners take a minimum of 12 credits per semester in college, completing their senior year of high school credits and their freshman year of college credits simultaneously- **tuition-free**. Some Early College programs also include on-campus housing, however only *the cost of tuition is paid for by the state of Vermont*. Learners and families/caregivers are responsible for the cost of housing, if applicable, transportation, textbooks, fees, and meals. Early College on-campus and online programs are available at Community College of Vermont, Vermont

State University, Norwich University and other higher education institutions. Vermont Academy of Science and Technology (VAST) is also affiliated with the Early College program through Vermont State University.

When participating in VT's Early College program, learners are eligible to apply to the same college after they graduate from MHS or can work with their MHS school counselor to apply to another higher education institution. In some cases, Early College credits transfer to the learner's next higher education institution, especially within the Vermont State University system. When learners intend to apply to out-of-state higher education institutions, they and their family should consult with the admissions office(s) for clarification regarding transfer of credit policies.

Participation

As with all flexible pathways options, participation in the Early College program begins with a meeting with one's school counselor for discussion and approval. Participating in Early College is an excellent opportunity to both earn college credits at a minimal cost and to greatly broaden the available options for study. It is also a *significant* commitment, and the decision should be made carefully. If admitted, the learner enrolls full time in challenging college-level courses. Classes meet 12-15 hours per week. Additionally, learners can expect to complete 30-40 hours of coursework outside of the classroom (homework, studying, papers, readings, projects, etc.). Early College learners must possess strong time-management and self-advocacy skills and be independently motivated learners. Courses are selected with the help of an academic advisor at the college, but usually include introductory courses (prerequisites) that provide easily transferable credits. It is very important that Early College students also communicate with their Montpelier High School school counselor to assure that remaining high school graduation requirements are satisfied.

Early College learners continue to receive all communication pertaining to their graduating class. They are encouraged to participate in the MHS

graduation ceremony and will receive a Montpelier High School diploma. Learners are also welcome to play sports, as well as to participate in any co-curricular activities of interest at MHS while attending Early College.

*****Each student/caregiver is responsible for any associated fees that are required by the participating EC higher education institution. Tuition is paid for by the State of Vermont.*

Assessment

Assessment practices vary for each course and each institution. Course grades are aligned with the MHS Conversion Chart, and the relevant content area (e.g., English Language Arts & Literacy) is determined by the flexible pathways advisor, school counselor, and administration (if needed).

Proficiency/Credit

The grades earned are recorded on ***both*** the learner's permanent high school ***and*** college transcripts.

Additional Resources

- Vermont's Early College Program

Introduction to College and Careers

Introduction to College and Careers (ICC) is a free course designed to help learners develop strategies for college success. ICC classes are offered at all 12 Community College of Vermont (CCV) locations. An ICC course does not count as a Dual Enrollment course; this means a voucher is not required to enroll.

Participation

As with all flexible pathways options, enrollment in ICC begins with a meeting with one's school counselor for discussion and approval. A

Vermont high school sophomore, junior, or senior can take Introduction to College and Careers (ICC).

Assessment

Assessment practices depend on the given instructor at CCV. A course grade is aligned with the MHS Conversion Chart and is recorded as an elective credit at the close of the semester.

Proficiency/Credit

Students who complete ICC will earn 1 credit on their high school transcript.

Additional Resources

- Introduction to College and Careers

Central Vermont Career Center -

The Central Vermont Career Center (CVCC) is an important flexible pathways resource for the learners of Montpelier, U-32, Harwood Union, Twinfield, Spaulding and Cabot high schools. The offerings for the 2025-2026 school year show a range of programming for 11th and 12th graders (and a 10th grade Exploratory Technology option) that reflects the needs and interests of our geographic region. CVCC's goal is to prepare learners for high-growth careers and access to postsecondary options that encourage lifelong learning. The instructors are knowledgeable and skilled in their fields and offer rigorous and relevant programs of study that apply classroom-based instruction and work-based learning to meet academic, employability, and technical industry standards.

CVCC has a Cooperative Education program for learners applying for a second- year experience in certain programs, which includes a robust admissions process, and CVCC works with all learners in obtaining work experience while still enrolled in school.

Participation

As with all flexible pathways options, learners should meet with their school counselor to express interest. Students typically attend CVCC either their junior or senior year. Transportation is provided; the bus leaves MHS at 8:00 AM and returns at 1:15 PM--in time for TA and Block 4 class at MHS on both Green and White days, if desired.

Implications for learners with disabilities

Assessment

While covering a full curriculum of content specific to the trade of study, learners in each program are trained and assessed on the high school-level proficiency indicators from Vermont's Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements. CVCC has recently finalized the alignment of proficiency

indicators for literacy and other academic areas; contact the trade-specific instructor for updates and more information.

Additional Resources

- Central Vermont Career Center