

2019 - 2020
NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROFESSIONAL
GROWTH
HANDBOOK

**GUIDELINES FOR SALARY LANE CHANGE
REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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PROFESSIONAL GROWTH INFORMATION FOR SALARY LANE CHANGE REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Revised 2019

The Professional Growth Council (PGC) is composed of representatives from each of Needham's Public Schools. The primary purpose of the PGC is to consider Equivalency Credit Applications, grant equivalency credit when deemed appropriate, and to substantiate documentation for salary lane changes submitted by Unit A staff members to the PGC Building Representative. The Council is empowered to grant equivalency credit but NOT graduate credit. Staff should be aware that courses, workshops, and other endeavors awarding PDPs may not automatically receive equivalency credits. PDPs are units for re-licensure. They may or may not fulfill Needham's equivalency requirements. The council strongly recommends that staff members direct questions to the PGC before submitting an application for equivalency approval.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES*

***Please note that Council Representatives are subject to change until the beginning of the upcoming school year. Please see your building principal and the [Needham Public School's website](#) for your current building representative(s).**

The Professional Growth Council will meet on the second Wednesday of most months at 3:30 p.m. at Broadmeadow School.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LANE CHANGE APPLICATIONS

Each staff member is responsible for identifying all requirements for a salary lane change. The Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and the PGC Building Representatives are willing to help and advise interested staff regarding Professional Growth rules and procedures. When considering a lane change, it is strongly recommended that Unit A members meet with their PGC representative early in the school year, to review the requirements needed to complete a lane change packet.

Each staff member is responsible for the assembly and timely completion of his/her own course packet (summary list of courses, ORIGINAL, OFFICIAL transcripts, and all documentation of previous levels, etc.).

Note: On-line transcripts WILL NOT be accepted as course completion documentation by the PGC.

- By First Monday in November Letters of Intent for all lane changes including Master's and Doctorate levels must be submitted electronically. In order to submit electronically you need to access the link located on the NPS website under the Human Resource Department. **No Letter of Intent submitted after the first Monday in November will be accepted.**

After completion of your electronic Letter of Intent, a confirmation will immediately appear on screen. PRINT out confirmation and maintain it for your records.

If for any reason you do not complete your pending lane change requirements, you must REAPPLY by RESUBMITTING a letter of intent by the first Monday in November of the next year for September lane change.

- By the Second Monday in April No equivalency credit application will be accepted after this date.

- By the First Monday in May Last day packets (including coversheet) may be submitted to PGC for review to qualify for a fall lane change.

- By August 31: All course work MUST BE completed for September lane change.

- By October 31: All transcripts MUST BE received by the Professional Growth Council District Coordinator.

- By end of November: All lane change increases will be processed in one of the two semi-monthly pays in November. This will include retroactive payment to the beginning of the school year.

Staff members must meet with Building Representatives to review lane change packets, at the latest, a week prior to the first Monday in May. Packets that are complete, except for the transcripts of grades for summer courses, may be submitted at anytime during the school year PRIOR to the Professional Growth Committee May meeting.

NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SALARY LANE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Note: The Professional Growth Council and the Administration have agreed to a change in practice regarding the transfer of credits from one lane change to another. Effective September 2003, the 15 credits beyond the Master's Degree MUST BE earned after completion of the Master's Degree.

The following graduate credits and/or equivalency credits must be earned for each salary lane:

B+15	15 graduate or equivalency credits (no more than 4 equivalency credits)
M+15	15 graduate or equivalency credits (no more than 4 equivalency credits)
M+30	30 graduate or equivalency credits (no more than 6* equivalency credits)
M+45	45 graduate or equivalency credits (no more than 9* equivalency credits)
M+60	60 graduate or equivalency credits (no more than 12* equivalency credits may be used)

Equivalency credit allocation for school psychologists, counselors, speech & language
pathologists, and nurses:

M+15=9, M+30=15*, M+45=21*, M+60=27*

*These numbers represent the cumulative total of equivalency credits used for all lane changes.

