

North Carolina's Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

SBE-GCS-M-001, Section 13

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North Carolina Credit by Demonstrated Mastery Implementation Guide

How to Use this Guide, LEA Support	4
Section One: Overview of CDM Policy	6
Introduction and Purpose of this Guide	6
Definition	6
SBE Policy Language.....	7
Rationale and Philosophical Base; NC's Approach	8
Student Access	9
Section Two – Overview: CDM Process and Logistics	11
Overall Process, Implementation Teams	11
District CDM Team	11
School CDM Team	12
CDM Student Review Panel.....	12
Suggested Implementation Timelines for Initial Year	13
Step-by-Step Student Process	14
Appeals Process; Role of Other Data	15
Section Three -- Overview: CDM Multi-Phase Assessment.....	16
Introduction	16
Course Eligibility and Pre-Requisites	16
Phase I - Student Examination.....	17
EOC Courses	17
CTE Courses.....	17
Non-EOC Courses.....	17
EOC Testing Windows	18
Examination Procedures.....	18
Advanced Placement Examination Option.....	19
Re-testing	19
Phase II - Artifact Development.....	20
CTE Capstone Projects	20
Additional Local Requirements.....	21
Awarding Credit for Successful Attempts	21
Unsuccessful Attempts	21
Section Four - Additional Considerations for CDM.....	22
Long-term Considerations	22
Advanced Courses through Grade 12	22
GPA and Quality Points	22
Athletic/Extra-Curricular Activities.....	22
High School Diploma Endorsements.....	23
Opportunity for Early Graduation.....	23
External Organizations and CDM	23
North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA)	23
National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)	24
North Carolina Community College System	24
University of North Carolina System	24

How to Use This Guide

This document offers specific implementation guidelines for the North Carolina State Board of Education policy (GCS-M-001.13) Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) addressing how students are able to earn course credit in a manner that does not require specific seat-time requirements. All NC students shall have the opportunity to earn CDM for high school courses in Spring 2014, to inform course enrollment in Fall 2014.

Potential Change from SBE/DPI

Currently, the SBE policy also addresses earning CDM for content in grades 6-8 as well. However, DPI is recommending that earning CDM for grades 6-8 content no longer be an expectation for all school districts from the SBE/DPI but rather an option if local school districts choose to do so. This recommendation is because off-grade level EOGs are not able to be used at this time; and thus would increase efforts in the school district that were not anticipated originally. This recommendation will be presented at the November 2013 meeting. If the recommendation is not approved, guidelines for grades 6-8 will be sent out immediately.

This CDM Implementation Guide is provided by the State Board of Education (SBE) and the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to help districts and schools implement the CDM policy for the benefit of students across the state.

This Guide is divided into four sections:

- **Section One** offers an overview of the CDM policy, the rationale, background, and development process.
 - **Section Two** addresses recommendations for CDM implementation and logistical guidelines. These recommendations will be applied for students who wish to bypass entirely or “test out” of a course or subject area and earn course credit without traditional course enrollment. Some students may choose CDM for the purpose of accelerating and moving into another more advanced course.
 - **Section Three** discusses the details of the SBE policy regarding the multi-phase assessment process required for students to earn CDM. This section also provides examination and artifact guidance, as well as suggestions regarding local requirements for CDM. Topics covered include testing windows, minimum scoring thresholds, use of standardized tests as local examinations, and types of artifacts and the artifact development process.
 - **Section Four** addresses other considerations and areas that may be impacted by CDM including graduation-related issues, accountability impacts, and acceptance of CDM by outside organizations.
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LEA Support

DPI is committed to supporting the implementation of CDM by local school districts. The CDM Working Group will continue to meet to develop additional tools that would support local implementation. Webinars and state-wide worksessions will be held annually to support implementation. Dates will be posted on the CDM wiki.

CDM Wiki

This CDM Implementation Guide, Frequently Asked Questions, and CDM Toolkit for CDM may be found on DPI's Credit by Demonstrated Mastery wiki at cdm.ncdpi.wikispaces.net.

The CDM wiki will be updated periodically. If there are CDM-related resources or ideas that you find may be helpful to others, please share them with the contacts below and they will post the information to share.

CDM Toolkit

The CDM Toolkit provides LEAs with recommended timelines and documents which may be customized to meet a school district needs. The CDM Toolkit maybe found at <http://cdm.ncdpi.wikispaces.net> and contains at least the following:

- CDM Recommended Timelines
- CDM Long Term Considerations
- CDM Frequently Asked Questions
- CDM Student Record
- CDM Student/Family Agreement
- CDM Local Team FlowCharts
- CDM Implementation Guide

Other types of documentation may be desired as well depending upon local procedures. These might include a results letter, an appeal form, an appeal decision letter, and other documentation.

