Mooresville Graded School District
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)
Frequently Asked Questions

Do LEAs have to offer CDM?
Yes. Per State Board of Education policy, all LEAs must offer the opportunity for students to earn CDM for high school courses by the end of 2014-15 to inform student placement in the academic year of 2015-16.

Is a credit earned through the CDM policy intended to be "different" than a credit earned in the traditional manner (completing the course)?
No. Schools and districts shall assess students and evaluate artifacts based upon the same standards that are applied to students earning course credit in the traditional sense. The achievement levels required to earn CDM through a two-phase assessment already reflect a more rigorous expectation of students who want to earn credit in this manner than those of students who complete the course with the traditional seat-time.

Who is eligible to request an opportunity to earn credit by demonstrating mastery?
All students in North Carolina Public Schools for high school courses in grades 9-12 and high school courses offered in grades 6-8 in middle school, based on LEA availability.

Is there a limit to the number of courses for which a student may earn credit using the CDM policy?
No. Students may earn credit using CDM for as many courses as they wish and districts may not impose local limitations. However, students may only make one attempt per course. Students who are unsuccessful after one attempt must register for and complete the course in the traditional manner to receive credit.

May students earn CDM credit for honors courses?
It depends. CDM is only available for standard-level courses and inherently honors courses. CDM credits will be indicated on the transcript as CDM (similar to a 'pass') and therefore do not earn a specific grade or calculate into a student's grade point average. Honors level courses that are not inherently honors are not available for CDM. In either case, a student only earns credit and does not receive grades or an extra quality-point.

Can the school or district deny a student the opportunity to attempt to earn CDM credit?
No. DPI encourages LEAs to advise parents and families of the opportunities and discuss possible benefits and challenges. However, all students must be awarded the opportunity to earn CDM.

May a student earn the CPR credit through CDM?
No. CPR is part of the Healthful Living requirement and NC State Board of Education policy specifically excludes required Healthful Living courses from CDM.

Are Charter Schools required to offer the CDM process?
No. Charter Schools are not required to participate but may decide to offer students the opportunity to earn course credit by demonstrated mastery.

Does CDM replace differentiation in meeting the learning needs of students?
No. CDM is not a replacement for differentiated services to meet the learning needs of students. CDM is in fact a way to differentiate and personalize learning based on individual student needs of content replacement. CDM does not replace the typical accelerated pathways of learning compacted curriculum by groups of advanced students, which are quite common in many LEAs.

What measures are in place to ensure consistency between LEAs across the state with the CDM process?
State Board of Education policy GCS-M-001 Course for Credit, Section 8, specifies required parameters. Additionally, NCDPI has developed CDM Guidelines and a CDM Toolkit for LEAs to use to develop and implement the local CDM process. As always, the SBE respects an individual LEA's context and needs, thus the CDM policy does allow local decisions among the CDM framework. The CDM Guidelines specify additional requirements of the policy as well as components that are determined by the local school district.

May a student receive credit through CDM for a course not offered at their school?
No. Students can only opt to use the CDM process for courses taught within the school district.

May students earn credit by demonstrated mastery for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Courses?
Yes, with the exception of specific courses excluded by SBE policy (work-based learning courses such as co-ops, internships and apprenticeships; courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement such as ProStart, Early Childhood Education I/II and Nursing Fundamentals; Advanced Studies courses). For CTE courses, an industry credential may be accepted as the required artifact component. Students will still be expected to complete the post-assessment, if one is available, or a teacher made exam if the state does not provide a post-assessment. If the student earns credit, the post-assessment score would be reported in the technical attainment performance measure.

When a student earns credit by demonstrated mastery for a course, what should schools use to replace the course in the student's schedule?
Generally, students should replace the course with the next course in the sequence, i.e. a student using CDM to earn a Math I credit should schedule Math II in its place. High school students might also use CDM credit to create space in their schedule that can be filled with a community college course available through Career & College Promise or other advanced courses, such AP and IB.

Can students graduate early based upon credits earned through this policy?

Yes. CDM credits work like traditional credits towards graduation. DPI recommends that early graduation decisions be made through deep discussion between families, students, and appropriate educational staff.

If a student chooses to earn credit by demonstrated mastery for an EOC course, will the student have to take that EOC for the course they passed through CDM?
Yes. Students attempting to earn a CDM credit for a course with an EOC, must take the EOC as the Phase 1 assessment component of the CDM attempt. If the attempt is successful, the score will be banked for appropriate use.

Because classroom situations (science labs, conversation in world languages, etc.) cannot be replicated on a standardized assessment, how should these situations be assessed?
Districts and schools may choose to require, as part of Phase II artifact assessment, student performance tasks that replicate these situations. For example, for world languages, the school may require a student to demonstrate conversational ability as part of earning the CDM credit as part of the Phase 2 assessment of the CDM process.

Are credits earned through this policy accepted by outside organizations such as the NCHSAA, NCCCS, UNC-GA, and NCAA?
Each organization handles CDM within its own parameters. It is important that the student and parent discuss the impact that CDM will have with these organizations with your school counselor and a representative from the organization.

Can students participating in an on-going course decide to earn CDM in the middle of the course?
No. The CDM policy is being phased in beginning with students who wish to accelerate without enrolling in a course and to attempt CDM prior to taking a course.

How does the CDM policy and its implementation impact quality points and a student's grade point average (GPA)?
CDM credits are awarded as CDM in the gradebook, essentially like a "pass", and will appear as such on the student's transcript. No course grade is received and the course is NOT included in the GPA calculation. Also, no honors credit is awarded through the CDM process – only regular course credit.

If students transfer between LEAs, how will the school/district know if the student has gone through the CDM process?
As of date, there are plans to ensure CDM will be apparent on the official transcript

In a sequence of courses, such as English I, II, III, IV, could a student theoretically receive credit for all four courses?
Yes, but not all at once. A student may attempt to earn CDM for all of the courses in a sequence, one at a time. For example, for a student in grade 9, who has NOT taken English I, II or III, may NOT attempt to earn CDM for English IV and then subsequently earn credit for the other English I-III. A student must CDM for the next course in the

content sequence. If a student did earn CDM for all four courses through the multi-phase assessments over time, this indicates a clear need for a personalized learning plan.

Who provides the assessments students will use to meet the Phase I assessment of foundational knowledge and progress to the artifact stage?
For EOC courses, the EOC will be given during an early testing window to provide the information needed for the Phase I assessment. For non-EOC courses, LEAs will determine the appropriate examination to use. School districts may decide to aggregate all the tests in the district for a course and either choose one or build one for purposes of CDM. Districts may also decide that the school CDM team will determine the assessment to be used for CDM purposes. With the exception of EOC courses, DPI does not currently require all tests or exams to be the same for student purposes. DPI expects all teachers and principals to administer tests in a professional manner that adequately tests students on the relevant course standards.

Can students potentially stay at home and graduate?
No. CDM policy does not relieve schools, parents or students of the requirement that students attend school until age 16.

Could CDM be used to accelerate students that know content, are very bright but are at risk?
Yes. CDM may be used for any student who would benefit from earning CDM and is able to meet the requirements. CDM may support a pathway towards graduation that was not available before.

Can CDM replace current differentiated pathways for advanced students, such as AIG students who are curriculum compacting Grade 6, 7, 8 Math in two years to access Math 1 in Grade 8?
No. CDM should not replace current compacted pathways for groups of students. CDM should not be an additional requirement to determine who will work at a faster rate within the classroom. CDM is meant for individual students who need content replacement and subject acceleration clearly, without any learning of the content in the school setting.