Due to course cancellations and/or other unforeseen circumstances during the summer, course substitutions may need to be made to complete a lane change packet that has already been approved by the PGC. When this occurs, contact your PGC representative for re-evaluation of your packet.

CREDITS

GRADUATE CREDITS

Graduate level courses awarding graduate credit from accredited universities or colleges are valid for a 10-year period

With the exception of summer courses, a staff member may take up to two graduate courses in one semester for School Committee approval (or recognition).

Graduate credit earned prior to employment by the Needham Public Schools will be accepted as long as the credit was:

- Earned within 10 years.
- Earned after completion of Master's Degree if moving to M+15 or beyond.
- Not used to determine initial hiring salary level.
- Documented by official, original transcripts from an accredited university or college.

Effective September 2008, graduate credit earned in whole or in part during the school day cannot be used towards a salary lane change.

NOTE: The PGC and the Administration have agreed to a change in practice regarding the transfer of credits from one lane change to another. Effective September 2003, the 15 credits beyond the Master's Degree MUST BE earned after completion of the Master's Degree.

GRADUATE COURSES EARNED AT FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS

Where teachers chose to engage in graduate course work at foreign institutions, it is important that you first verify with the institution that you will be earning graduate credit which is equivalent to graduate credits earned in the United States. Once the transcript is issued, you must have the transcript evaluated for equivalency by an authorized agency. Please note that the fee charged by the agency is the responsibility of the employee.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides a list of agencies that perform the equivalency service. Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/Jeducators/foreignequivalence.html> for a list of these agencies you may use.

It is important to note the time to complete the requirements when taking graduate course work at a foreign institution will be significantly longer than US graduate course work. Typically, it takes longer for the institution to produce the transcript, and it will take additional time for transcript to be evaluated for equivalency. Please plan accordingly when taking graduate courses at foreign institutions.

ON-LINE GRADUATE COURSES

On-line graduate courses will be considered by the PGC if the credit earned is from an accredited university or college. Documentation must be an official, original transcript. On-line copies (printouts) are usually marked "unofficial" and will not be accepted by the PGC.

The PGC ONLY ACCEPTS graduate credit for salary lane changes from accredited universities and colleges. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure that credits earned from courses taken, especially courses from on-line Staff Development sites, are courses eligible for graduate credit. Several transcripts have been denied by the PGC because credit earned was not graduate credit. When in doubt, get documentation in writing from the university or college that credit granted is indeed graduate, before registering for the course.

Online Graduate Courses will only be reimbursed and recognized for lane changes when they meet the following criteria:

1. The online course has a specific start and end date with a minimum of 15-hours of work for 1 graduate credit
2. The online course is not designed as a self-paced "module" course with no specified beginning and ending date
3. The online course requires regular weekly interaction with the professor i.e., discussion boards that require the class members to log in and participate in discussions
4. The online course has regular weekly interactions with other students i.e., discussion boards that require the class members to log in and participate in discussions
5. The online assignments are regular, posted, and graded by the professor
6. The online course has graded mid-term and/or final examination or project
7. The online course is offered directly by regionally accredited colleges and universities
8. The online course offers graduate credit. Quarters and points are examples of measurements that are not acceptable as graduate credit
9. Courses that do not meet the above required criteria may still qualify for workshop, audit and/or conference reimbursement.

EQUIVALENCY CREDITS

Equivalency credit is awarded to Unit A teachers by the Professional Growth Council only for certain courses and educational experiences. Applications for equivalency credits are reviewed at monthly PGC meetings. NO applications will be considered after the second Monday in April.

Equivalency credit may be granted for experiences outside of normal school hours and that are not funded by the Needham Public Schools. The PGC will award one equivalency credit per 15 hours of invested time. No one endeavor shall earn more than 2 equivalency credits.