DPI Contacts

Please contact the Director of Gifted Education and Advanced Programs or the Director of LEA Projects at NCDPI for any issues related to CDM. They can be reached by at:
NCDPI Academic Services at 919.807.3200
CDM@dpi.nc.gov

Section One - Overview: CDM Policy

Introduction and Purpose of this Guide

The State Board of Education (SBE) encourages supporting students to accelerate their learning appropriately. Several long-standing policies document SBE intent, including:

- GCS-F-016, Policy Defining Academic Rigor;
- GCS-L-006, Policy for Adequately Informing Ninth Grade Students about Accelerated Preparation for College Entry;
- GCS-N-004, State Graduation Requirements; and
- GCS-M-001, Course for Credit, High School Courses in Middle School.

Policy GCS-M-001.13, Course for Credit, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, specifically offers NC students the opportunity to personalize and accelerate their learning by earning course credit through a demonstration of mastery of course material, beginning by the end of 2013-14 school year for course placement in 2014-15.

The addition of this Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) provision to the Course for Credit policy resulted from feedback received from superintendents, district-level Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) coordinators, principals, parents and students. In response to this feedback, DPI formed a working group with representatives from District-level staff from local school districts around the state, DPI Academic Services, and the NC Virtual Public School to study how the SBE might implement such a policy. This Implementation Guide and Toolkit are the direct work products from the CDM Work Group.

This CDM Implementation Guide provides specific guidance to assist local schools and school districts in effectively executing the CDM policy.

Definition

The State Board of Education defines “mastery” as a student’s command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and the ability to apply his or her knowledge of the material.

“Credit by demonstrated mastery” is the process by which LEAs shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.

**SBE Policy
Language**

Section 13 of GCS-M-001 provides the following Credit by Demonstrated Mastery policy:

13. Credit by Demonstrated Mastery

Please note that based on the SBE decision this Fall, this policy may be amended soon to reflect the change for middle grades.

13.1 Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is the process by which LEAs shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.

13.2 “Mastery” is defined as a student’s command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge.

13.3 Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery shall be available for all NC students in grades 6-12.

13.4 Students shall demonstrate mastery through a multi-phase assessment, consisting of (1) a standard examination, which shall be the EOC/EOG where applicable, or a final exam developed locally and (2) an artifact which requires the student to apply knowledge and skills relevant to the content standards. LEAs may require additional requirements, such as performance tasks.

This multi-phase assessment process builds a body-of-evidence that allows a committee to determine if the student has a deep understanding of the standards for the course or subject area, as defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, thereby earning credit for the course without experiencing it in the school setting.

13.5 DPI shall develop implementation guidelines for this policy. These guidelines shall provide guidance for LEAs regarding scoring of assessments as well as local implementation. The guidelines shall establish minimum scores for the standard examination and artifact creation. Students must attain minimum scores to earn Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

13.6 The following courses are excluded from Credit by

Demonstrated Mastery:

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) work-based learning courses (co-op, internship, apprenticeship)
- CTE courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement of the course, such as ProStart, Early Childhood Education I/II and Nursing Fundamentals
- CTE Advanced Studies courses
- English Language Learner (ELL) courses
- Healthful Living required courses
- AP/IB Courses

Rationale and Philosophical Base

Every student deserves a high-quality education, and the Credit by Demonstrated Mastery policy ensures that every student has the opportunity for the most rigorous and appropriate course of study based on academic progress and need.

This policy emerged from shared views of the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina State Board of Education. The General Assembly believes that “public schools should challenge all students to aim for academic excellence” (Article 9B), while the State Board of Education’s mission, adopted in 2006, is that “every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century.” Achieving this requires that students are able to progress and advance in coursework when they are ready, without the traditional barrier of seat time. A student able to demonstrate a deep understanding of the knowledge, skills and understandings of a particular course will earn credit for that course so that he/she may spend their time more effectively in another course where they will learn and experience new content and material.

The State Board of Education has stated, “A great public education system is one that is ambitious and prepares all students for postsecondary education, careers, citizenship, and lifelong learning. It sets high standards and fosters the critical thinking and other skills needed in today’s global economy.” By providing the CDM process, uniquely qualified students who possess mastery knowledge of content are able to personalize their learning and use their education time in courses that provide new challenges and content.

