

A Parent's Guide to Personal Curriculum



Focus on Students with an IEP

Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

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 career pathway and postsecondary goals. The EDP also outlines the high school coursework the student will need to achieve his or her postsecondary goals.

For students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the IEP is used to document special education services necessary for the student to access and achieve in the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC). A PC can be used to modify any content within the MMC for a student with an IEP if he or she needs it in order to access and achieve in the MMC. The EDP, IEP, and PC must work together to map out an educational plan that meets the student's needs.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) can be modified.

The PC will not be necessary for most students with an IEP but can be a valuable tool for some students to earn a diploma. A modification to the MMC through use of a PC starts with a request by a parent or legal guardian, emancipated student, or school personnel. The request is followed by a thorough review of the relevant student information by a PC team. A PC for a student with an IEP allows a district to consider modifications to any area of the MMC.

MMC content may only be modified if the PC team determines that the student's disability is the reason the student is not able to access or demonstrate proficiency in the content. The PC plan must be agreed to by both the parent or legal guardian (or emancipated student) 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.

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 also develops measurable performance goals for the modified content 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 struggled with middle school curriculum and will require extensive support to meet all high school requirements or requirements in a specific content area, or is currently having difficulty meeting high school course requirements.

Is my child eligible for a Personal Curriculum?

The majority of students will not need a PC. Many other instructional strategies, supports, and interventions are available to students and should be considered before creating a PC. A PC is typically only granted to students who cannot otherwise meet all the requirements of the MMC.

When would I request a Personal Curriculum?

Parents of students with an IEP can begin to explore the PC option as early as 7th or 8th grade when the EDP is being developed. If granted, the PC goes into effect when the student enters high school. Parents of students with an IEP may also request a PC at any point during the student's high school career.

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, student, and the district superintendent or designee.

The essential elements of the Personal Curriculum:

The PC must be consistent with the EDP and IEP. All three should be consistent with student goals and supports. The PC must include as much of the MMC as possible. Measurable goals and an evaluation process must be clearly stated in the PC.

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 in accessing the MMC and achieving postsecondary goals 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 Algebra II

Students who demonstrate a need to reduce the Algebra II requirement.

Focus on Transfer Students

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



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