Some courses listed in the Staff Development Book cannot be used toward equivalency credit. Check "Credits" under individual course listings for this information or check with your PGC representative. Examples: The full day induction for new teachers receives PDPs but cannot be used for equivalency credit. PDPs awarded for curriculum or committee work cannot be used for equivalency credits.

The Professional Growth Council may award equivalency credit for online courses begun as of Fall 2016. The course should have credits granted from an accredited college or university and must be a graduate-level course. Equivalency credit may also be granted for an online professional development program offered through the district via My Learning Plan, but like a graduate course, must require the student produce a work product that is evaluated for quality. Webinars, for example, would not be accepted for Equivalency Credit. All other provisions regarding Equivalency Credit apply to online courses.

Experiences such as in-service courses will be considered for equivalency credit. Like graduate credits, equivalency credits must be earned and used within a 10-year period. Formal written request must be made to the PGC on the "Application for Credit Equivalency Form." The applicant must include original, official substantiating documents and attendance.

Note: No equivalency credits will be awarded for experiences completed prior to employment by Needham Public Schools.

Some experiences or work related to education may be considered for equivalency credit. The experience must meet specific requirements and be of direct benefit to the teacher in his/her work in the Needham Public Schools. Documentation must be submitted by the teacher which explains how their teaching has been enhanced by the experience and which explains the impact on the students and/or staff of the Needham Public Schools. Original, official signed documentation must accompany all applications.

To ensure that a request for equivalency credit will meet the necessary requirements, the PGC strongly recommends that staff members seek PRIOR approval from the PGC. With substantiating documentation, up to 2 equivalency credits may be awarded only once for any one endeavor.

NO EQUIVALENCY CREDIT APPLICATION PENDING DOCUMENTATION WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR A SEPTEMBER LANE CHANGE

Note: No on-line copies (print-outs) will be accepted as official, original documentation for an equivalency credit application.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR EQUIVALENCY CREDIT APPLICATIONS

All requests for equivalency credit must be submitted to the PGC on the Application for Equivalency Credit Form-REVISED 2016.

All equivalency credit applications must be substantiated with ORIGINAL, OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION with appropriate signatures when applicable. No application will be accepted for consideration after the second Monday in April.

1. Student Teacher/Intern Supervision: 2 equivalency credits
 - a. Lasts a minimum of one full semester of direct supervision (full time)
 - b. Reported by applicant on Student Teaching/Intern Supervision Form (page 14)
 - c. Includes all appropriate, signed documentation from sponsoring institution that clearly defines responsibilities and duration of experience.

NOTE: As of September 1, 2010 equivalency credits awarded for student teacher/intern supervision can be used only ONCE during the Masters – Masters +60 salary lane change process.

2. Educational Organization Leadership Position: up to 2 equivalency credits (to be used only once)
 - a. Exists outside Needham Public Schools
 - b. Lasts at least 1 year and is unpaid
 - c. Include leadership documentation/report explaining specific role and responsibilities signed by an official representative of the organization
 - d. Examples: ASCD, IRA (International Reading Association)
3. Professional Publication: up to 2 equivalency credits (to be used only once)
 - a. Completed within previous 2 years
 - b. Submitted published document to PGC
 - c. Contributes to the professional growth of the author in his/her current position
4. Work Experience: up to 2 equivalency credits (to be used only once)
 - a. Contributes directly to the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom
 - b. Reports the length of employment, name of employer and application to the classroom
 - c. Includes signed documentation from employer explaining job description and duration of employment.
 - d. Not funded by the Needham Public Schools
5. Educational Workshop Presentation: up to 2 equivalency credits (can be used only once per lane change)
 - a. Occurs outside regular school hours and not paid for by the Needham Public Schools
 - b. Documented with workshop content and time involved
 - c. Organized and planned by the teacher requesting credit
 - d. One equivalency = 15 teaching hours
 - e. Signed documentation defining applicant's role, responsibilities, length and number of workshops