North Carolina’s Approach

Currently, at least nineteen other states have policies allowing credit without seat time: Texas, New York, Tennessee, Oregon, Alabama, Iowa, Missouri, Ohio, Idaho, Utah, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Michigan,

Indiana, Kentucky, Virginia, New Hampshire, Maryland, and Arizona. These states use either an examination only or the option of an examination or another product for a student to receive credit for a course. Implementation guidelines and expectations vary from state to state.

To develop a comprehensive approach designed to ensure students truly understand the material for which they want to receive credit DPI Academic Services established the CDM Working Group. This group began meeting in Spring 2012 and included DPI personnel from across the agency, NC Virtual Public School representation, and LEA representatives from around the state. During policy and guideline development, representatives from 12 different LEAs worked in-depth on the committee to ensure quality and meaningful policy development. The CDM Working Group's goals were to develop a conceptual framework around this topic to ensure students are engaged in personalized learning and using their time most effectively, to develop an SBE policy, and to develop guidelines to support LEAs in policy implementation.

The result of the CDM Working Group is a policy specific to NC's needs which addresses NC's commitment to high quality education. NC's policy differs from other state policies related to earning credit without seat time and benefits from other states' experiences.

North Carolina's CDM policy requires a comprehensive, multi-phased assessment approach, designed to enable students to demonstrate a deep understanding of content, ensure appropriate student placement, allow students to receive credit for what they know and personalize their learning.

Student Access

Access to the Credit by Demonstrated Mastery process is open to all NC public school students high school courses in grades 9-12 and those high school courses offered in middle school.* CDM should not be limited to certain students or exclude any student who wants to pursue this pathway.

The CDM policy recognizes that any student may have unique, individual circumstances in his or her learning path that has allowed the student to gain a deep understanding of content of a particular course or subject area without the traditional school setting. CDM promotes personalized learning and removes the requirement for seat time for student learning and earning credit for courses so that a student may take a more advanced course in that same subject area or provide time in the class schedule to explore a new topic. It allows subject-level acceleration without requiring full grade-level acceleration.

While the CDM process is open to all students, it is not for whole groups of students. It is not intended to replace the general accelerated pathways local school districts often provide advanced students. Instead, it is designed to provide opportunity for an individual student who has an exceptional mastery of course content prior to even taking a course and who wishes to earn credit and move onto something else more meaningful.

While access should not be limited to any student, local schools and CDM committees are encouraged to have discussions with parents, the student, and appropriate district and school-based personnel, including AIG and content specialists and principal, to ensure the most effective decisions are made for an individual student. Effective matching for this learning experience is crucial for student success. Families and students have the right to pursue the CDM process, even if the school is not in favor.

**Future
Developments**

During policy development, the CDM Working Group intentionally crafted a process that eventually will accommodate students wishing to **reduce**, rather than eliminate, seat time either for acceleration or for credit recovery purposes. The CDM Working Group is still assessing the complex implementation issues for seat-time reduction circumstances and additional guidelines will be available in the future to allow implementation for students in these situations.

**This statement assumes SBE approval of DPI's recommendations to change the current SBE policy to reflect only high school courses.*

Section Two – Overview: CDM Process and Logistics

Overall Process

A variety of logistical issues should be considered prior to implementing the CDM process and beginning the multi-phase assessment for students. Because different school districts manage operations in different ways and based upon differing local conditions and needs, there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution for these considerations.

To support a school district’s implementation of CDM, the following logistical recommendations have been developed by the CDM Working Group. These recommendations are not requirements but suggestions from the CDM Working Group as a place to start your thinking and implementation plans. The initial options will likely be adapted to fit local needs and context to best match a district’s own CDM process and practices.

Implementation Teams

In order to facilitate CDM in a school district, the CDM Working Group recommends creation of the following teams to ensure effective implementation at the district and school level. This suggested structure is designed to help schools implement their local processes; it is not a mandated structure and school teams are encouraged to consider what will work most effectively for their students.

-District CDM Team to develop district-wide CDM process and practices. Determine timelines, documentation, policies, assessment protocols and tasks.

-School CDM Team to manage the CDM process at the school level. Guide process at the school level and serve as the primary contacts for students/families as they go through the CDM process.

-CDM Student Review Panel (School or District Level) to lead the multi-phase assessment process, review assessments and determine CDM eligibility, especially with the Phase 2 Artifact Assessment.

