

**Credit Flexibility—A Pathway to Graduation:
Test-Out Development and Implementation
Audio Transcription**

**Tuesday, March 29, 2011
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Tom Rutan: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Credit flexibility is part of Senate Bill 311, the Ohio Core, which provides opportunities for students to earn credits in nontraditional ways. It allows for both advanced work and credit recovery. It pertains only to high school credit, only for high school students, or those who have high school status through your acceleration policy. There's no limit to the kind of credit you can earn, nor is there a limit on the number of credits that can be earned. Credits can be mixed between core academic and vocational/career education. It can be traditional or it can be part of educational options. There are some limitations, however, that you need to be sensitive to when it comes to NCAA Division I scholar athletes.

Candidly, credit flexibility includes all the standard educational options, plus the test-out consideration. Add in post-secondary enrollment options (PSEO), add in dual enrollment, and you have where we are today with the test-out option. It provides many opportunities for students through choice, through customized educational opportunities, and acknowledges their specific interest in core academic areas. It promotes a different way of accessing content and engages greater ownership on the part of the student. It matches learning to acceleration and capacity.

The test-out development is somewhat new and different to credit flexibility because this provides an opportunity for a student to test out or in other ways demonstrate mastery through a series of assessments. It deals specifically with content and, I want to clarify right up front, everything is on the table. All content areas can be tested out, and anything is accessible. The question that you need to ask is, when your assessment instrument is created, does it proportionately answer the questions that are covered in the course of study, all the points in the course of study? What is the scope and sequence, what is the rigor? Is it a fair assessment of the student's mastery of the information? Everyone still needs to determine what the grade is. So when you use, for instance, the AP test, and we'll touch more on that in a moment, even though you score a three, four, or five, the local district still has to determine whether or not that's a C, B, or an A.

Can commercial products be used? Absolutely, commercial products can be used and you're going to hear from someone later that's going to talk about the commercial opportunities. Students can earn credit through demonstration of

mastery, through traditional classroom ways, or through the testing out or pursuing different educational options. The advanced placement exams are unique to the test-out option. You can use advanced placement providing the following is true. First and foremost, a credit flexibility plan must be developed prior to the student taking the test that specifies which test will be administered, for what credit, and what score is required for the grade. Secondly, it must be administered in May when all the other AP tests nationwide are administered. Third, the results don't come back until July. Finally, for it to be entered on the transcript as advanced placement, it must be a three, four, or five, otherwise it just goes on as a core academic subject.

Who administers the test? The local school district, the teacher of record will determine the award. Be specifically sensitive to core academic subjects, because those require teachers of record to have HQT; in other words, they're highly qualified. Otherwise, you need a credentialed educator to serve as the teacher of record. The local plan requirements are designed locally by the inception of the program. Students can earn credit by completing the courses, by testing out, or pursuing the educational options.

I want to introduce our presenters briefly at this time and ask each to give just a very brief overview of their area and how they approach it. Our first presenter is Ryan Wertz, and he is our consultant for world languages. We're going to ask Ryan to comment briefly on how world languages approach testing out.

Ryan Wertz: Good afternoon to everyone. I can tell you that in the field of world languages, we've been waiting for a good long time to have this option to grant our students flexible credit for the proficiency that they exhibit in their various languages. We know, for a fact, that many kids bring to the classroom language skills that were gained in very nontraditional, non-classroom sorts of ways. Up until now, we've been very, very limited in our ability to actually give them credit for those skills.

So I'd like to plant the seed first of all, with world languages, that we're largely talking about students who have some heritage language background. They have some native ability to speak another language. Primarily, these students are who we're considering when we're talking about credit flexibility. Of course, that's not to say that we don't have other learners who are able to gain proficiency in a language via some nontraditional ways. I'm also talking about those students. But for the vast majority of you, we're talking about granting credit to students who bring some type of language proficiency to the classroom with them that was gained in their life outside of school.

A few more seeds of thought are some essential questions for you to ponder. The first question I've already alluded to - Is the student a heritage or non-heritage user of the language? This is important because heritage speakers and non-heritage users of the language will exhibit different strengths and weaknesses.

