

DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Darien, Connecticut

**GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES TO OBTAIN
“COLUMN CHANGE” CREDIT
FOR GRADUATE DEGREE COMPLETION OR
PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

NOTE: Candidates for employment as teachers must present all academic credentials to be considered toward salary placement prior to the time of hiring. Credentials submitted after initial salary placement has been agreed upon may be credited toward column change but only in years subsequent to the school year of hire.

1. Graduate courses taken as part of a planned degree program in one's field at an accredited college or university need the prior approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee. In the event there are no graduate courses in a particular area or field of study, the Superintendent or his/her designee may grant written prior approval for an undergraduate course or program to be substituted for credit. To utilize graduate or in-service courses that are not part of a degree program for salary change, these courses must be part of a total Independent Professional Improvement Plan, approved in advance by the Superintendent or his/her designee. To be eligible for in-service credit as part of a teacher's Professional Improvement Plan, such courses must be of sufficient duration and scope to indicate intensive study.
2. Staff members who have earned thirty (30) graduate credits beyond the Bachelor's degree will be placed on the Master's Schedule if the thirty (30) graduate credits: (a) were earned in a planned program at an accredited college or university, and (b) are recognized by the State Board of Education for purposes of granting certification, or (c) are approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Staff members are responsible for maintaining their own course completion records and submitting official transcripts for review and approval, along with the Column Change Record Sheet.
3. Post-Bachelor's and Post-Master's credit will be recognized only when the courses are taken chronologically after the date upon which the Bachelor's degree or Master's degree was awarded.
4. Individuals earning two Master's degrees will receive post-Master's credit recognition for the hours earned after the date a first Master's degree was completed.
5. To obtain placement on the MA+15, MA+30 or MA+60 column, a teacher must have completed 15, 30, or 60 approved credits beyond the Master's, or 15, 30, or 60 pre-approved credits of an approved Independent Professional Improvement Plan beyond the Master's degree. Teachers holding a MA degree that requires 60 credits for certification in the areas of the Teacher's professional assignment in Darien shall be placed on the MA+30 track.
6. Teachers may design their own MA+15, MA+30 and/or MA+60 Professional Improvement Plan, with the prior approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee. Ph.D. column placement can only be achieved through the awarding of a Doctoral degree from an accredited college or university, and cannot qualify to be obtained through Professional

Improvement Plans, as described in these guidelines. To obtain MA+15, MA+30 and/or MA+60 program pre-approval, the teacher should first meet with the Superintendent or his/her designee to discuss the plan. Following this meeting the teacher must submit the plan in writing to the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee will then either approve the plan, not approve the plan, or request additional information. A copy of an approved plan will be kept in the employee's personnel file. As courses are completed, official transcripts and/or other official verifying documents must be sent to the Personnel Office for filing. Plans may be modified while in progress with approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee. In such cases, a revised plan must be submitted, approved, and filed.

7. The attainment of an advanced degree or of the required number of credits will result in movement to higher status twice each year: prior to the first semester (by approximately September 1) or prior to the second semester (on or about January 28). Any teacher who has earned or who anticipates earning an advanced degree or the required number of credits for the purpose of advancing to higher status must notify the Superintendent or his/her designee by **November 15** of the immediately preceding work year of the date on which he/she anticipates attainment of the credits or degrees necessary for such advancement. The teacher must earn the degree or pre-approved credits before August 31 to be eligible for a first semester column change and before December 31 to be eligible for a second semester column change, and the teacher must provide official transcripts to the Personnel Office.
8. Darien teachers may apply for credit for in-service courses offered by another school system or outside agency only if the course will be part of a teacher's pre-approved Professional Improvement Plan. (See #10 below.)
9. In-service courses that are operated during normal school hours and courses that provide compensation to the participants are not eligible for in-service credits. In-service credit that is part of an individual program leading to certification will be counted toward salary column change.
10. To be eligible, each individual in-service program must meet for a minimum of 1 contact hour. Credit guidelines for conversion of in-service courses to credits adhere to State of Connecticut Guidelines as follows:

15 contact hours	1.0 credit
30 contact hours	2.0 credits
45 contact hours	3.0 credits

Note: To convert CEU or in-service credits to pre-approved program credit:

- (1) Obtain pre-approval of plan from the Superintendent or his/her designee
- (2) Obtain evidence of CEU certification for attendance
- (3) Send this documentation to the Superintendent or his/her designee for conversion (CEU credit deleted and in-service credit posted). The teacher will receive a copy of the transaction for his/her file.

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2012-2013 NOTIFICATION FORM FOR
ANTICIPATED COLUMN CHANGE

NOTE: For budgeting purposes, this form **MUST** be filed with the Personnel Office by November 15, 2011, in order to qualify for placement on the anticipated salary column change for the 2012-2013 School Year. If it is not filed by November 15, 2011, the salary column change will not have been budgeted for, and you will continue to be paid on your current salary column.

PRINT YOUR NAME

My signature below signifies that I have fully read the "Guidelines and Procedures to Obtain Column Change Credit for Graduate Degree Completion or Professional Improvement Plans." In accordance with the provisions set forth in said guidelines, I am filing this, my official notification to you, that I anticipate earning _____ more credits prior to the (check one): ___ first semester ___ second semester of the 2012-13 school year, which will change my salary from my current placement on the (circle one):

BA MA MA+15 MA+30 MA+60

column during the 2011-12 school year to an anticipated new salary column placement of (circle one):

MA MA+15 MA+30 MA+60 Ph.D.

for the 2012-13 school year.

I will provide official transcripts and a completed Column Change Record Sheet to the Personnel Office when I complete the required coursework for the column change.

Teacher's Signature

Today's Date

This form must be received by the Personnel Office by November 15, 2011.

