

A Parent's Guide to Personal Curriculum



Focus on Algebra II

Students who demonstrate a need to reduce the Algebra II requirement in the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)

The purpose of this parent guide is to provide a description of the Personal Curriculum (PC) process and the options it may offer your student. Understanding this educational option will help in making informed decisions about your student's educational experience and path to earning a high school diploma.

Helping All Students Succeed

All students must have a plan for the future.

Students need opportunities to investigate career pathways, to discover their interests, and to identify options for meeting their potential. This is addressed through the Educational Development Plan (EDP), which documents the student's postsecondary goals. The EDP also outlines the high school coursework the student will need to earn a high school diploma and achieve his or her postsecondary goals. If there is reason to believe a student may be unable to complete the Algebra II requirement of the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC), the requirement may be modified with a PC. A PC can only be put in place with the agreement of both the parent or guardian (or emancipated student) and the district superintendent or his or her designee.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) can be modified.

Modifications to the MMC, made through the PC, allow a student to reduce the 1.0 credit Algebra II requirement to a 0.5 credit of Algebra II, statistics, or functions and data analysis. A modification to the MMC through use of a PC starts with a request by a parent, an emancipated student, or school personnel. The request is followed by a thorough review of the relevant information by a PC team. The PC team develops the PC, which must be agreed to by the parent or guardian and the superintendent or his or her designee before being implemented. Upon completing the MMC, as modified by the PC, the student receives a high school diploma. A PC is not needed for students to earn credit through career and technical education, alternative education, a humanities course sequence, or industrial education.

Basic Steps to a PC

Step 1: The parent, school personnel, student age 18 or older, or emancipated student requests a PC.

Step 2: The PC team meets (student, parent, counselor or designee, and/or teacher(s) who currently teaches the student or has expertise in the content being modified). The PC team reviews student information, performance data, and supports—including the EDP—and develops a PC. The PC team develops measurable performance goals for the modified 0.5 credit of Algebra II, statistics, or functions and data analysis, and methods to evaluate the achievement of those goals.

Step 3: The PC team writes agreement and gets sign-off from the superintendent or chief executive and the parent or legal guardian (or emancipated student).

Step 4: The PC is implemented.

Step 5: The parent or emancipated student monitors progress with each teacher of modified content area. If revisions to the PC are needed, the PC team reconvenes and makes revisions using the same process.

Step 6: The student is awarded a diploma upon completing all PC requirements.

Why would I request a Personal Curriculum?

For some students, a PC may offer the best opportunity to succeed in high school and achieve postsecondary goals. A parent may want to consider this option if his or her child has struggled with the middle school curriculum, Algebra I, and/or Geometry and will require extensive support to meet the full Algebra II requirement, or is currently having difficulty meeting the Algebra II requirement.

What math modifications are allowed?

A PC allows a student to earn the equivalent of 0.5 credit of Algebra II, statistics, or functions and data analysis:

- In a Career and Technical Education (CTE) course that the local district determines satisfies half of the content.
- In an Algebra II class that covers half of the high school content expectations for the Algebra II credit, or in a statistics or functions and data analysis class.

A PC is not required for students to take Algebra II over two years for two math credits, or 1.5 years for 1.5 credits. Students must earn 3.5 total math credits and take math during their final year of high school if they receive a PC to modify Algebra II.

When would I request a Personal Curriculum?

A PC to modify the Algebra II requirement may be requested and created after the student completes 9th grade.

Who can request a Personal Curriculum?

The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a student, or an emancipated student may request a PC. School personnel may also request a PC or recommend that students and parents consider the PC option. Interested parents must contact the high school counselor or principal to begin the process. A planning meeting may be scheduled when the school receives a formal request. The process will involve an agreement between the parent or legal guardian (or emancipated student), and the district superintendent or designee.

The essential elements of the Personal Curriculum:

- ◇ The PC must align with the EDP. Both should be consistent regarding student goals.
- ◇ The PC must include as much of the MMC as possible.
- ◇ Measurable goals and an evaluation process must be clearly stated.

Districts MUST offer the PC option and respond to PC requests but are NOT required to approve all PC requests.

The school has the discretion to deny a request for a PC. There are many other options available to support students that should be considered before requesting a PC.

Please be sure to review all appropriate Personal Curriculum *Parent Resource Guides* for your student:

Focus on Enrichment

Students who are interested in earning additional credits in math, science, world languages and/or English language arts.

Focus on Transfer Students

Students transferring from an out of state or a nonpublic school after completing two years of high school.

Focus on Students with an IEP

Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).



State Board of Education

John C. Austin - President

Cassandra E. Ulbrich - Vice President

Michelle Fecteau - Secretary

Pamela Pugh Smith - Treasurer

Lupe Ramos-Montigny - NASBE Delegate

Kathleen N. Straus

Eileen Lappin Weiser

Richard Zeile

Ex Officio

Rick Snyder, Governor

Michael P. Flanagan, State Superintendent



For more information, contact:

Rashell Bowerman, Education Consultant

(517) 335-3062

bowermanr1@michigan.gov