

503.2AP – Course Challenge By Students

Purpose

Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools supports the concept of course challenge by students provided that there is strong compelling evidence that they will succeed in the challenge, and that it is in their best interest. The course challenge process will not be available as a means to improve course marks or as a replacement for the valuable experience of learning in a classroom setting. While opportunity for challenge will be provided for all provincial and locally developed courses, the Board is only obliged to provide challenge for courses currently being taught in this district. All students may request the opportunity to challenge courses for credit subject to the attendant procedures.

Definition

Course challenge refers to the process of receiving credit for a provincial or locally developed Grade 11 or Grade 12 course taught within the school district through an assessment of the student's undocumented prior learning.

A. General

1. Only an entire course may be challenged; partial credit will not be granted through the challenge process.
2. Determination of challenge tasks and criteria are the responsibility of the school, and student performance will be evaluated at the school level.
3. A student may challenge a Grade 11 or 12 course, without being enrolled in Grades 11 or 12.
4. There is no limit to the number of Grade 11 and 12 courses that a student may challenge.
5. For a course challenge to be successful, a student must demonstrate that she/he has met the prescribed learning outcomes of a course.
6. A student must meet the same standards as students taking the course through regular classes, and the nature of the tasks undertaken by the challenge student should be of a similar nature and complexity as those undertaken by students in the regular course.
7. Only a student who has not been previously enrolled in the course will be eligible for course challenge, and she/he will be permitted only one opportunity to challenge a specific course.

B. Timelines

1. The student must make an application for a challenge by the end of the first full week in October or March.
2. The completed application will be submitted to the school principal who will have the application screened by the appropriate department.
3. The applicant will be advised of the results of the screening, and if successful, will be given the course challenge package within two weeks of the application deadline.
4. The students will complete all challenged tasks and present them to the school's 'Evaluation Standing Committee' for each subject by the end of the first full week in December or May.
5. The committee will evaluate the challenge and return the results to the student within six calendar weeks.

C. Student Eligibility

1. In order to be eligible to participate in the challenge process the student must be enrolled in the school district.
2. Students arriving from other jurisdictions may challenge for credit where equivalency cannot be determined.
3. Students should be able to demonstrate their readiness to challenge a specific course for credit. The school district considers the following criteria as indicators of readiness.
 - a. Strong and compelling evidence related to the course that suggests a student will achieve the prescribed learning outcomes for the course.
 - b. Recommendations from teachers based on previous learning in a related area (e.g., a recommendation may be from a teacher of the course being challenged or a teacher who has previously taught the student).
 - c. Evidence that relevant learning has been acquired outside of school.
 - d. Appropriateness of challenge to the student's educational goals as set out in his/her learning plan.
4. Approval for challenge must be made in consultation with the principal, appropriate teacher/department head, parent/guardian and the student.

D. Assessing and Evaluating the Challenge

1. The school will establish appropriate assessment and evaluation strategies to determine whether students have met prescribed learning outcomes of the course being challenged.

2. Assessment strategies may include, but are not limited to, a combination of the following:
 - a. A laboratory demonstration.
 - b. Oral performance.
 - c. Portfolio of work.
 - d. Interview.
 - e. Written examination, and
 - f. Other assessment strategies as determined by the school.
3. The student will be awarded credit for a successful challenge and will receive a letter grade and percentage mark for the course in the next reporting period.
4. If a challenge is unsuccessful, the student has the option of pursuing course credits to enrol in the course.

E. Challenging Courses with Provincial Examinations

A student may challenge a course with provincial examination according to the following procedures:

1. The student must first challenge the school portion of the course mark.
2. If the student is successful, she/he will be given an opportunity to write the provincial examination.
3. The school must submit the school mark derived from the challenge process before the provincial examination is written, as indicated in the Ministry's *Handbook of Procedures for the Graduation Program*.
4. The student may only write the provincial examination at the scheduled times set by the Ministry.

The student will be awarded credit and receive a letter grade and percentage mark according to *Ministry Reporting Policy and Guidelines*, and the *Student Progress Report Order*.

Legal References:	<i>Handbook of Procedures for the Graduation Program</i> <i>Reporting Policy and Guidelines</i> <i>Student Progress Report Order</i>
Monitoring Method:	<i>Board of Education / Superintendent</i>
Monitoring Frequency:	<i>Annual</i>
Previous Policy Number:	<i>A340</i>
Adopted:	<i>1997.03.12</i>
Amended:	<i>2016.02.19; 2025.01.21</i>