6. Educational Workshop Attendance: up to 2 equivalency credits
 - a. Occurs outside regular school hours
 - b. Documented with workshop content, dates, time involved, and proof of attendance

7. Graduate Course Instruction: can be used only once per lane change
 - a. Granted only once for a given course
 - b. Equivalency credits = number of graduate credits: for example, 2 credit course = 2 equivalency credits; 3 credit course = 2 equivalency credits

PROCEDURES FOR SALARY LANE CHANGE

1. Meet with your PGC Building Representative to obtain forms and information.
2. Complete Salary Lane Change Letter of Intent (found online) by the first Monday in November. If any possibility exists that you may accrue enough credits by next September, submit your Letter of Intent. Note: No Letters of Intent will be accepted after the first Monday in November. Print out confirmation and keep for your records.
3. If you are applying for equivalency credit, complete the Application for Equivalency Credit Form. Be sure to attach all original substantiating data, which should include date, time and duration of the course/workshop. No credit will be given for a workshop or course given during the school day (for example, during the afternoon of an early dismissal day). This is the cause of most returned packets. Make sure that all Applications for Equivalency Credit Forms are complete. Those pending documentation or credit cannot be used as part of a lane change packet.
 - If you are applying for equivalency credits for categories other than those listed in the Staff Development Book, include in your request a description about the value to you and your students, as well as information about the time and duration of the activity. Staff members are always welcome at PGC meetings and may present any requests for equivalency credits in person for the council's consideration.
 - Meet with your Building Representative between October and March to review your application materials. Your Representative will present your request for equivalency credit at a PGC meeting.

NOTE: Not all PDPs earned can be used for equivalency credit.

4. Assemble your Application for Salary Lane Change packet. Attach the Application for Lane Change form containing the list of courses and your principal's/director's signature to the front of a 9 x 12 envelope. In the envelope be sure to include the following:
 - official originals of all transcripts and equivalency credit documentation for this lane change (no on-line printouts)
 - cover pages from all previous Needham Public School Salary Lane Change packets*
 - documentation of equivalency credits used for previous lane changes*
 - verification of hiring at advanced level with list of courses presented at time of hire, if pertinent*
 - Master's Degree transcript must state that degree is "awarded" or "conferred"
 - transcript of Master's Degree if applying for M+15*

*NOTE: You are responsible for providing this information by going to your personnel file in the Human Resources Office and making copies. All copies must show appropriate signatures and proof of completion of previous pending lane change requirements.

5. Meet with your Building Representative between October and March to review your Salary Lane Change packet. Representatives must be sure all information is correct, complete and on current forms before initialing the cover page and submitting your packet to the PGC. It is not necessary to wait until May to submit packets. Packets that are complete except for documentation of completion of spring or summer courses may be submitted at any time during the year prior to the first Monday in May.

Course packets must be submitted to the PGC Building Representative prior to the Professional Growth

Committee meeting in May in order to be considered for a September salary lane change. If you plan to take a course in the summer, you must submit your packet in May, listing the name of the course(s) you plan to take under "pending courses" on the lower part of the form. You are responsible for sending all pending transcripts and/or pertinent data directly to the school where the Professional Growth Council Coordinator is employed before October 31st. When submitting final materials, please write, "This will complete my packet" to ensure proper salary adjustment. All course work must be completed by August 31. ORIGINAL, OFFICIAL transcripts and documentation must be submitted no later than OCTOBER 31.

CHECKLIST FOR SALARY LANE CHANGE
Revised October 2019

This checklist contains guidelines and procedures to help in the preparation of a Salary Lane Change Packet. If you have any questions, please contact your PGC Building Representative listed in this handbook.

Check DUE DATES and make sure all paperwork and documentation are passed in on time.

