



## **DC PCSB High School Transcript Audit Guidance**

### **Ninth Grade Transcript Audit**

In this process, DC PCSB staff sends schools a pre-filled data template listing 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who are enrolled per end of year enrollment records. Schools are asked to submit an updated template, indicating whether each student is "on track" or "not on track" to graduate in four years in accordance with the school's promotion policy. DC PCSB staff then conducts an on-site school visit in which they review student records (e.g., transcripts, report cards, attendance records, community service logs) belonging to 20% of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class. (DC PCSB staff selects the 20% sample at random.) If there are no discrepancies between the data template and the student records (i.e. students' on track/not on track status matches the reviewed documents), then the audit is complete. However, if there are discrepancies between the data template and the student records (i.e. students' on track/not on track status does not match the reviewed documents), then all 9<sup>th</sup> grade student records will be audited. DC PCSB staff sends a summary of findings after the audit. At the end of summer school, DC PCSB staff updates the count of on track students based off of amended transcripts/report cards demonstrating course completion.

### **Twelfth Grade Transcript Audit**

DC PCSB staff and consultants conduct 12<sup>th</sup> grade transcript audits on all schools that serve 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Audits are conducted at three points during the school year: January-February (midyear graduates), April-May (traditional graduates) and July-August (summer graduates). For a charter school student to receive a high school diploma signed by the DC PCSB chair, that student's academic records must be confirmed through the audit process. Additionally, for students attending a charter high school that implements attendance criteria as part of its promotion and/or graduation requirements, their attendance records from those schools must also be confirmed through the audit process. For students to be included an audit at any of the three points in the school year (i.e. midyear, traditional, or summer) the student must have a record of enrollment in the school's student information system (SIS) for the school year that they are graduating.

Prior to the audits in April-May for prospective graduates, schools verify the roster of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students presently enrolled, their school-specific graduation requirements, their credit recovery policy, and their grading policies and procedures. In the audit process, all seniors' transcripts are reviewed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and integrity of student academic records. Reviewers work with school staff to analyze report cards, credit recovery documentation, official transcripts, attendance records (if applicable to the school's promotion policy), student/family policies, course offerings documents, and guidance/registrar files to complete the review. For students who have transferred local education agencies (LEA) during their high school years, these documents include academic documents from a student's previous school(s). Any waivers from a school's graduation requirements must be made in compliance with the school's waiver policy, as contained in the school's charter agreement. The review includes students all students enrolled at the LEA, including non-public placement (NPP) students. Students at a NPP are required to meet the graduation requirements of their respective LEA. At the end of the process, the audit review team conducts a clarifying session which provides an opportunity for the school to review the data and clarify any miscalculations.

Schools are asked to provide the following documents to the DC PCSB staff and consultant review team<sup>1</sup>:

- A copy of each senior's memorandum of understanding
- Photocopies of senior transcripts for purposes of mark-up
- Photocopies of students' report cards containing all courses taken toward high school graduation<sup>2</sup>
- Documentation of all completed community service hours
- Documentation of credit recovery course completion<sup>3</sup>
- Other documentation that provides justification for students' on-track status (e.g. supporting attendance documentation).

The review team uses pre-formatted Excel spreadsheets to document each student's graduation status by comparing his or her cumulative academic record to the official transcript and the school's graduation requirements. The pre-formatted Excel spreadsheet will contain the school's graduation requirements and required course names for each subject area. For schools

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<sup>1</sup> Schools will be asked to submit these documents either in hard copy (paper form) or electronically, depending on if the audit occurs in person at the school, virtually, or a combination of both.

<sup>2</sup> For students who have earned high school credit at a middle school level (e.g. Algebra I) in addition to their report cards from grades 9-12, please include the report cards from their middle school years when high school credit was earned.

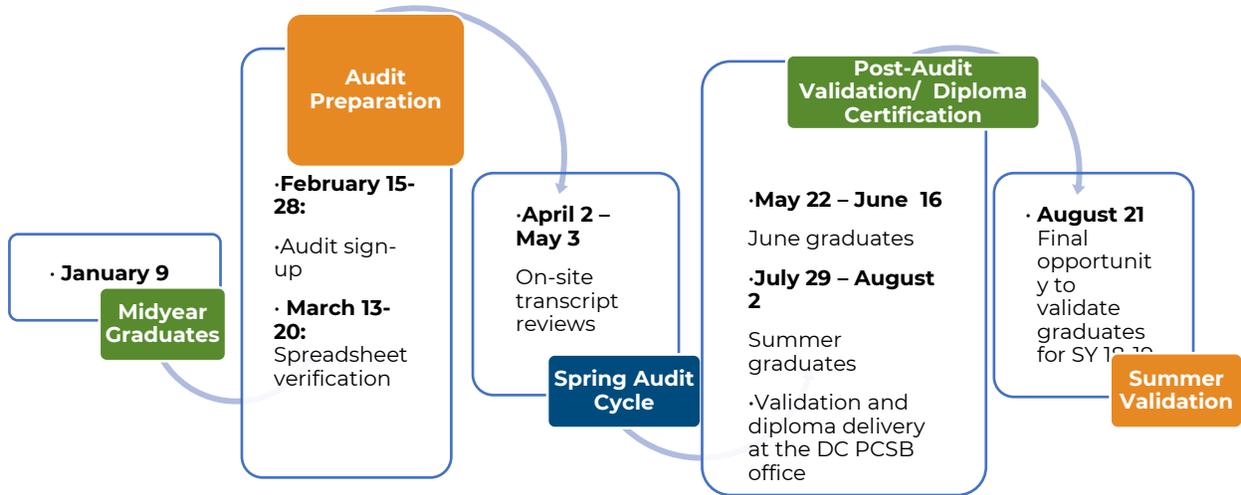
<sup>3</sup> See DC PCSB's [Credit Recovery Policy](#) for details on the use of such programs.

with specific attendance criteria linked to their promotion policy, the Excel file will also contain pre-populated student attendance data. The auditing team may also review students' cumulative attendance records for further clarification. Within two weeks following the in-person audit, an Executive Summary of the findings is then sent to the school and includes the number of students on target to graduate.

Prior to each charter high school's May/June graduation ceremony, each school must schedule an appointment with DC PCSB staff to complete a post-audit follow-up session. During the post-audit appointment, two things occur: (1) the school provides documentation to DC PCSB staff as evidence for any students whose graduation status changed from "not on track" to "on track," or vice versa, since the time of the transcript audit; and (2) the school provides original copies of high school diplomas for each of their anticipated June graduates. Once DC PCSB staff validate every student's record and determines their eligibility for June graduation, the school's diplomas for June graduates are accepted to be signed by DC PCSB's board chair.

Between June and August, DC PCSB staff complete a second transcript review at each charter high school to confirm any summer graduates who completed their graduation requirements after the school's June graduation ceremony. At the end of the summer, once all schools' summer programs have concluded, DC PCSB staff compile a comprehensive, certified list of graduates for each charter high school that is first verified by each school, before DC PCSB submits the final list to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to calculate each school's adjusted cohort graduation rate. The deadline to submit the certified graduates list to OSSE is August 31.

## **Tentative Timeline**



## Sample Audit Spreadsheet