

South Brunswick High School PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION



Understanding Option II: A Guide for Students and Parents

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Note:

**Student Application Form and Time & Activity Sheet are posted separately.
Both are “clickable” forms that must be typed before submission.**

PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION



GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order for a student to graduate and receive a high school diploma from South Brunswick, he/she must:

- Pass the State high school assessment tests.
- Fulfill the following minimum 125-credit¹ graduation requirement.

English	At least 20 credits of English Language Arts
Social Studies	At least 15 credits
Science	At least 15 credits
Mathematics	At least 15 credits
Financial Literacy	At least 2.5 credits (in Junior or Senior Year) as of Class of 2014
Health & Physical/Safety Education ²	At least 5 credits for each year (including Health Education)
Fine Arts	At least 5 credits
21 st Century Life & Careers	At least 5 credits for Classes of 2014, 2015, and beyond
Practical Arts	At least 5 credits of this or 21 st Century for Classes of 2012 and 2013 only
World Languages	At least 10 credits in the same language
Electives	At least 17.5 credits
Total Minimum Credits Required	125

OPTIONS

A student may meet the 125-credit requirement through one or a combination of options or pathways that follow.

I. OPTION I (Traditional Path of Studies)

A student earns credits by successful completion of the required courses above. Credits are awarded for student participation in a class period of instruction. This is called “in-the-seat” class time. A class that meets routinely for one block on alternate days for a year yields 5 credits.

II. OPTION II (Alternate Path)

This option permits a student to earn credits in a more personalized and independent manner—rather than “in the seat.” Option II offers alternative paths to credits that meet or exceed the most current standards and are based on student interest or career goals. Examples include independent studies, study abroad programs, distance or online learning, community service, physical education through athletics, world language through demonstration of proficiency or off-campus learning, successful completion of an accredited college course and/or successful completion of an accredited high school course taken outside SBHS. Option II requires application and pre-approval from the principal to ensure that student achievement meets or exceeds the standards. Before credits can be awarded, students must pass appropriate assessments.

¹ *The Board of Education, through the IEP process and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.12, may, for individual students with disabilities, specify alternate requirements for a State-endorsed diploma.*

² *Comprehensive Health, Physical Education and Safety: Students with an authorized excuse may be excused from the physical activity part of the regular program and will be assigned an alternative activity.*

RESPONSIBILITY

As a student and his/her parents engage in discussion about Option II, there should be conversation about the number of Option II courses and studies a student should take and the additional academic responsibilities that a student will feel as a result of these decisions. How much is too much? Care and thought should accompany any academic decision but especially this one given the additional responsibilities that a student will be taking on.

Generally speaking, students are limited to two Option II experiences per school year or the equivalent of 10 credits. A student may appeal to the principal for an exemption to this limit.

COMMITMENT

Once engaged in an Option II experience, it is expected that a student will approach the activity with the same seriousness that would be given to a traditional course, and will be committed to the course, the study or the project through its completion.

COURSE REGISTRATION & APPLICATION PROCESS

Course registration and Option II application are two related but different procedures.

Registration: A student interested in applying for Option II must participate in the traditional course registration at the High School by following the timeframe put forth in the South Brunswick High School Course Catalog. This ensures that the student has been enrolled in the courses of his or her choosing and does not risk the student being closed out of a desired or needed course. The period for course registrations is generally in January – February.

Option II Application: Then, following the timeframe set forth in this Guidebook for Option II, a student would apply for Option II. If approved, the student's schedule will be adjusted accordingly. There are three windows for Option II Application—all with very firm deadlines. The reason for the varied dates is that Option II may take place at varied times: throughout the year, by semester, in the summer and by marking period.

SOUTH BRUNSWICK SUMMER INSTITUTE: COURSES FOR ADVANCEMENT

Each year, the District hosts the **South Brunswick High School Summer Institute**. Student scholars are offered a series of courses for advancement that have all been pre-approved for Option II credit.

If a student is attending one of these courses, held on the High School campus or conducted in blended learning environment (some classes onsite and some online), the only application form that is necessary is the Summer Institute application available online. No other forms, permissions or signatures are required. The timeline for submission is set by the Institute.