District CDM Team

Team members: Principals or other school-based leadership, Curriculum & instructional leaders, District AIG coordinator, and Teacher representatives to form a District CDM Team designed to discuss policy implementation.

Purpose: This team develops the district-wide procedures and policies to implement CDM most effectively in the school district, including an appeal process for families. Topics to determine include the communication plan, CDM timeline, student documentation and

assessment protocols, structure and practices of School CDM committees, family appeals process, and whether CDM will be offered for courses not currently taught in a student's base school. This team will also guide the development and/or selection of tests (as applicable), artifacts, and rubrics for each course and subject area for which CDM is offered. The team will bring content experts together to determine these multi-phase assessment tools.

School CDM Team

Team members: Principal or designee, curriculum specialist, AIG specialist, one or more teacher representatives, testing coordinator and/or counselor. The suggested structure includes a total of 3-5 members who reflect the diversity of the school population and represent the various perspectives of personnel.

Purpose: This school-based team conducts the work of leading students through the CDM process at the school-level. This team communicates with the school community about CDM, meets with students/families for advisement and discussion of long-term implications of earning CDM, and leads the overall CDM application process. This team will also meet with students/families after the multi-phase assessment is complete to discuss the outcomes, based on the recommendation of the Student Review Panel.

CDM Student Review Panel

Team members: At least two content-area experts related to the course being challenged, principal or designee and an AIG or Curriculum and Instructional specialist. Members will differ depending upon the subject for which a student is attempting to earn credit. In a single school, there may be several different Student Review Panels at any given time for different students.

Purpose: This school-based or district-based team will determine whether a student has met the requirements to earn CDM through the multi-phase assessment. This team shall work with the CDM School Team to facilitate the Phase 1 Assessment and then focus work on the Phase 2 Artifact Assessment and any additional performance tasks required. This group of at least three educational experts will review student examinations, student artifacts and presentations to determine whether a student has successfully met the requirements to earn CDM. This Student Review Panel will provide needed data and documentation to the School CDM Team to support effective communication with the student/family.

***Suggested
Implementation
Timeline for Initial
Year***

It is the intent of SBE policy and DPI that LEAs will provide opportunities for CDM by the end of the 2013-14 school year, to inform class placement decisions in 2014-15. For this initial implementation year, the CDM Working Group recommends starting with the 2014 Spring Timeline below.

Spring Timeline:

This timeline is for students attempting to earn CDM during the spring semester for courses scheduled in the fall.

November – January: Develop local processes and practices to implement CDM.

January – Mid-February: Share CDM opportunities with students and families. Have student/family discussions and advisement. Accept CDM Applications. Set Application deadline date based on local needs.

Last 2 weeks of February: Implement Phase 1 Assessment of the CDM process.

- Complete the Phase 1 assessment portion of the CDM process for non-EOC courses. Determine process for student examinations.
- **The official DPI testing window for EOC courses is the last two weeks of February** with required test security protocols.
 - For students attempting to earn CDM for appropriate CTE courses, administer CDM post-assessments.
 - For students attempting to earn CDM for EOC courses (Math I, Biology, English II), administer the appropriate EOC.

First week of March: Report results to students/families.

Remainder of March: Schedule Phase 2 artifact work for students who achieve the required standard on the assessment. (Allow necessary flexibility to accommodate Spring Break in your district.)

First 2 weeks of April: Conduct school-level artifact review. Student Review Panel meets to review artifacts and determine results.

Mid-April: Provide results to students/families and discuss course schedule changes. Begin a ten-calendar-day window for submission of appeals.

First week of May: Conduct appeals reviews.

Second week of May: Finalize appeal decisions and share results.

**Year-Long
Recommended
Timelines**

Additional recommended timelines for a full academic year may be found in the CDM Toolkit. The CDM Working Group recommends following three implementation timelines for the CDM process in local school districts. These timelines are recommendations and are not required to follow. Consider adapting these timelines as needed to your local context and needs. The only aspect of the timelines that is unable to be changed is the DPI Testing Window for the early administration of the EOC exams for Phase 1 Assessment.

**Step-by-Step
Student Process**

Step 1: Information regarding CDM is shared with all students/families and teachers.

Step 2: Discussions and advisement with interested students at the school level are held to ensure informed decisions are made regarding participation. Long-term implications are discussed to ensure full understanding. Students/families have the right pursue CDM process even if the school does not support the decision. An individual student, based on own motivation or on school personnel recommendation, initiates the process to earn CDM

Step 3: Student/family completes the CDM Application.

