



## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

POLICY:	613
ADOPTED:	05/29/07
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### I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth requirements for graduation from the school district.

### II. General Statement of Policy

The policy of the school district is that all students must satisfactorily complete, as determined by the school district, all course credit requirements, all state academic standards, or local standards where state standards do not apply, and successfully pass graduation examinations, as required, in order to graduate.

### III. Definitions

- A. "Academic standard" means: (1) a statewide adopted expectation for student learning in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, or the arts, or (2) a locally adopted expectation for student learning in health, the arts, career and technical education, or world languages.
- B. "Course credit" is equivalent to a student's successful completion of an academic year of study or a student's mastery of the applicable subject matter, as determined by the school district.
- C. "Section 504 Accommodation" means the defined appropriate accommodations or modifications that must be made in the school environment to address the needs of an individual student with disabilities. "Individualized Education Program," or "IEP," means a written statement developed for a student eligible by law for special education and services.
- D. "Individualized Education Program" or "IEP" means a written statement developed for a student eligible by law for special education and services.
- E. "English Learner" or "EL" student means an individual whose first language is not English and whose test performance may be negatively impacted by lack of English language proficiency.
- F. "Online Learning" is a form of digital learning delivered by an approved online learning provider.

#### **IV. Assessment Coordinator**

The Superintendent or designee shall be named the school district assessment coordinator. Said person shall be in charge of all assessment procedures and shall bring recommendations to the school board annually for approval.

#### **V. Graduation Assessment Requirements**

- A. For students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2012-2013 school year and later, students' state graduation requirements, based on a longitudinal, systematic approach to student education and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation, include the following:
1. an opportunity to participate on a nationally normed college entrance exam in grade 11 or grade 12;
  2. achievement and career and college readiness in mathematics, reading, and writing, as measured against a continuum of empirically derived, clearly defined benchmarks focused on students' attainment of knowledge and skills so that students, their parents, and teachers know how well students must perform to have a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without the need for postsecondary remediation.
    - a. monitoring of students' continuous development of and growth in requisite knowledge and skills; analysis of students' progress and performance levels, identifying students' academic strengths and diagnosing areas where students require curriculum or instructional adjustments, targeted interventions, or remediation; and,
    - b. students' learning and instructional needs and the instructional tools and best practices that support academic rigor for the student based on analysis of students' progress and performance data; and
  3. Consistent with this paragraph and Minn. Stat. § 120B.125 (see Policy 604, Section II.H.), age-appropriate exploration and planning activities and career assessments to encourage students to identify personally relevant career interests and aptitudes and help students and their families develop a regularly reexamined transition plan for postsecondary education or employment without need for postsecondary remediation.

4. Based on appropriate state guidelines, students with IEP's may satisfy state graduation requirements by achieving an individual score on the state-identified alternative assessments.
5. Students meeting the state graduation requirements under this section must receive targeted, relevant, academically rigorous, and resourced instruction which may include a targeted instruction and intervention plan focused on improving the student's knowledge and skills in core subjects so that the student has a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without need for postsecondary remediation.
6. Students meeting the state graduation requirements under this section and who are students in grade 11 or 12 and who are identified as academically ready for a career or college are actively encouraged by the school district to participate in courses and programs awarding college credit to high school students. Students are not required to achieve a specified score or level of proficiency on an assessment to graduate from high school.
7. A student's progress toward career and college readiness must be recorded on the student's high school transcript.

## **VI. High School Graduation Credit Requirements**

- A. Students must satisfactorily complete 65 credits of course work at the high school level, grades 9-12 inclusively, to be eligible for high school graduation, as specified below.
  1. Language Arts – four years (12 trimester credits);
  2. Social Studies (encompassing U.S. history, geography, world history, economics and government/citizenship) – three and two-thirds years (11 trimester credits);
  3. Science (including one year of biology; one year of chemistry or physics, and one year of a science elective) – three years (9 trimester credits);
  4. Mathematics (including an algebra II credit or its equivalent) – three years (9 trimester credits), and an algebra I course by the end of 8th grade.
  5. Other – 24 credits, including required courses in the arts, health, safety education and physical education. (No more than 12 trimester credits of instrumental and/or vocal music may be applied toward fulfillment of the graduation requirements.)