For more detailed information, visit www.sbschools.org/schools/sbhs/sps/summer_institute.php

OPTION II: WHAT COUNTS?

Option II: Advancing a Course Level in an Accredited School or Institute (NOT online)

Grades 9, 10, 11

Students may advance a course level in a given sequence of courses such as mathematics by taking courses outside SBHS (e.g. Learning Center) or during the SBHS Summer Institute. Course content must equate to that of the high school course that is being bypassed. **Note: Algebra I may NOT be bypassed.**

A Course of Study from the accredited institution must be attached to the application.

Purpose: Taking high school level courses at an approved school/institute (not online) enables a student to use those courses to meet pre-requisites for advanced courses and move more quickly through a course sequence. To be considered for advancement, the student must achieve an 85% or better as a final grade.

Note: Successful completion of math courses will NOT impact science course placement. Successful completion of chemistry or biology will not lead to placement in AP classes in the Fall of that calendar year, but will qualify students for the following academic year if they meet all pre-requisites.

Assessment: In addition to passing the course with an 85%, the student will need to successfully pass the SBHS final exam/assessment and achieve the mastery score established by the department supervisor in the bypassed course. Note: A Group Proctor fee of \$10 will be assessed.

Proof of Experience: course of study, transcript, final exam

Grading:

- Grade is recorded.
- Course and grade are listed on student's transcript.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.

All fees and any necessary transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Option II: College Course Work for High School Credit

Grades 11-12

High school students may choose to enroll in college level work at an accredited college or university for both college and high school credit (called dual credit). This option includes dual credit courses offered during the SBHS Summer Institute.

A Course of Study from the accredited institution must be attached to the application.

Purpose: Taking college course work while in high school enables a student to begin post-secondary study in an interest area or in a potential career path while simultaneously meeting the high school graduation requirements.

Note: There are several courses offered at SBHS that are already dual credit courses (e.g. the Middlesex County College Credit Program). These courses are not Option II. They are "in the seat" courses, graded traditionally and included in the GPA.

Proof of Experience: course of study, transcript

Assessment: Students must successfully pass the End-of-Course Assessment as required by the college/university.

Grading:

- Grade is recorded.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements (3-credit college course = 5-credit high school course).
- Course and grade are listed on student's transcript.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.

All fees and any necessary transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

**Option II: High School Course Work Taken Outside SBHS for Credit (NOT online)
Grades 10, 11, 12**

Students may complete high school course work in an academic setting other than SBHS or during the SBHS Summer Institute. The provider of this off-site coursework must be accredited.

A Course of Study from the accredited institution must be attached to the application.

<p>Purpose: Taking high school courses at a site other than SBHS enables a student to take courses that are not currently offered at the high school. Students may also take courses in which they must recover credits.</p> <p>Proof of Experience: course of study, transcript</p> <p>Assessment: The student must achieve the mastery score established by the department supervisor in the off-site course.</p> <p>Grading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade is recorded.• Credits are counted toward graduation requirements (3-credit college course = 5-credit high school course).• Course and grade are listed on student’s transcript.• Grade is not included in the GPA. <p>All fees and any necessary transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.</p>
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**Option II: Independent Study at SBHS
Grades 11-12**

The Independent Study Program is available for those students who are looking to do in-depth study beyond the SBHS course offerings or have a desire to fulfill a course need that is not available in the current SBHS curriculum. An Independent Study may be content-based or be an interdisciplinary/theme-based project.

An Independent Study may not replace a course that is offered in the current SBHS curriculum unless there is an irresolvable scheduling conflict. A maximum of 5 independent study credits may be attempted each year.