Make sure that all graduate and equivalency credits have been earned and are being used within a 10-year period. Only original, official transcripts will be accepted.

As soon as your course grade is posted, request the transcript.

Use your oldest credits first.

When applying for equivalency credits, group them in 15 or 30 hour increments, if possible, and submit them as soon as possible to your PGC Representative for Council consideration and approval.

Remember that equivalency credit applications pending documentation may not be used as part of a Lane Change Packet.

No equivalency credit applications will be accepted for consideration after the second Monday in April.

All credits for new lane change level must have been granted within 10 years of the packet due date.

Check the limit on the number of equivalency credits that may be used for each lane change and what you have used in previous lane changes.

Fill out ALL information asked on cover page of your Lane Change Packet.

MAKE A COPY OF EVERYTHING FOR YOUR OWN RECORDS

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE APPROPRIATE SIGNATURES

NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
APPLICATION FOR EQUIVALENCY CREDIT

Please submit a separate form for each type or category requested.
Applications must be submitted by the second Monday in April.

NAME: _____ SCHOOL: _____ DATE: _____

TITLE: _____

CHECK ONE

Student Teacher/Intern Supervision - Report on Student Teacher/Intern Form attached with appropriate signature of college supervisor and documentation from sponsoring institution

Educational/Organizational Leadership Position - Report attached with appropriate signatures

Professional Publications - Copy of published writing attached

Work Experience - Report attached with all substantiating documentation and signatures

Graduate Course Instruction - Documentation attached

Educational Workshop Presentation - Documentation/report attached

Educational Workshop Attendance - Certificate of attendance from presenter including title, date, time and description

No Equivalency Credit Application will be considered without all appropriate original, official documentation and signatures.

Workshop Title (grouped in 15 or 30 hour increments, if possible)	Hours
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APPROVED FOR _____ CREDITS:

PGC COORDINATOR: _____ DATE: _____

**NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REPORT ON STUDENT TEACHER/INTERN SUPERVISION**

This COMPLETED AND SIGNED form must accompany all requests for Student Teacher/Intern Supervision Equivalency Credits.

To: PROFESSIONAL GROWTH COUNCIL

From: COOPERATING TEACHER _____

SCHOOL: _____ DATE : _____

TITLE: _____

STUDENT TEACHER/INTERN: _____

PERIOD OF OBSERVATION: FROM _____ TO _____ NUMBER OF WEEKS: _____

NUMBER OF DAYS PER WEEK: _____ TIME: from ___ : ___ to ___ : ___

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT TEACHER/INTERN EXPERIENCE:

On a separate, attached sheet provide a detailed description of your role in providing a variety of teaching and learning experiences for your student teacher/intern. (please type)

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

College Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

APPLICATION FOR SALARY LANE CHANGE

Please fill out the form completely, print and attach this form to the front of your packet.

Date: _____ School: _____
 From: _____ Title: _____

Packet Checklist:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Original Official Transcripts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Original equivalency credit documentation for lane change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cover pages showing proof of completion for all previous NPS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lane change packets WITH SIGNATURES.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation of equivalency credits used for prior lane changes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verification of hiring at advanced level, with list of courses being used.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of Master's transcript for M+15 only.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence that online courses meet criteria, either attached syllabus or document that course has been approved.

Lane change requesting: B+15 | Masters | M+15 | M+30 | M+45 | M+60 | Doctorate

Date of Bachelor's Degree: _____

Date of Master's Degree: _____ Must state "awarded" or "conferred"

Lane Change Type: Single Double

SUMMARY OF COURSES:

Complete or Pending	Course Title	Institution	Completion Date	Graduate/ Type/ Equivalency	Number of Credits	Grade

PACKETS MUST BE TURNED IN WITH APPROPRIATE SIGNATURES:

Packet reviewed by: Principal/Director _____ Date: _____
 PGC Rep _____ Date: _____
 PCG Coordinator: _____ Date: _____