Secondly, what's the difficulty level of the language being considered for credit flexibility? You need to understand that not all languages are the same. In our profession, languages are categorized by four different and very distinct levels of difficulty. The languages that most of your students would traditionally be taking in the classroom, for example Spanish or French, are considered to be level one difficulty languages. But more recently, we have some pretty cool languages coming into play. We have schools that are now offering languages like Arabic or Mandarin Chinese or even Parsee or Hindi, which fall in the level three or four difficulty range, and will lend some very different assessment results.

Another point for consideration, what is or perhaps what was the nature of the language learning experience? For example, is the student under consideration for credit flexibility a heritage speaker of the language who uses that language daily at home with native speaking family members? Or, is the student someone who spent a year abroad immersed in the language while living with a native speaking host family and perhaps taking content courses in the language? Or, did the student use the language in a more limited fashion, let's say while taking an online course or perhaps maybe using a commercially available language learning product like Berlitz or Rosetta Stone software program? Time and intensity will directly affect the student's ability to demonstrate language proficiency on task-based performance assessment. That's the key for granting credit flexibility with world languages. We want the assessments that are given to be task-based and performance-based.

Another point for consideration, can the student demonstrate both oral and literacy skills in language? In other words, can they not only understand the language when it's spoken to them and respond in oral fashion, but do they also have literacy skills? Are they able to read the language and are they able to express themselves in writing in the language? We want to make sure we're testing all four of those areas. Are you prepared to grant partial credit when a student is only able to demonstrate oral or literacy skills, but not both sets of skills? Another point of consideration, when you go to assess the student, will the assessment truly be a performance-based measurement of that student's proficiency or is your intention to use an old-fashioned measurement that really looks at only vocabulary and grammar knowledge? The reason I bring that point up, those are still the types of assessments that are being used in many foreign language classrooms. We want the assessments that you use to actually render some useful information in terms of the students overall proficiency, not their ability to conjugate verbs, fill in blanks, or answer questions. So the assessment needs to cover all four of the language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Finally, another point of consideration to think about: what is the specific number of credits that your district is prepared to award for different levels of demonstrated proficiency? Here at ODE, we cannot tell you how many credits that you should award based on varying levels of proficiency. That has been very

much left in the hands of local districts to decide under language of Senate Bill 311.

I have raised a lot of questions and I've given you a lot of food for thought. I am happy to say that we do provide a good amount of guidance for world languages on the ODE website. If you go to our homepage, you will see in the bottom right hand corner a link that says Credit Flexibility. If you click on that, it will take you to our Credit Flexibility webpage and you'll see another link there for [Credit Flexibility Guidance Documents](#). If you go to that Credit Flexibility guidance documents link, about two-thirds of the way down the page you're going to see a section titled Implementation Guidance and you'll see world languages listed as the first area of focus. There are three documents that provide you with all kinds of information related to these points of consideration that I raised for you to think about. The first document is called [Credit Flexibility and World Languages](#). The second document is [Supporting Data-Proficiency and Course Credit](#), which can help you determine how much credit to award the student. The third document is a tutorial titled [Language Proficiency](#), and shows how to measure that.

Tom Rutan: Our next speaker is Michael Morbitzer, from Hamilton Township schools. Michael heads up the credit flexibility program and this is a general discussion about the testing-out option for an entire school, not a particular content subject.

Michael Morbitzer: It's my pleasure being here with you today representing Hamilton Township High School. About two years ago in spring 2009, our director of teaching and learning, Dr. Susan Witten, was patient with me as she gave me just a few minutes to reflect on what she was telling me about credit flexibility. It seemed to me initially an impossible task. Credit flexibility had the potential, I thought, to dramatically change everything about our daily operations. I took a deep breath, then I assured Dr. Witten that working throughout the next year, as hard as I could, I could have policies and procedures ready for the 2010 school year. I was quite proud of myself. That's when Dr. Witten smiled and said: "No, Mike, our board has to approve our plan this fall."