<p>Purpose: The Independent Study option has been created for two reasons: (1) To allow for the student who has exhausted existing courses to complete more advanced or intense study in a given area; and (2) To respond to a scheduling conflict which precludes the student taking a course critical to his/her educational plan.</p> <p>Note: Students may not use an Independent Study to extend the work they are already doing in a regularly scheduled course. Independent Study is NOT designed as a replacement option for a dropped course.</p> <p>Requirement: The Independent Study Addenda must accompany the Option II Application. (Application available online.)</p> <p>Grading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approved Independent Study courses will receive grades. Grades are not weighted.• Each Independent Study will appear on report cards and transcripts.• The deadlines and penalties for dropping an Independent Study are the same as for any other on-site course.• Grades will be included in the GPA. <p>Assessment/Proof of Experience: As outlined in the Independent Study application.</p> <p>Note: Independent Studies that are software-based have been identified by the NCAA Eligibility Center as nontraditional courses, and as such, must meet guidelines in order to be used for college-bound student-athletes who are planning to attend an NCAA Division I college or university. Refer to information in the section on Application Process. Students must make sure they are checking and meeting NCAA guidelines.</p>
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Option II: Music Help and Access Program (Music HAP)

Grade 9

Students who take Music HAP in lieu of regular Help and Access Period may apply for 5 Option II credits. This option is a Directed Study as students work under the “direct” supervision of a music teacher. Students are required to attend all classes in order to receive credit. No application is needed for a Music HAP.

Purpose: The Music HAP enables the student who is interested in music as a pathway to a vocation or an avocation to pursue music study in lieu of a standard HAP.

Expectation: A student who is in Music HAP must complete the work and meet the terms and conditions of the Music HAP teacher in order to be awarded credit. If he/she does not complete the required work, the course is recorded in the student’s record as a regular HAP. Mandatory attendance required.

Application: There is a separate Music HAP application that must be submitted. Students’ current music teachers will be able to assist with the group application.

Grading:

- Music HAP will receive traditional grades. Grades are not weighted.
- Grades will appear on report cards and transcripts.
- Grades will be included in the GPA.

Assessment/Proof of Experience: As determined by the Music HAP teacher and Department Supervisor.

Option II: Private Music Study in Instruments NOT Offered at South Brunswick High School

Grades 10, 11, 12

Students who are engaged in advanced private music study in an instrument not currently offered at the high school may apply for course credit on a semester (2.5 credit) or full year (5 credit) basis. This option may replace elective credits or fine arts credits.

Note: This study must take place at an accredited institution.

Purpose: This is sustained study of one instrument for students at the advanced level. It includes learning and practice time—and perhaps preparation and performance time as well depending on the instrument.

Requirement: The student must provide a course of study from the accredited institution. The student must engage in both Pre- and Post- jury Assessments as directed by the music supervisor. The pre-jury assessment must be video and/or audio recorded for comparison purposes. The student must make arrangements for this. A written reflection for both pre and post study is also required.

Note: There is a pre jury fee of \$50. There is also a post jury fee of \$50.

Assessment/Proof of Experience: Transcript, Activity/Time Log, and Post-jury Assessment with the Music Supervisor and written reflections (pre/post)

Grading:

- Pass (P) or Fail (F) grade is awarded.
- Course is listed on student’s transcript.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements (2.5 credits for 67.5 hours; 5 credits for 135 hours)

All participation fees are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Option II: James Kimple Center Directed Study Grades 10, 11, 12

Similar to an independent study, the Directed Study option is available for students enrolled in JKC who may need a concentrated study in areas that are offered in SBHS as well as in course areas that are not available in the current SBHS program of study. The Study may be completed on-site, off-site, or online. There is “direct” supervision during the study that is provided by a staff member. The supervisor and chairperson determine the total number of credits that may be attempted each year in Directed Study.

Purpose: The Directed Study option enables the student to meet one or more of the following goals

- (1) Earn graduation credits in an alternative setting or compacted time structure;
- (2) Recover credit for a failed course;
- (3) Respond to a scheduling conflict which precludes the student taking a course critical to the educational plan;
- (4) Promote independence while providing a guide on the side;
- (5) Increase academic success; and/or
- (6) Ensure smooth transition to post-secondary life and careers.

Requirement: An Individualized Program Plan is required. This is developed jointly between student, counselors, teachers, JKC supervisor/chair, and parent. All plans must be approved by the Principal and Assistant Superintendent. ***This is the only Option II to which the due dates and timeline for application do not apply.***

Grading:

- Courses may receive grades or pass/fail depending on the agreement with the supervisor.
- Courses will appear on report cards and transcripts.
- The deadlines and penalties for dropping a Directed Study are the same as for any other on-site course.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements and grades are included in the GPA.