Step 4: School CDM Team reviews application and initiates Multi-Phase Assessment process.

Step 5: Student completes Phase 1 Assessment to demonstrate foundational knowledge through a student examination, EOC, CTE Post-Assessment or local exam.

Step 6: CDM Student Review Panel reviews Phase 1 Assessment.

- If student does not meet minimum criteria, student/family is notified. Process no longer continues.
- If student does meet minimum criteria, student/family is notified and completes Phase 2 Assessment.

Step 7: Student completes Phase 2 Assessment to demonstrate deep understanding and application of content through an Artifact Development process and any other criteria a local school district deems required.

Step 8: CDM Student Review Panel reviews Phase 2 Assessment and provides assessment information to School CDM Team.

- If student does not meet local criteria, student/family is notified. Student/family is notified of Appeals Process.
- If student does meet local criteria and earns CDM for the

course, student/family is notified.

Step 9: School CDM team meets with family to discuss options for future course enrollment and other specific implications of earning CDM for that particular course.

Step 10: Student earns CDM. The combination of examination, artifact creation, and optional additional performance assessments will provide assurance that the student has met standards for the course or subject area, as defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, and deserves credit for the course. School CDM Team enters into Powerschool the CDM indicator for the appropriate course. [Directions for Powerschool entry will be released later.]

Appeals Process

The CDM Working Group recommends that the District CDM Team develop an Appeals Process, which provides the opportunity for students/families to appeal committee decisions regarding the decision of earning CDM. The Appeals process should be given to families at the time they begin the process of earning credit through this policy and no later than the assessment date.

Students and their parents should submit appeals within ten days of receiving notification that an attempt was not successful and a subset of the various CDM teams will review and finalize appeal decisions within ten days of appeal submission. The CDM Working Group suggests use of a written appeal request to facilitate the process.

The following parameters are suggested at a minimum:

- EOC/EOG test scores are not appealable.
 - Appeals must be received in writing within ten days of decision.
 - A review panel will conduct an appeals review within ten days of receiving an appeal request and will collect any additional data requested by the panel.
 - Final recommendations will be made within ten days of Appeals Review.
 - The decisions of appeals panels are final.
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The Role of Other Data

For districts interested in a proactive approach to recognizing students who may benefit from earning CDM, consider other student-level data such as EVAAS, EXPLORE, PLAN, PSAT, ACT, and SAT scores. As with data from CDM attempts, these scores should also be used to inform instructional pathways and differentiation for students even if they do not earn credit by demonstrated mastery.

Section Three – Overview: CDM Multi-Phase Assessment

Introduction

Earning Credit by Demonstrated Mastery requires students to complete a multi-phase assessment process that includes an examination and an artifact. The Phase I assessment process focuses on the examination which establishes that a student has a strong foundational understanding of the course material. The Phase II process focuses on the artifact and establishes a student's ability to apply knowledge to show deep understanding. School districts may choose to add additional required tasks to demonstrate mastery.

This multi-phase design intentionally aligns with the conceptual underpinnings of the Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards, which are also designed to convey knowledge and the ability to apply knowledge.

The multi-phase assessment processes outlined below is an expectation for all school districts. This process is based on the SBE policy and is required for students to earn CDM.

Course Eligibility and Pre-Requisites

At this time, students may earn CDM for all high school courses in grades 9-12 and high school courses offered in middle school in grades 6-8. *

The following courses are excluded from CDM:

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) work-based learning courses (co-op, internship, apprenticeship)
- CTE courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement of the course, such as ProStart, Early Childhood Education I/II and Nursing Fundamentals
- CTE Advanced Studies courses or any course without state technical standards
- English Language Learner (ELL) courses
- Healthful Living required courses
- AP/IB Courses

For courses taught in a predetermined sequence, a student may only attempt to earn CDM for the next course in the sequence. For example, if a student has taken Math I and would like to attempt CDM for Math III, s/he would need to first successfully earn credit for Math II, either through CDM or traditional enrollment in the course.

Phase I – Student Examination

Phase 1 of the multi-phase assessment process for earning CDM is the student examination. Phase 1 is intended for a student to show a foundational knowledge of the course content. Success at a minimally acceptable level on the Phase 1 exam affords a student the opportunity to continue onto the Phase 2 artifact. High school courses comprise three types of courses – EOC, CTE and non-EOC – and districts and schools should use different examinations for each.

EOC Courses

For North Carolina EOC courses (Math I, Biology, and English II), a student’s Phase 1 examination component will be the state’s End-of-Course examination. Students must take the exam in a pre-determined testing window by DPI in a secure environment. [Additional information about testing windows may be found later in this section.]

