STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 20, 2015

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Norma Jean Sass
Deputy Superintendent, Education Services

SUBJECT: Section 5-O-B Project-Based Learning Option – 2015-16 Implementation Plan Available

According to Section 5-O-B of the 2015-16 Pupil Accounting Manual, a district must receive approval from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in cases where the district wishes to provide self-scheduled, project-based learning courses that have no online or computer-based component as part of a Seat Time Waiver (STW) program. While STWs have most frequently been used for 100 percent and blended online programs in the past, additional options exist for other non-traditional flexible learning opportunities and other flexible scheduling options based on student needs and strengths.

A district must present a plan for the approval of a self-scheduled, project-based learning course under Section 5-O-B to the intermediate school district auditor before submitting an implementation plan to the MDE. The implementation plan for the course must include provisions regarding how the district will satisfy the requirements for counting the pupil in membership.

The implementation plan for such self-scheduled, project-based learning is now available at http://www.techplan.org/seat-time-waivers. Implementation plans must be submitted by September 11, 2015, in order to be considered for MDE approval for the 2015-16 school year.

In order to apply for the project-based learning option, the district or Public School Academy (PSA) must also have an approved STW Application on file with the MDE from 2011-12 or a subsequent school year. If the district or PSA does not currently have an approved STW application on file with the MDE, an application for the project-based learning option must include a STW application and implementation plan.

If you have any questions regarding the information being requested, please contact Brian Barber or Eric Lipinski by email at barberb2@michigan.gov or lipinskie@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

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