Assessment/Proof of Experience. As determined by the Supervisor/Chairperson and outlined in AIPP.

Option II: Online or Distance Learning Grades 10-12

Online or Distance Learning courses may be taken from an accredited institution. A Course of Study from the accredited institution must be attached to the application.

Purpose: Taking online courses enables a student to take courses that are not currently offered at the high school, to recover credits, or to advance a course level. Note: Core Lab Science courses are excluded as online options.

Requirement: If a proctor is required for the requested course, SBHS applicants must secure an eligible proctor from the list of SBHS Teacher Proctors (available in the Guidance Department) prior to submitting their application.

Proof of Experience: course of study, transcript, final exam

Assessment: If a HS course for advancement, students will need to successfully pass the course with an 85% and take the SBHS final exam/assessment and achieve a mastery score. For all other courses (high school or college level), students will need to successfully pass the End-of-Course assessment provided by the accredited institution.

Note: A Group Proctor fee of \$10 will be assessed.

All course and proctor fees are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Grading:

- Grade is recorded.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements.
- Course and grade are listed on student’s transcript.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.

Note: These types of courses have been identified by the NCAA Eligibility Center as nontraditional courses, and as such, must meet guidelines in order to be used for college-bound student-athletes who are planning to attend an NCAA Division I college or university. Refer to further information in the section on Application Process.

Option II: Study Abroad
Grades 11, 12

Students may study abroad and earn credits by participating in an approved and accredited program of study. The counselor and supervisor/chairperson determine the total number of credits that may be earned. This determination will be based on course correlation with the SBHS Program of Studies. (NOTE: SBHS does not enroll exchange students.)

Purpose: A Study Abroad is an intercultural experience that enables students to continue their academic studies while learning about another country’s culture and society while gaining new perspective on their own county.

Proof of Experience: transcript

Assessment: The student must achieve course mastery scores as established by the student’s “exchanged” school.

Grading: This will be determined by the counselor in consultation with the counselors in the school in which the student will be “exchanging” courses.

All fees and any necessary transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Option II: Physical Education Athletic Participation
Grades 11-12

Student-athletes may earn marking period credits toward their PE requirement by participating in South Brunswick varsity athletic programs as recognized by the NJ State Interstate Athletic Association (NJSIAA) as well as the Competitive Cheerleading Team, Dance Team, Winter Guard, and Marching Band.

Purpose: This is a “directed study” as student-athletes participate in athletics at the advanced level (learning, practicing, preparing and competing) under the direction of their coaches/advisors. Students may earn 1.25 credits per athletic program and can earn up to a total of 3.75 credits per year.

Notes: A student may choose to receive credit but still participate in PE. Students who apply for this option and wish to bypass may be placed into HAP during the bypassed PE marking period(s).

Credit Requirement: Students must complete one marking period of health education per year at SBHS.

Junior Credits

Marking Period 1- Fall Season (1.25 credits)

Marking Period 2- Health FOR JUNIORS (1.25 credits) – May not be bypassed.

Marking Period 3- Winter Season (1.25 credits)

Marking Period 4- Spring Season (1.25 credits)

Senior Credits

Marking Period 1- Fall Season (1.25 credits)

Marking Period 2- Winter Season (1.25 credits)

Marking Period 3- Spring Season (1.25 credits)

Marking Period 4- Health FOR SENIORS (1.25 credits) – May not be bypassed.

Notes:

Medical: Excuses due to injury will be handled as they are during the traditional PE program.

Assessment/Proof of Experience: Successful completion of a season as verified by the head coach or advisor.

Grading:

- Pass (P) or Fail (F) grade is awarded.
- Course is listed on student’s transcript.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements. Only a completed season will count for credit.
- The deadlines and penalties for dropping out are the same as for any other course.

All participation fees are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Student must report to their Physical Education class until they are notified by the Athletic Director that they have made the team.

The PE Option II Application Addenda **must** be turned in to the student's scheduled PE teacher on the first day of PE class. If this does not happen, the student remains enrolled in the regular PE class. The student is responsible for and **must** turn in the signed PE addenda at the end of the marking period to his/her PE teacher in order to be awarded credit.