After one more deep breath, I realized that I couldn't do it alone. I needed our entire high school staff. During the 2009-2010 school year, we devoted each professional development opportunity, including monthly staff meetings and weekly department curriculum meetings, to credit flexibility. We used our existing assessment system, where departments created our option B - tests that were quite similar to our final exams. We designed an interactive portfolio that we use to communicate with students who to attend education options, that we call option C. I then discussed credit flexibility and presented it to all our 9th-, 10th-, and 11th-grade students in separate periods in our auditorium. They were all very interested and stayed afterwards to ask many questions.

From those meetings, we had 74 of our 800 students sign up for our test-out option. No one signed up for our option C, the educational option. Nine students

passed an option B assessment, but only four of the nine elected to keep that credit they earned. They enrolled in the traditional route instead. During this year, one student has been attempting the option C portfolio project. She is progressing well.

For next year, 65 students have signed up for credit flexibility in 19 courses. We have three students who have signed up for the option C portfolio. In short, credit flexibility has now dramatically changed our daily operations. We see it as an amazing opportunity to provide some of our students exactly what they need. We serve our students best when we can accelerate their learning, offer challenging ways for them to demonstrate their skills and abilities, and ensure we are serving their needs. Students will always need us. The deep reality is that we are now recognizing exactly how we are needed. We in Hamilton Township really look forward to hearing from anyone who has had any difficulty whatsoever implementing credit flexibility.

Tom Rutan: Our third guest presenters are Jodi Palmer and Mike Schaefer from Upper Arlington Schools. They're dealing with one of the most problematic issues we've encountered with credit flexibility this year, which is physical education. A lot of students want to access physical education in nontraditional ways and testing out has been a real challenge.

Mike Schaefer: Good afternoon and thank you for your time this afternoon. What I'm going to specifically address are the test-out options for credit flexibility at Upper Arlington High School in terms of our Wellness Department. Our Wellness Department makes up our physical education and health teachers. When a student elects to go the credit flexibility route in the proficiency option or the test-out option, they have three parts that they have to complete.

The first part is a written portfolio, which is very course specific. Some of the resources are available to you online, where you'll see a walking for fitness course, you see a sports for life course, lifeguarding. These are some of the courses that we offer. So when a student elects to test out, let's say they pick the walking for fitness option, they're going to receive that document, which explains the process and all the requirements that they will need to complete in order to test out. The written portfolio is addressed in that option. They come on test day and on test day they would have a Fitness Gram fitness test. Fitness Gram is a district wide assessment that we use from kindergarten through the high school level.

We test them in six areas that cover the five fitness components. Again, any questions specifically on these I can address later. But we go through that battery of physical fitness tests. Students have to pass four out of six of those tests in order to pass that part of the proficiency. If they do not pass that part of the proficiency, their test day is done. If they pass four or more of the six, they move on to the written exam.

The written exam is course specific. Going back to the example of the walking for fitness course, students have a specific written test that covers material that we teach in the walking for fitness class. They take that written test and that would be their test day. After their test day is over, we as a staff grade their written examination and their portfolio. They have to achieve a 60% or better on their written exam and on their portfolio in order to pass the test, in order to test out of the option. The 60% was determined because 60% is our lowest passing grade in our school district based on our school scale. Again, if you have any other specific questions, I'd be happy to answer.

Tom Rutan: Thank you very much, Mike and Ryan. Jodi was there in silence, nodding approval of what Michael was saying. We'll take some live Q&A at this time. Ryan Wertz already has a question that was emailed into him. So we'll start with Ryan.

Ryan Wertz: Thanks, Tom. The question is: "*Is test out available for courses not offered by the school?*"

You could imagine for example that you have a student at your school who has, either through a heritage background or through a study abroad experience, learned Arabic. Arabic is not a world language course that's offered by your district. You certainly do have the option of making credit flexibility available to that student. If you go to those guidance documents on the ODE webpage and you click on that first guidance document under world languages, you'll see that two pages of that document list all of the existing world language assessments that we know to be nationally valid and have reliable instruments of world language assessment.