For EOC courses, students must achieve a Level 4 at the following scale scores exhibiting a superior understanding, to qualify for Phase II artifact development:

EOC Assessments

Math I ≥ 264

Biology ≥ 261

English II ≥ 165

These scale scores are research- and content-based, technically sound and based upon item-mapping standard-setting procedures conducted by the DPI during the summer of 2013.

CTE Courses

For North Carolina CTE courses that are eligible, a student’s Phase 1 examination component will be the CTE Post-Assessment. Students must take the exam in a pre-determined testing window by DPI in a secure environment. [Additional information about testing windows may be found later in this section.]

For CTE courses, students must achieve a scale score of 93 to qualify for Phase II artifact development.

When students successfully earn CDM for a CTE course, the credit shall be included in the required credits to earn CTE concentrations. Students should be aware that awarding articulated credit at the community college requires both a course grade of at least B and a **post-assessment score of 93 or higher**. At this time, students who request credit without completing the course will not be eligible for articulated credit.

Non-EOC Courses

For non-EOC high school courses, students must take a local examination developed or selected by the district or school. Examinations shall be based upon the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for these courses and should be cumulative in nature where a qualifying score demonstrates mastery of the entire course. The number of questions included on the exam for each standard should be representative of the standard's relative weight within the course.

For non-EOC courses, students must achieve a 94 or higher on the local exam to qualify for Phase II artifact development.

Local exams will be developed at the discretion of the school district. Some options include:

- Ask subject-area teachers across the district to submit final examinations from their courses and choose the highest quality (or exams) from among them, or use items from them to construct an exam for the purpose of CDM;
- Have principals or other school-based leadership to review examinations from teachers in the school and choose one or construct one to use;
- Have schools convene subject-area teachers to develop a CDM examination for students in the school; or
- Develop shared CDM examinations with neighboring districts.

Authority to establish the examination component for non-EOC courses rests with the school district and the CDM Working Group recommends a common approach district-wide.

At this time, for security and logistics reasons, state-developed NC Final Exams may not be used. This may be re-assessed in the future to allow for these exams to serve this purpose.

EOC Testing Windows

Three testing windows per year provide an opportunity for students to use EOC tests or CTE Post-Assessment to earn credit by demonstrated mastery. A testing window is offered each spring, each summer and each fall according to the following schedule:

- Last two weeks of February
- Last two weeks of July
- Last two weeks of September

The turnaround time for online administrations of Math I and Biology EOCs is the same day; however, online test records are not scored until any required accommodations coding is complete. NCDPI provides daily drops of scored records between 4pm and 7pm daily.

For example, if required accommodations coding is complete by 4pm on the day of the test, scored records are returned to the LEA by 7pm that same day. If required coding is not completed until 4pm the following day, the scored record is returned to the LEA test coordinator by 7pm on the following day.

English II exams include constructed response items, necessitating a different scoring process. Scores for English II exams will take up to three weeks to process.

Examination Procedures

Schools should adhere to the following guidelines for conducting CDM examinations:

- Exams should be administered during the normal school day in order to ensure equal access.
 - Modifications and/or accommodations based on IEP/504 should be addressed in the testing plan.
 - Testing procedures, including the setting for the exam, should comply with state guidelines as required. Where not applicable, a classroom setting may be appropriate.
 - Where LEA teams determine additional assessments are necessary to determine a deep understand of content standards (for example, performance tasks in world language courses), these assessments must be consistently implemented across the LEA.
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College Board's Advanced Placement Exam Scores – Phase 1

If a student earns a 3 or higher on an AP exam without having enrolled in a specific course and wants to earn CDM for the equivalent high school course requirement, where applicable, the AP exam score may satisfy the Phase I assessment and provide evidence of foundational knowledge of the appropriate equivalent high school course.

Students will then need to complete the Phase 2 artifact component to receive a CDM credit for the equivalent standard-level high school course for which the AP exam relates. This AP exam option offers an added bonus of potentially earning a student college credit as well as fulfilling the assessment requirement for CDM.

Students may not earn CDM for AP or IB courses, because CDM is only available for standard-level courses based on the NCSCOS. AP and IB courses are not eligible for CDM.

Re-testing

For both EOC, CTE and non-EOC courses, re-testing is *not* permitted. Students attempting CDM receive one opportunity per course to achieve the minimum standards to earn CDM.

