

Duchesne County School District - Policy Proposal

4.0540 Online Courses

Existing Policy	Proposed Policy
None	<p data-bbox="479 380 781 411">4.0540 Online Courses</p> <p data-bbox="479 457 805 489">4.0540.01 DEFINITIONS</p> <p data-bbox="479 535 1495 716">Educational service provider: A third-party entity contracted by Duchesne County School District (the District) to provide courses or instructional services that generate average daily membership, count toward graduation requirements, or provide curriculum, grading, and educator services for such courses.</p> <p data-bbox="479 762 1511 951">Learner validated program: An educational program specifically designed for competency-based or self-paced learning where student participation is measured by demonstrated academic progress and completion of learning objectives rather than by attendance at scheduled instructional periods, and which is governed by the District policy, meeting the criteria set forth in this part.</p> <p data-bbox="479 997 1458 1066">Online course: A course delivered primarily through digital or internet-based platforms where instruction occurs outside a traditional classroom setting.</p> <p data-bbox="479 1113 1500 1262">Teacher of record: A licensed educator employed by the District who has direct responsibility for a student's educational progress, maintains oversight of curriculum quality and alignment with state standards, and documents the student's academic participation and progress.</p> <p data-bbox="479 1346 1279 1377">4.0540.02 LEA ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <p data-bbox="479 1381 1458 1570">District Oversight: The District shall maintain primary responsibility for the administration and oversight of all learner-validated programs. The Superintendent or their designee is responsible for the oversight and implementation of learner-validated program requirements, ensuring that all such programs comply with Utah law and State Board rules.</p> <p data-bbox="479 1617 1490 1686">General Responsibilities: In operating a learner-validated program, the District shall:</p> <ol data-bbox="532 1753 1490 1976" style="list-style-type: none">1. Assign a licensed teacher of record employed by the District for every student membership enrolled in a learner-validated program.2. Maintain accountability for student academic outcomes, instructional effectiveness, and ensure courses align with state core standards.3. Monitor student academic progress, participation, and compliance with all state assessment requirements.

4. Verify that learner-validated programs maintain academic rigor similar to traditional attendance-validated programs. Online courses provided by any learner-validated programs shall be reviewed regularly.

Contractual and Material Provisions As provided by Utah Code § 53G-2-502(2): The District may contract with educational service providers or online course providers for instructional services and may provide students with necessary materials, equipment, or technology.

4.0540.03 SPECIFIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Learner-validated programs operated by the District must adhere to the following seven essential components:

1. Pacing Requirements: Defined standards for the pacing of learning objectives, coursework, and assessments to ensure students make adequate progress toward course completion within the school year. District sequencing guides should be followed to the maximum extent possible in all online courses.
2. Proctored Assessments: Unit assessments must be proctored to verify student identity and maintain academic integrity. Proctoring may occur in person or remotely using online proctoring tools.
3. Teacher Interaction: Regular interactions between the student and the teacher of record, conducted either online or in person will be provided for each student during the duration of each online course.
4. Student-to-Teacher Ratios: A maximum student-to-teacher ratio of 300 individual student courses to one teacher is advised to allow the teacher of record to effectively evaluate student progress.
5. Sequential Completion: Students need to sequentially complete coursework to ensure they demonstrate competence of prerequisite skills before advancing.
6. Monitoring and Validation: Teachers of record will monitor student growth, validate academic engagement, and document student progress of state core standards regularly during each online course.
7. Equivalent Rigor: All courses will flow from district curriculum guides to ensure that learning objectives, coursework, and assessments provide similar educational rigor and support compared to attendance-validated programs.

Accreditation and Standards Alignment: All courses provided through a learner-validated program shall be aligned with state core standards and be accredited through an accreditation program authorized by the Utah State Board of Education.

4.0540.04 ENROLLMENT AND WPU REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) generating enrollment and Minimum School Program funding for students in learner-validated programs, the District shall meet the following conditions:

- A. **Teacher Assignment:** The District shall assign a licensed and qualified educator employed by the District as the teacher of record for each student membership.
- B. **Ratio Documentation:** The District shall maintain and document student-to-teacher ratios for learner-validated program students that comply with District policy and State Board rule.
- C. **Participation Records:** The District shall require and maintain documentation of student participation in instructional supports, learning activities, coursework, and assessments.
- D. **Compliance Submission:** The District shall submit documentation demonstrating compliance with this section to the State Board of Education upon request.

4.0540.05 PROFICIENCY-BASED WAIVERS

Waiver Authority: The State Board of Education may grant waivers for specific program requirements (including pacing, proctored assessments, teacher interaction, student-to-teacher ratios, and sequential completion) for individual students.

Waiver Criteria: The District may apply for a waiver if it demonstrates that a student requires a modified instructional approach due to advanced proficiency, as evidenced by:

- 1. State-approved assessment results;
- 2. Documented mastery of learning objectives; or
- 3. Other evidence of proficiency approved by the State Board.

Limitations on Waivers: A waiver granted for proficiency does not waive the requirement for a teacher of record, nor does it waive the requirement for the teacher of record to monitor student growth, validate engagement, and document progress toward state core standards.

Utah Code Ann. § 53G-2-502 (2026)