They are divided by age level, so there are assessments for testing younger children and then there is a whole variety of assessments for testing older learners, middle school, high school and beyond. For example, you might look to see which of those assessments specifically might be used for Arabic. You might come across in that list The American Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages oral proficiency interview and writing proficiency test. These are two of the more well known nationally valid and reliable assessments for which 50 different languages can be tested. I know Arabic to be one of those. Basically, any language that you might come across in the American classroom is probably tested via the oral proficiency and writing proficiency interviews and tests.

There are other assessments. One of the most common is actually an online and a very inexpensive option. It's a standards-based measurement of proficiency, also known as the stamp test. It's available for Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. Currently under development and/or being piloted are Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, Persian, Swahili, Turkish, and Yoruba. I know they will be adding more languages down the road.

I also want to point out one assessment that's very much an Ohio-grown assessment. That is the Ohio State University's collaborative articulation and assessment project assessment measures, which are currently offered in French, German and Spanish here in Ohio. Chinese is currently under development and will be offered tentatively during the 2011-2012 school year. So, with regard to this question, if you have languages that students are seeking credit for that are not offered, obviously you'll want to put your foreign language staff members to work. Even though it might not be a language that they speak or assess themselves, they can certainly guide the process for that student and can help the district with the assessment of that particular language.

Ryan Wertz: Another question is: "*Who administers and grades if that's not a language that the teacher of record at the school teaches?*"

We certainly would encourage you to contact any number of local universities or colleges here in Ohio. You're going to very easily come across someone who does teach or speak that language and who is qualified to assess that student's proficiency. That's certainly an option. Then also, if you do use some of these recommended language assessments, the raw information or the raw data that's provided by those assessors can then be used in conjunction with the credit guidance documents that we've provided. Based on the level of proficiency exhibited by the assessment, the district can then use our guidance documents to make a determination of how much credit might be awarded based on the student's actual level of proficiency in the language as indicated by those assessments.

Mike Schaefer: A question I received: "*Is there a deadline to request the test-out option?*" For Upper Arlington High School, we have two testing periods. We did one in December, about a week before when we did our final exam. Those students had to be registered for that by early November. I want to say it was a November 1 deadline. We have an online registration system where students go in and can complete that registration form. If they do not meet that deadline, then the registration still holds valid, they just get put into the next testing cycle, which is the week after school is out. I think it's the second week in June this year. So those are our two timelines for tests and how we do it. If they don't meet the one deadline, they just get pushed towards the next test date.

Mike Morbitzer: I have a question that's my pleasure to address: "*Do students have to live with the grade they get?*"

An interesting quick story about how we approach this. Last early June, it was our first testing date. We had a number of our eighth-graders attempting an English 9 exam and we set our performance standard at 80%. I looked around the room and I looked down the roster that I had. It didn't take me long to realize that we had in this room some very high achieving students; very driven, high

achieving students. These are the students who are going to eventually be at the top of their class their senior year, competing for that valedictorian spot, salutatorian spot. I realized then and there that these are students who are attempting something extraordinary. They're attempting to really demonstrate their skills beyond their classmates. It was then that it became apparent that we had to do something about that, because we were going to end up in a situation where we had a student who potentially could have gotten an A. The rest of them could have done very well and they could have finished that test with an 89%. That single decision that day, and that good performance by all those students, could have really decided in the four years what was going to become of their senior class.

I didn't think that was a fair thing to do to them, to lock them in for doing something above and beyond what all their other 8th-grade classmates were doing that day. So instead, here's what we've established. Students who achieve a score of 80% or better on a course of option B assessment may earn credit for the course. However, students who achieve the 80% mastery standard also have the option of foregoing the earned credit by declaring that they will attend a course for the duration of the semester or year as offered in attempt to achieve a higher score than the score achieved on that option B assessment.

So they will sit in a class for the entire year and work very hard to earn a higher score. There is a condition. Students who forego the earned option B credit for a course are cautioned that they later will not have the option of accepting the credit after declaring that they will attend a class or achieve credit by completing a different high school credit option. That way they make the decision that they will not accept the 89%, which while would have been a very good performance, it would have been a B. Again, these high achieving students could take the class with their classmates, potentially out perform their classmates and hopefully out perform their test-out score.