Phase II - Artifact Development

While the Phase I assessment process establishes a student's strong foundational understanding of the course standards, the Phase II artifact development process establishes a student's ability to apply knowledge in a real-world context, requiring students to show deeper content mastery and establishing clearly that s/he should be awarded credit.

For all EOC and non-EOC courses, students are expected to create an artifact that demonstrates their deep understanding of the content standards, and their ability to apply the skills and knowledge expected for the course. Artifacts may be of any type, ranging from three-dimensional to paper-based to electronic to oral interviews.

Specific expectations for the type of artifacts are left to the discretion of the LEA and District CDM Team. It is recommended that the LEA provide students with clear expectations and guidance regarding the artifact development, including artifact scoring criteria or a rubric describing the local committee's expectations. The committee may decide to assign an artifact to a student or allow students to propose an artifact.

CTE Capstone Projects

For CTE courses that provide a capstone project, the capstone project shall be used as the artifact to demonstrate mastery. Capstone projects are student led projects that demonstrate an understanding of the technical concepts of the course and should represent at least 80% of the course standards.

In some CTE areas, capstone projects may require students to use tools and equipment to complete projects. Students should show evidence of training in how to use the tools and equipment safely. LEAs may require the completion of an OSHA 10 certificate or some other assessment that gives evidence of understanding of safety measures prior to work on the capstone project. For example, if a student wanted to demonstrate mastery in a carpentry course by completing construction of a wall segment, the student could demonstrate safety knowledge either by showing evidence of having completed a safety course such as an OSHA 10 certification or by earning a high score on the safety assessment included as part of the carpentry course.

Students who earn a CTE credential may use the credential as the artifact component. Students will need to complete the examination component to receive CDM credit.

Additional Local Requirements

District CDM Teams may choose to implement additional requirements as part of the Phase 2 artifact development process, as appropriate to the course. Some suggestions for LEAs wishing to

have additional requirements might include interviews, using other exam formats (multiple choice, constructed response, technology enhanced, portfolio, etc.), performance tasks (orchestra performance), oral presentations, videotaped performances, or other appropriate demonstrations of student knowledge, skills, and abilities.

***Awarding Credit
for Successful
Attempts***

Students who demonstrate mastery, through the process throughout this Guide, shall receive credit for the course toward graduation requirements. Credit shall be indicated on a student's transcript as a "pass", and where applicable, the "passed EOC" indicator is set to the level at which the student scored, either "III" or "IV". The school shall not grant a numeric or letter grade for the course and shall not include the grade in the student's grade point average (GPA) calculation.

***Unsuccessful
Attempts***

If a student unsuccessfully attempts to earn credit by demonstrated mastery, s/he does not receive credit for the course. To receive credit after an unsuccessful attempt to demonstrate mastery, a student is required to:

- enroll in and complete the course,
- receive a passing grade for the course, AND
- re-take the EOC (if applicable) according to existing State policies and procedures.

The CDM Working Group encourages schools to use data gathered through the CDM process to inform instructional pathways and differentiation for students even if they do not earn credit by demonstrated mastery.

No transcript record or other record of the unsuccessful attempt is required and it should NOT be recorded in Home Base. The local CDM committee may choose to note the attempt in the student's file. **Students shall not be penalized for an unsuccessful attempt and such attempts shall never, under any circumstances, affect the student's grades or transcript.**

Section Four – Additional Considerations for CDM

Long-term Considerations

Students attempting the CDM process need high-quality advisement on long-term implications of earning CDM and beginning a path of accelerated course work. When considering CDM with a student and his/her family, discuss all aspects of the student's development, including academic, cognitive and social/emotional development. This will ensure that students and their families are able to make an informed decision about participating in the CDM process. It is the responsibility of the entire school CDM team, not just one person to counsel students and families.

See CDM LEA Toolkit for a document focused on Long-Term Implications.

Advanced Courses through Grade 12

Discuss current options available for advanced curriculum and instruction. Discuss CDM as well as other possible pathways for advanced learning through grade 12. Review how programs such as high school courses in middle school, AP/IB/Honors courses, CCP opportunities, and whole-grade acceleration may also support a student's needs. If a student does indeed subject accelerate with CDM or through other means, create a long-term plan to ensure the student, family and school are all working together and are aware of future opportunities.

