

Awarding Credit in Lieu of Enrollment to Students Whose Native Language is not English

The Georgia Department of Education provides an opportunity for an exemption from the high school graduation requirements for two units of foreign language for students whose native language is not English. Included in each of the state graduation policies, Rule 160-4-2-.30, Rule 160-4-2-.06, Rule 160-4-2-.36, Rule 160-4-2-.46, and Rule 160-4-2-.47 in the foreign language section, is the following statement:

"Two Carnegie units of the same foreign language shall be required for the College Preparatory (CP) program of study in grades 9-12. Students whose native language is not English may be considered to have met the foreign language requirement by exercising the credit in lieu of enrollment option if they are proficient in their native language. A formal examination is not necessary if other evidence of proficiency is available."

One may access the full text of these rules, as well as all current rules that have been adopted by the State Board at the following URLs:

High School Graduation Rules

IHF (6):

http://www.gadoe.org/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-4-2-.48.pdf

IHF (5)

http://www.gadoe.org/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-4-2-.47.pdf

List of State Approved K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses

http://www.gadoe.org/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-4-2-.20.pdf

To avoid confusion about actual modern language course enrollments, the Native Language (Not English) course should be utilized to award credit in lieu of enrollment:

65.01000 Native Language (Not English) c/e c/e

The Native Language (Not English) course is listed on page 71 of the List of State Approved K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses.

Students who are simply given an exemption from this requirement may have problems either being accepted to college or qualifying for the HOPE Scholarship; therefore, granting an exemption without awarding credit is not recommended.

Page seven of Rule 160-4-2-.03, List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses, makes the following provision for giving credit in lieu of enrollment:

XX.XXXX3XX = CREDIT IN LIEU OF ENROLLMENT

A **3** as the fifth numerical digit to the right of the decimal indicates that students receive credit for a course in which they are not enrolled. Such instances would require a local policy that must be met in order for a student to receive credit without enrolling in the course. (For example, a student whose native language is not English could be given one or two Carnegie unit credits for foreign language if he/she can demonstrate proficiency in that language. A local system could use an end of Level I or II test or a proficiency test of its choice.)

Rule 160-4-2-.13, Statewide Passing Score, http://www.gadoe.org/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-4-2-.13.pdf, specifies that numerical grades must be assigned if credit is given for a course. In addition to the grade, the language for which credit is given should be indicated on the transcript.

The grade assigned may be based on a variety of criteria, including the student's performance on a proficiency examination, a project that the student has completed, community service in the community that speaks the language in question, student presentations that inform the wider school community about the language and culture, developing and teaching a mini-unit on the language and culture to other students, etc. How the grade is assigned will differ depending on the individual, the native language, and the method of evaluation chosen. The grade should reflect the level of proficiency in the language. Establishing a consistent local policy is critical.

It seems likely that the original intent of this provision was to prevent students with limited proficiency in English from being burdened with the need to learn an additional foreign language at the same time that they are learning English. Regardless, any student who is a native speaker of a language other than English can potentially take advantage of this rule. However, guidance counselors should inform students and parents/guardians that there is no guarantee that credit in lieu of enrollment will be accepted by colleges for admissions purposes. Students should check with the post-secondary institutions they plan to apply to regarding their policies.

Speakers of less common languages who are already proficient in English would be well be well advised to study one of the languages prevalent in the occupation they wish to enter.

Finally, native speakers of who have not already achieved a high degree of literacy in their native language will benefit greatly from taking either upper-level foreign language courses in their native language, when available, or courses designed for native speakers. Please refer to the List of State-Funded courses for the complete list of foreign language courses available.

The following courses for native speakers are available on the List of State Approved K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses:

60.07900 Spanish for Native Spanish Speakers Level 1 c/e c/e

60.07910 Spanish for Native Spanish Speakers Level 2 c/e c/e

(Page 71)

65.02000 Native Language Reading and Literacy I c/e c/e

65.02100 Native Language Reading and Literacy II c/e c/e

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These courses focus on developing reading and writing skills. It is well-documented that strong literacy skills in one's native language are an excellent foundation for higher achievement in reading and writing in one's second language.