Tom Rutan: I want to comment on the deadline date to request the opportunity to test out of a course or, for that matter, the deadline date to declare your intention to seek a credit flexibility option. Set reasonable deadlines. I think setting a January deadline for the fall semester is a bit unreasonable. Be more reasonable. I know you want to do this for scheduling purposes as far as your staff allocations, but be reasonable when you work with students and parents with regard to deadlines both for the fall semester and for the second semester. Make those as reasonable as you possibly can.

We've got a couple questions with regard to who determines the course title and how do you get the teacher of record? First, if it's a course you're not offering, the student is taking a course, such as Mandarin Chinese online from a university, that university is going to set that course title. It's going to be Chinese 101 or it's going to be a Chinese credit. If you look at the guidance documents that we have

on our website, you'll see there's one that deals with teachers of record when you're dealing with an outside contractor (OC). When you deal with the outside contractor, the teacher of record is a non factor. However, be particularly sensitive when you use any of the core academic areas and those are found in No Child Left Behind. Use the guidance document on teacher of record. Those teachers must be highly qualified even in the case of testing out, because they're the ones doing the grading, they're the ones awarding the credit, even if they're not doing the instruction necessarily.

Someone asked for clarification about how you get credit flexibility subjects that you do not offer. Those can be in any content area beyond your program of studies with an outside contractor, a third-party provider as such, and that, by the way, is the topic of the April webinar. It's possible to do that by using the OC, the outside contractor to make that happen.

Mike S. I have a question about using a pass/fail option. At Upper Arlington High School students receive a grade, a percentage grade, let's say it's an 84%. If the student decides they do not like that grade, they can choose to have that be reflected on their grade card as a pass. They have the option after they receive their percentage score, whether to do it pass/fail. Obviously, if they fail they fail, that ends the discussion. But they do have the option to take the percentage grade or take it as a simple pass.

Tom Rutan: I know of another school district that does somewhat likewise where a student can take the assessment and maybe not get the score they wanted. They have to take the course for the rest of the year. They do not have that option available again in that area.

I do want to point out one thing, that the test-out option is not necessarily limited to a paper/pencil test. It's not 38 multiple choice questions, but rather it may be a series of tests, perhaps first semester, second semester, one every six weeks. It can be a battery of assessments. It can involve performance assessments, particularly in the areas such as foreign language where you have to be able to speak and listen and understand. Or, the arts where you have to be able to perform. Possibly even physical education where you have to be able to demonstrate your physical abilities. So don't limit your thinking to a paper/pencil test for the test-out option. Be sure to include that when you talk with students and parents as you're developing the test-out credit flexibility plan.

Mike Morbitzer: I want to address the teacher of record question. That's a very popular question it seems everywhere I go for all the teachers of school districts I talk with. I'm going to speak very deliberately about our policy because I think the wording is very helpful.

Grading the test-out assessments really is not different from our other assessments. The grading of a credit flexibility test during the school year is the

same for students already going through the traditional seat time route. It's completed during the usual school year by the teachers during their planning or conference period. These students already are enrolled in teacher's course, so it is natural that they assign the teacher to grade the assessment during that time, the contractual time. The teacher of record for a student who qualifies for a test-out or portfolio option shall be the teacher who otherwise would be assigned to the student if no credit flexibility option had been available at all.

A guidance counselor shall generate a schedule for the student in the same manner as had the student been new to the building and following the traditional option A route. The teacher assigned on that schedule is then responsible for being the teacher of record while departments would still work as teams to develop standard criteria for credit flexibility and to create the assessment. Finally, departments are encouraged to work together as teams to evaluate option B and option C efforts – the test out and educational option effort. Yet the teacher of record ultimately shall be responsible for evaluating both options of both the progress and the product.