GPA and Quality Points

Share and discuss how CDM courses will not earn grades or quality points towards GPA. Credit for CDM courses will be granted to meet high school graduation requirements. This may be a concern for some students and families; however, CDM should be pursued when a student truly wants to benefit from a more challenging learning experience and move towards more advanced coursework. Students may earn CDM for all standard-level high school courses in grades 9-12 and those high school courses offered in middle school. Grades for CDM will be recorded specifically on the transcript in Powerschool. More information coming later.

Athletic/Extra-Curricular Activities

Discuss the implications for CDM on athletic and other extra-curricular activities. Discuss with the students/families how earning CDM may impact a student's participation in these school activities. There are some potential impacts to consider of CDM on athletic and other extra-curricular activities. Please see the section on external organizations below to learn more about important considerations for students considering CDM. .

High School
Diploma
Endorsements

Discuss the criteria for High School Diploma Endorsements (SBE, GCS-L-007), Career, College and Academic Scholars. Walk through the CDM implications for interested Diploma Endorsements to ensure appropriate coursework is completed. For example: If a student desires to work towards the NC Academic Scholars Endorsement and achieves CDM for a standard-level course instead of enrolling in an honors-level course, develop a plan to enroll in another honors-level or above course criteria needed to attain the NC Academic Scholars Endorsement.

Opportunity for
Early Graduation

Discuss the option for completing high school graduation requirements (state and local) early. Discuss post-graduation options that meet the student needs. Walk through examples of the implications on courses required for graduation and intended High School Diploma Endorsements (SBE, GCS-L-007) if a student earns CDM. CDM may help prevent some students from leaving high school to pursue other options before graduating.

**External
Organizations and
CDM**

One of the considerations of any policy that may award credit to students who have not completed a course in the traditional manner is the future impact on students when they interact with other stakeholder organizations. The CDM Working Group contacted several of the most common external organizations with which a student may interact during high school or following high school graduation including, the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the University of North Carolina system, and the North Carolina Community College system.

North Carolina High
School Athletic
Association
(NCHSAA)

According to the NCHSAA, students' primary consideration with respect to earning credit by demonstrated mastery is maintaining eligibility if they are participating or wish to participate in high school athletics. According to Association by-laws, students must ensure they are enrolled in a number of courses that is at least equal to one less than the maximum number of courses available per the high school schedule. For instance, students in a high school on a block schedule must be enrolled in at least three courses of a possible four. For schools on a seven-course schedule, students must be enrolled in at least six courses. More specific guidance regarding NCHSAA requirements may be found in the Association's eligibility handbook at <http://www.nchsaa.org/pages/685/Rules-Eligibility-Skills-Development-procedures/#.UkGHRxZhpUQ>.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

According to the NCAA, students' primary consideration with respect to earning credit by demonstrated mastery is maintaining eligibility if they wish to participate in NCAA athletics. Please note that because North Carolina's current CDM procedure does not assign a final letter grade, CDM courses would not be used in the initial-eligibility process. Students would still be required to satisfy NCAA division-specific core course distribution requirements. More information about establishing initial eligibility may be found in these two locations: [here](#) and [here](#).

North Carolina Community College System

Two primary considerations exist for high school students planning to attend a North Carolina community college – acceptance of the high school diploma and articulation of credit earned while in high school.

Community colleges in North Carolina have traditionally accepted the State Board of Education's authority to determine how students earn high school credit toward graduation and the credit by demonstrated mastery policy does not change that. Students with a diploma from a North Carolina high school will be recognized as high school graduates regardless of the presence of academic or career-technical credits earned via the CDM policy, thus ensuring students' ability to enroll in a community college following graduation.

Like many colleges and universities, North Carolina community colleges offer "credit for prior learning," either according to the high school-community college articulation agreement for CTE courses or through local college decisions to award credit for academic courses. The North Carolina Community College System Office has not established system-wide policies regarding credit for prior learning; final decisions are left to local college administrators. As such, students should anticipate that decisions regarding credit for academic courses will be made on a case-by-case basis, so students are not guaranteed a particular outcome with respect to high school credits earned through the CDM policy. Regarding CTE courses, students who request credit without completing the course will not be eligible for articulated credit at the community college.

University of North Carolina System

Like community colleges, University of North Carolina member universities have traditionally accepted the State Board of Education's authority to determine how students earn high school credit toward graduation. Based upon discussions during the summer of 2013 with UNC-GA staff as well as enrollment managers across the system, the credit by demonstrated mastery policy does not change that. Students with a diploma from a North Carolina high

school will be recognized as high school graduates regardless of the credits earned via the CDM policy, thus ensuring students' ability to enroll in a UNC system university following graduation. As always, minimum admission requirements must be satisfied.