Option II: World Language Demonstration of Proficiency for Heritage Speakers³ **Grades 9, 10, 11, 12**

A student who is a native or heritage speaker of a language can meet the **one-year** State requirement for world language through "demonstration of proficiency." The supervisor determines proficiency through testing, interview and/or other assessments. Note: The student must take a second year of **the same** language in order to meet the two-year SBHS requirement.

Purpose: With demonstration of proficiency, native speakers may bypass the one-year State requirement.

Exceptions: ELL students who demonstrate proficiency in their native language can be exempt. ELL students who take an additional English or an ELL class may use that second English class to fulfill the requirement.

Assessment: Native speaking students must pass a written and oral proficiency assessment administered by a state approved assessor. The supervisor will determine which assessment is most appropriate from the following: the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), the Standards-based Assessment and Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP), the Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI), and/or a South Brunswick-designed assessment. Upon passing, students are awarded world language credits counting towards graduation.

Grading:

- Pass (P) or Fail (F) grade is awarded.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements.
- Course is listed on student's transcript.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.

All fees associated with the proficiency assessment are the responsibility of the parent /guardian.

Option II: World Language Programs Not Taught in SBHS **Grades 9, 10, 11, 12**

Students may receive instruction in, and graduation credit for, a world language not taught during the school year in the high school. The languages currently being taught in SBHS are French, Spanish and Latin.

Purpose: Learning another language provides the opportunity for one to experience the heritage and context of another culture from within. This option enables students to study languages not currently offered in the SBHS program of studies.

Proof of Experience: course of study, transcript, and end-of-course assessment results

Assessment: In addition to passing the course, the student must also achieve proficiency on a state approved proficiency assessment. Approved tests include the following: the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), the Standards-based Assessment and Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP), the Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI).

The student must achieve the "novice-high" level as put forth the by American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language (ACTFL).

³ **World Language Note-** While the State requires 5 credits (one year) of world language and South Brunswick requires 10 credits (two years), colleges strongly recommend 3 or 4 years of prolonged world language study.

Grading:

- Pass (P) or Fail (F) grade is awarded.
- Credits are counted toward graduation requirements.
- Course is listed on student's transcript.
- Grade is not included in the GPA.

All fees associated with the course and the proficiency assessment are the responsibility of the parent /guardian.

STEPS TO APPROVAL

Eligibility (with NO exceptions)

Option II opportunities only apply to the specified grade levels.

Option II only occurs after 8th grade. Summer experiences following the completion of 8th grade qualify.

Option II applicants must meet all published dates and deadlines.

Option II opportunities must be pre-approved.

Applications must have required signatures.

Application Process

Students who plan on pursuing credits outside the traditional SBHS program must complete the Option II Application online to be approved by **Principal's Credit Committee**. Application forms are available online at www.sbschools.org. The Principal's Committee will review the application and make a decision based on the student's rationale and the criteria outlined.

Deadlines

If your proposed course work will take place in:	Your application is due on:	You will be notified by:	You must submit your proof of experience by:
Outside Summer Course Work	March 1	April 1	August 15
School Year	March 1	April 1	June 15
First Semester	March 1	April 1	January 15
Second Semester	October 1	November 1	June 15
Quarter 1 PE for 11 th & 12 th	June 1	September 15	November 15
Quarter 2 PE for 11 th & 12 th	October 1	December 1	January 15
Quarter 3 PE for 11 th & 12 th	January 1	March 15	April 14
Quarter 4 PE for 11 th & 12 th	March 1	April 1	June 15

Procedures

1. The student completes the online application, supplies their counselor with any additional information that will assist the committee in making a decision, obtains all required signatures, when applicable.
2. The counselor reviews the online application with student and if all in order, forwards to the supervisor.
3. Once approved by supervisor, the application is forwarded to the principal for final approval.
4. The principal examines the application based on the student's rationale and the criteria outlined in the instructions.
5. Upon final approval, the student/parent and/or guardian will receive an email advising of decision. A student may appeal the decision.
6. If approved, the student completes the work during the time specified above. The student arranges with the department supervisor/chair for completion of the final assessment (as applicable). Finally, the student provides the counselor with the proof of experience by the dates indicated.

Awarding of Credit

Each Option II opportunity has a final assessment, documentation of participation, presentation, interview and/or end-of-course final exam.