In the event that another highly qualified teacher in the content area volunteers to assume the full teacher of record responsibility, then by all means a student may be reassigned to that volunteering teacher. So again, the way we look at it at Hamilton Township High School is that this hasn't been much above and beyond what we typically do for any of our students. The teacher of record hasn't been that much of a question for us. I'd be willing to share the specifics of the policy with anyone who inquires.

Tom Rutan: A question regarding the use of pass/fail with credit flexibility. I frequently will get that question sent to the Ohio Department of Education and the advice I give is approach pass/fail in the same way for credit flexibility that you would approach it for your traditional classroom setting.

If it's available for the traditional students, it ought to be available for the credit flexibility students. If not, then it probably shouldn't be available unless you have a unique situation. We talked earlier on how they can access pass/fail. The question then begs, how do colleges look at pass/fail? Quite frankly, different colleges look at it in different ways. I know we're moving toward the electronic transcript where we're going to be transferring the grade, whether it's an A, B, C, D, F or whether it's a P/F. Obviously, the P/F is not factored into the GPA. Some students like it that way.

Others will address the issue of what percentage is used for passing. Again, that is a local decision and sometimes it's even locally determined from content area to content area. Some core academic subjects may indicate that 80% is needed to demonstrate mastery. Another area, we heard one today, might have proficient at

60%, because that's what all the other students are held to. That is a locally determined decision.

Jodi Palmer: I haven't said much, but I do have a question here that I can hopefully enlighten some of you on. The question was: "*Did you work on the development of your test-out options on your own, or did you work with someone?*"

In Upper Arlington, each department met prior to last year when this all went into effect, to develop some guidelines as to what we were going to use. This was in all areas, not just physical education. Where I came in, because I am not a teacher at the high school level, I am the teacher leader. After that process was determined, then I met with our wellness department heads to talk about the things that were in our current curriculum because we just had a new curriculum approved. Together we came up with what the test-out options were going to look like for physical education. So that's how we did it. At the time, we were, I believe, one of the first schools that did credit flexibility. So we had no guidelines ourselves to follow. Everything we did we had to develop on our own. That was done through the high school department and me.

Tom Rutan: I have a question that came in on science. Someone wants to know how does test-out work for science labs? It would work in much the same way as your traditional students. When I just mentioned the fact that there may be performance assessment components through the test-out option, it could very well be that you're trying to test out of chemistry 1 or physics and there would be an associated lab that the student would have to fulfill.

As you know, the Ohio Core calls for inquiry-based instruction with laboratory experiences. So if all the other students are held accountable to perform a laboratory experiment, then the test-out students may well be held to that same standard. Feel free to craft that, but be very cautious and careful to communicate the expectation clearly up front when the credit flexibility plan is designed for the student. Make sure they know there will be labs. Similarly, if every student in school has to be able to demonstrate four different swimming strokes, the credit flexibility student may very well be called down to the auditorium to dive in and show us you can do it. That's certainly the performance-based part of the physical education plan.

Ryan Wertz: We have a question: *Are world language teachers HQT for any language or is it their HQT language specific? How can a teacher who doesn't know Chinese be considered an HQT teacher of record for purposes of signing off on a Chinese test-out?*

Language teachers are indeed HQT only specific to the language that they have their licensure in. However, with that said, world language teachers do hold a common understanding of how to interpret proficiency data as rendered by nationally valid and reliable assessments. If for an example, an outside national

assessment is used to evaluate a student's proficiency in the Chinese language, those scores, which are couched in terms of proficiency, will be sent to the teacher of record. The teacher of record can take that proficiency score, which might be intermediate low in speaking, intermediate mid in listening, novice high in reading and writing, and along with the guidance provided by the Ohio Department of Education and any applicable policies that have been developed at the local level, interpret that score, and grant credit based on all of that information. So even though that person isn't capable of perhaps producing a Chinese language test himself or herself, they can take the information rendered from a nationally recognized assessment and help the district to make a determination in terms of that particular student's proficiency.

Mike Schaefer: I have a question asking: "*Do you use credit flexibility for students with medical excuses or medical issues?*"

We handle any student with any medical issue the same as we would within the classroom. If they would need modifications or some other assistance provided for that proficiency option, we would provide that modification and deal with that on an individual basis. We have not had any specific instances of that yet, but like I said, we would make any modifications we would need to meet the needs of that student.

