ACADEMIC INFORMATION:

Acceptance of Transfer Credits

Helena Public Schools generally accept transfer credits from other accredited schools and institutions. Transfer credits from schools and institutions accredited by the Montana Office of Public Instruction, the Northwest Accrediting Association or similar US accrediting agency, Department of Defense Schools, or schools accredited by the appropriate State Department of Public Instruction of the respective state will be accepted. Correspondence and online credit will be accepted from schools and institutions accredited by the Northwest Association or similar accrediting agency.

Credits from non-accredited schools are subject to review and evaluation by the principal or principal's designee. Acceptance of transfer credits from non-accredited schools is not guaranteed.

Alternative Assignments

Adopted curriculum is determined through a systematic process, which culminates with the approval by the Board of Trustees. The adoption of curricular materials that align with Montana State Standards and district curriculum is approved by the Superintendent.

The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent or guardian to request that his or her child not read or view specific curriculum materials.

The Board further recognizes that significant instructional preparation is necessary to align curricular activities and assignments with state and local standards and learner outcomes.

To ensure that all parents, guardians, and students are informed about course expectations classroom teachers are to develop a course syllabus that includes an overview of the course and an estimated timeline that identifies when course content will be covered during the semester. In addition to the use of the textbooks, the syllabus should include any supplemental materials to be used during the course. The course syllabus is to be distributed to students during the first week of the course and to new students as soon as they are enrolled in the course.

The following procedure for requesting an alternative assignment will govern when an individual parent or guardian requests that his or her child be excused from a curricular assignment. "Alternative Curricular Assignment Request" forms are available in the School Office and the School Library.

1. A parent or guardian with a concern about curricular materials should first discuss the matter with the classroom teacher with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally.
2. If after the informal meeting the parent or guardian wishes to initiate a formal written request for an alternative assignment, they must complete and submit the "Alternative Curricular Assignment Request Form" to the building principal. If a parent/guardian seeks an alternative assignment for a classroom novel, film, unit, etc., the request must be received as early as possible in the course and prior to the time when his or her student will begin reading the book. This advance notification will

allow time for the teacher to identify a comparable assignment that meets the original learner outcomes if possible.

3. The building principal will review the request and will send a copy to the District Curriculum Administrator. The principal will schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian and the classroom teacher to discuss the request and determine if a resolution can be reached.
4. If parent/guardian or teacher is not satisfied, he or she may appeal the building principal's decision to the District Curriculum Administrator.
5. The District Curriculum Administrator will review the request, and seek input from the teacher, the building principal, the parent/guardian, and the building or grade level department chairs and will render a decision.
6. If either parent/guardian or the teacher is not satisfied with the District Curriculum Administrator's decision, the decision may be appealed to the Superintendent who shall consult with the parties involved.
7. The Superintendent will render a decision, which shall be final.

Book Challenge

The Board of Trustees, although it is ultimately responsible for all instructional and library material, recognizes the right of students to free access to many different types of books and resources. The Board also recognizes the right of teachers, librarians and administrators to select books and other materials in accordance with the adopted curriculum, current trends in education, and student and staff needs, and to make them available in schools and libraries.

Therefore, books and other resources will be chosen for value of interest and enlightenment of all students in the school community. A book or other resource will not be excluded because of the race, nationality, political, or religious values of the writer or of the material's style and language. Every effort will be made to provide materials that present all points of view concerning the international, national, and local problems and issues of our times. Books and other resources of sound factual authority will not be proscribed or removed from library shelves or classrooms because of partisan doctrinal approval or disapproval.

Censorship of books and other materials will be challenged in order to maintain the school's responsibility to provide information and enlightenment. Accordingly, the Board will deal with censorship of books or other materials as follows:

- The final decision on controversial materials rests with the Board after the established process for handling challenged materials has been exhausted/completed.
- The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent or guardian to request that his or her child not have to read a given book, or view a particular media work.
- Any parent or person of legal standing who wishes to request reconsideration of the use of any book or resource in the school must make such request in writing on forms provided through building principals or school librarians.

[Administrative Procedure for the enforcement of this policy) may be obtained in the Central Administration building, and each school office.]

See: Board Policy 2067 – Handling Challenged or Questioned Material