- If the student successfully passes the assessment and/or successfully meets the assessment requirements by the required dates, the student is awarded credit.
- If it is determined that the student has not met the minimum proficiencies via the final assessment or proof of experience, credit is not awarded.

- **Option II: Advancing a Course Level**

If a student takes an off-site or online course for the purpose of advancement, and receives a transcript upon completion indicating a passing grade of 85% with a transcript indicating course completion from an approved and accredited institution, then the following applies:

If the student passes the SBHS final assessment, the student is awarded credit and the student may advance a course level.

If the student does not pass the SBHS assessment and is determined not to have met the minimum proficiencies, credit WILL NOT be awarded and the student WILL NOT advance a course level in a given sequence.

Proctors for Online Courses

Many “online” high schools require that the applicant identify a proctor who agrees to supervise examinations and is responsible for maintaining a secure testing environment. If a proctor is required, then the following may apply.

- Prior to submitting the Option II application, the student must secure a proctor from the list of SBHS teacher-proctors. This list is available in the Guidance Office.
- A student must receive the teacher-proctor’s permission before designating him or her as the proctor.
- A proctor must be a certified teacher or education professional from the SBHS list.
- The student applicant is responsible for paying the proctor. The fee for proctoring is \$50.
- Note: The proctor may be required to complete a proctor certification form online and agree to your online high school’s policies and procedures.

Course Completion

It is expected that each Option II opportunity will be completed during the time specified. Deadlines are firm.

Exiting Option II

When the Option II coursework is completed, the student exits the program in the following manner.

- The counselor forwards notice of completion to the Registrar for official credit awarding by the principal and input into the student’s records.
- The Registrar provides final copies for the student’s cumulative file, the data processing manager, and the student’s counselor.

Core Curriculum Content Standards: Important URLs

Students applying for Option II will need to align requests with the State standards available at the New Jersey Department of Education website: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/>

National College Athletics Association (NCAA) Eligibility Information

The rules regarding software-based credit recovery, virtual, online, independent study and correspondence courses changed effective August 2010. These types of courses, which are identified by the NCAA Eligibility Center as nontraditional courses, must meet new guidelines in order to be used for college-bound student-athletes who are planning to attend an NCAA Division I college or university.

The rule change was enacted to ensure that acceptable nontraditional courses provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their work was completed in a manner consistent with the intent and design of the core-course curriculum requirements. This legislation will allow the NCAA Eligibility Center to determine which courses and institutions are acceptable to satisfy initial-eligibility standards with the ultimate goal of ensuring that prospective student-athletes are enrolled in quality courses that satisfy the intent of the core-curriculum requirements and prepare prospective student-athlete for college academic work.

Nontraditional courses must meet the following:

- Courses that are taught through distance learning, online, credit recovery, etc. need to be comparable in length, content and rigor to courses taught in a traditional classroom setting. Students may not skip lessons or test out of modules. The course must be four-year college preparatory.
- All courses must include ongoing access between the instructor and student, as well as regular interaction for purposes of teaching, evaluating and providing assistance. This may include, for example, exchanging of e-mails between the student and teacher, feedback on assignments, and the opportunity for the teacher to engage the student in individual instruction.
- Any course taken must have a defined time period for completion. For example, it should be clear whether the course is meant to be taken for an entire semester or during a more condensed time frame, such as six weeks, etc.
- Nontraditional courses should be clearly identified as such on the high school transcript.
- **NOTE: ALL COURSES TAKEN MUST BE APPROVED BY NCAA. ALL INSTITUTIONS MUST BE APPROVED BY NCAA.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What does Alternate Path (Option II) mean?

The traditional way that students earn credit for a high school course is the one with which we are all familiar: they register for a course offered by the school; attend the required number of classes per quarter, semester, or year; and earn a passing cumulative grade on all required course work and assessments. In addition to this traditional option, SBHS offers students options for earning credit in non-traditional ways.