Tom Rutan: Along those same lines, for students with disabilities, regardless of the content area, who have an IEP, we advise to follow the language of the IEP. If there's an accommodation factored into the IEP and they wish to use credit flexibility whether it's the test-out option or any other credit flexibility option, be sensitive to the needs of the IEP and make sure that those accommodations are factored in.

Simply because a student has an IEP should not prevent access to the full range of opportunities provided under credit flexibility. The test-out option is, like I say, the new kid on the block. We had 150 schools last year request the waiver. The waiver, as far as we know, will not be available next year. Out of those 150 schools, 145 (all districts) requested a waiver on the test-out option. So that means everyone needs to be prepared and ready to move forward with testing out in fall 2011. Keep in mind, it covers any content area, not restricted to a specific few. It even covers content areas not necessarily covered in your program of studies, because that's the way the credit flexibility concept was developed.

When you use a third-party provider to access a course you do not offer, you've moved to the OC, the outside contractor, and the highly qualified factor for the teacher of record is no longer a consideration. Again, the webpage has a multitude of information available specifically under guidance documents. Take a look at those different guidance documents. There are two in particular that deal with physical education, because there's considerable confusion with physical education, most with regard to the waiver that some districts have adopted, and to the fact that sports does not equate to credit for phys ed. I hope everyone heard

that. Just because a student is playing interscholastic sports does not mean the student is generating his/her physical education credit. If the district has a waiver, you waive the credit. There's no credit awarded and the obligation goes away. But simply because you're a varsity athlete or an interscholastic athlete does not release the student from the obligation of taking physical education. That's been a big confusion.

Can you change or rethink the test-out option?

By the way you are saying this, I'm assuming you must mean the Ohio General Assembly. That's how credit flexibility became law through Senate Bill 311. If you have an assessment that you're using for the test-out option and for one reason or another you find that assessment instrument is not adequate, certainly you have the right to rethink it because each individual student plan is unique unto itself. It's not a cookie cutter approach where everybody does the same thing. Each student must be approached individually. There should be a collaboration between the student/parent and the school, teacher of record, counselor, administrator, as these are collaboratively developed. It is not a program sponsored by the school, but it's an opportunity accepted by the student and initiated by the student.

Patti Grey: We're coming to the close of our time that we've asked of you today. I want to let you know that this is the beginning of an ongoing discussion that we will continue to have and we're going to talk about a tool in a minute that you'll be able to use for that.

We post the PowerPoint and all materials that were discussed today on the credit flexibility page as soon as we can. We are going to take all the questions that you have offered during this time and develop a Q & A. To foster and to keep this discussion going, we are going to be introducing soon a tool that will allow you to talk 24/7, not that you all want to, but through an online tool called the Community of Practice. This forum will allow schools to share information, to ask questions, to share lessons learned, so know that, in addition to these Web conferences, we will be including other tools for you to use. Tom has one last question to answer.

Tom Rutan: There was a little confusion regarding the waiver. The credit flexibility waiver will probably not exist next year. That means a waiver to exempt schools from implementing all parts of the credit flexibility requirement. The physical education waiver is an entirely different law and it will continue in place until legislation changes that. So it is permissive legislation, districts who have approved a waiver for physical education credit requirement can continue to use it until told otherwise. Those are two different issues all together.

Patti Grey: Thank you Tom, the two Mikes, Ryan and Jodi for joining us this afternoon. Jen, do you have some closing remarks?

Jen Reed: Yes, I'd like to thank everyone again for joining us on today's event. As Patti mentioned, we will have an archive of the event on the Ohio Department of Education website, including the audio, the transcripts, the Q & A document developed and any of the handouts that were also used. At this time we are going to be sending you to a post-event survey. These surveys are very important. They help us understand your needs with credit flexibility as well as what you're looking for out of these Web conferences in this series. We hope you have a wonderful day and thank you again everyone for attending.