

## Instruction

## Curriculum

### Innovative Schools, Innovation Zones, and Credit Flexibility

The Watertown Unified School District recognizes that the establishment of innovative schools and programs (Innovation Zones) as well as proficiency-based credit earning options address emerging pathways toward demonstrating knowledge and skills that are increasingly appropriate, effective, and appealing to a variety of stakeholders, including community members and parents. The establishment and implementation of Innovation Zones and credit-flexibility options will assist the Board in accomplishing the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan, including the offering of diverse opportunities that prepare all students for college, career and life. Supporting diverse options and flexibility also creates opportunities for the Board to remain agile in response to fluctuating resources while ensuring that high quality education continues to characterize the student experience in WUSD.

- Innovation includes, but is not limited to, approaches to curriculum, instruction, staffing, school organization and calendar, learning, achievement, and social-emotional growth metrics, family/community partnerships, strategic use of technology, and other strategies not typically associated with conventional educational programming.
- Innovation Zones are spaces, cultures, and methodologies that are created and maintained for a specified period of time to afford staff a level of independence, authority, and incentive to pursue educational innovation free from undue barriers or interference, while remaining accountable to defined achievement results.

While Innovation Zones are independent and separate from the conventional program, they shall be established and sustained in a positive climate of collaboration among all entities of the WUSD. Innovation Zones shall meet state and federal educational requirements and be fiscally responsible.

- Credits for demonstrating proficiency refer to high school-level students exhibiting competency in core and non-core academic areas in ways that show a level of knowledge and skills comparable to what they would have expected to achieve from attending a traditional class. Credit flexibility includes, but is not limited to, portfolios of work completed through a summer college course, MOOCs, or related experience; achieving a sufficient score on a comprehensive exam of a corresponding course; achieving a sufficient level of performance on a pre-established rubric of a comprehensive, student designed and executed project, or co-directed place-based vocational experience. No more than one-half of the credits required for graduation may be earned via demonstrable proficiencies unless a waiver request is granted by the Department of Public Instruction. WUSD will identify methods for identifying and assessing competencies and will apply related procedures where proficiency-based credit is already awarded.

**Legal Reference:**            **Wisconsin State Statute – 118.33**  
   **Wisconsin State Statute – 118.33(1)(es)**  
   **Wisconsin State Statute – 118.15(1)(a)**

**Wisconsin State Statute – 118.33(1)(b)  
PI 18.05(1)(d)  
PO 8.01(2)(f)  
Wisconsin Administrative Codes 121.02(1)(f)**

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**Policy Revised:**