2. What steps must I take to apply for Option II?

Planning for the experience should always begin with your counselor. It is important to ensure that the course work you wish to complete will complement the work you do at SBHS. You will need to complete the Option II application, which is available online, and then schedule an appointment to meet with the South Brunswick department supervisor or chair (if this is required) for the course work you are considering. The supervisor will review your proposed curriculum and discuss what credit will be offered to you, as well as any specific requirements such as the completion of an exit exam or performance assessment. If you are planning an independent study, you will need to have an Independent Study Addenda prepared for the supervisor's review and the name of the teacher/advisor who will oversee your study. After you meet with the department supervisor, your completed forms should be turned in to your counselor by the appropriate due date. Remember that in some cases it will be necessary to arrange for a proctor to oversee your course work.

3. If my course requires a proctor, how do I get one? How much does this cost and who pays the proctor?

You and your parents are responsible for obtaining and paying a teacher to serve as your proctor for the on-line course. The proctor may be a certified teacher at South Brunswick; he/she cannot be a relative or your counselor. Arranging for the proctor is your responsibility. The cost is as follows: \$40 per hour for individual teacher proctors; \$10 per hour for a Group Proctoring situation; and \$50 for a pre/post jury assessment of music.

4. If I failed a course, can I make it up through Option II?

Yes. If you fail a course, you may "recover credit" via a summer course including those offered in the SBHS Virtual Summer School online program or participation in High School Course Work Taken Outside SBHS for Credit or an Online/Distance Learning Course. See your counselor regarding registration.

5. Are there deadlines for submitting an Option II application? Yes, refer to the deadlines dates in the Option II Guidebook.

6. If the application is late, will it be considered? No late applications will be considered.

7. Can I get credit for a course without prior approval from the Principal's Credit Committee? No.

8. How long will it take to get a response from the Principal's Credit Committee?

You will be notified approximately one month from the application due date.

9. Can Option II be used to advance a level or prepare for early graduation?

Yes. In order to receive credit for advancing a level or preparing for early exit and graduation, the course must meet the most current standards, as well as those standards set by South Brunswick.

10. Do departments require specific exit assessments?

In some cases, there is a final assessment. Final assessments will be discussed and determined when you meet with the department supervisor. See #3 above as proctoring fees may be involved.

11. What kinds of courses are not approved?

Personal enrichment courses that do not align with core curriculum or that have no curriculum associated with them are examples of courses not approved.

12. How will my grade be determined? Will my grade count in my GPA?

See the grading policies listed for each option in the Option II Guidebook under “What Counts.”

13. How many Option II courses can I take during my high school career?

Some of the options have limits in terms of grade and number. For example, in the case of independent study, there is a limit of five credits per year and it can only be taken in 11th or 12th grade. Refer to the “What Counts” section for further detail about each option. Generally speaking, students are limited to two Option II experiences per school year or the equivalent of 10 credits. A student may appeal to the principal for an exemption to this limit.

14. What will appear on my transcript after I complete an Option II course?

The name of course, institution and appropriate credits will be recorded on the South Brunswick transcript for those students approved for alternative course work.

15. Is there a time limit for Option II work to be completed?

Yes, refer to the deadlines dates in the Option II Guidebook.

16. What do colleges think of Option II?

The top factors in the college admission decision are: grades in traditional college preparatory courses (with extra weight given to Honors and AP courses), admission test scores and overall grades. Colleges will view each Option II on its own merit, along with the rationale for taking the experience; there are varying degrees of opinion on the rigor of distance learning courses.

Independent Study

17. How do I get an advisor for Independent Study?

If you are planning an independent study, arranging for the advisor is your responsibility. A South Brunswick HS certified faculty member must serve as the advisor. You will need to personally contact and make an appointment to meet with a teacher in your field of study to discuss the work to be completed, grading procedure, credits to be awarded and time to be allotted. Once you have secured an advisor you will need to complete the independent study section of the Option II application. Make sure you have obtained all required signatures on the application.

18. What happens if I can't find a teacher to sponsor my Independent Study?

You will not be given approval to complete an independent study without an approved sponsor.

19. What forms do I need for Independent Study?

The independent study application must include two things:

Option II application (completed online)

Independent Study Addenda

All plans for the independent study must be discussed with your counselor. The online application and addenda must be received within the stated timelines and all required signatures must be obtained.

22. Can I take a regular existing class at SBHS as an Independent Study?

Yes, but only if there is an irresolvable scheduling conflict.