- a. Arts ( – (3 trimester credits in dance, media arts, music, theater, or visual arts));
  - b. Health – (1 trimester credits);
  - c. Physical Education – (1 trimester credits), and
- B. Course Credit by Assessment – Students in grades 9-12 may receive credit for one or more required or elective courses through an assessment process.
- 1. A student may not attempt to receive credit by assessment for a course if:
    - a. The student has previously attempted to receive credit by assessment for that course;
    - b. The student has been previously enrolled in that course; or,
    - c. The student does not maintain their full-time status in the school.
  - 2. A student who wants to receive credit by assessment for sequential courses must do so in sequence.
  - 3. A student who wants to receive credit by assessment for a course which has a prerequisite must first satisfactorily complete or receive credit by assessment for the prerequisite course.
  - 4. To receive credit by assessment for a course, a student must go through the following process:
    - a. Discuss the request with a counselor;
    - b. Complete the Application for Testing Out of a Course, and turn it in to the high school counseling office at least one full trimester (or quarter) before the beginning of the course; and,
    - c. Satisfactorily complete the required assessment for the course within the specified timeline.
  - 5. When a student applies to receive credit by assessment for a particular course, the requirements for awarding the credit will be established. Once the credit requirements have been established for a particular course, those same requirements will be used if and when other students request credit by assessment for the same course.
- C. A student who completes a postsecondary enrollment options course,

a concurrent enrollment course, or an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course or program is not required to complete other requirements of the academic standards corresponding to that specific rigorous course of study.

## **VII. College and Career Readiness**

Students in grades 11 and 12 must be offered an opportunity to participate in a nationally recognized college entrance exam on a school day.

## **VIII. Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or a Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan)**

- A. The IEP team or Section 504 team will address the graduation requirements for students with an IEP and/or a Section 504 accommodation plan beginning in grade 9, in accordance with Minnesota Statute 120B.024, Graduation requirements; course credits.
- B. A student with an IEP or a Section 504 accommodation plan will be granted a high school diploma that is identical to the diploma granted other students once the individual satisfactorily completes the following items, as specified in the individual's IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan developed by the IEP or Section 504 team:
  - 1. Those classes that regular education students need to attain a high school diploma that are appropriate and attainable by the student with an IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan; and,
  - 2. The individualized requirements for graduation outlined in the IEP or 504 plan.
- C. Students with an IEP will receive credit for special education instruction. Credit substitution will be specified in the IEP.
- D. Grade 11 special education students meeting certain criteria must be offered the opportunity to participate in the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS).

## **IX. English Learners (EL)**

- A. Generally speaking, students enrolled in EL may receive a regular English credit for one EL course per term. Students earn elective credit for other EL courses taken during that term. This practice encourages more proficient English learners to earn at least part of their English requirement through non-EL English courses.

- B. Exceptions are made based on the English proficiency of the learner; for example, students arriving as non-English speakers in grade 8 or later, may earn more than one English credit per term, possibly meeting all of their English requirement through EL courses. Exceptions are made at the discretion of EL and counseling staff.

**X. Work Experience Students**

- A. Students in grades 11 and 12 enrolled in work experience programs will receive one credit per trimester or quarter for successful completion of the seminar. Students receive a maximum of two credits per trimester or quarter for work during school hours spent in an on-the-job training program.
- B. Students enrolled in work experience programs must meet all graduation requirements for their grade level. Students enrolled in a work experience program must take no less than three required subjects each trimester or quarter (exclusive of seminar). This does not include elective credits.

**XI. Transfer Students**

A student who transfers into District 199 will be expected to meet graduation requirements beginning with the date of entrance.

- A. Course Credits – All passed course credits earned at previously attended public schools will be accepted by District 199 as part of the student’s requirement to successfully complete 65 credits, as described in section 1, above.
  - 1. District 199 will attempt to determine the content of courses, programs and other educational experiences to credit the student as fully as possible for previous learning. This determination may include asking the student or the sending institution to verify the content of completed courses and programs when it is not clear from the transcript or other documentation.
- B. Nonpublic and Home School Course Credits – When a nonpublic or home school student transfers to District 199, credits will be evaluated by the principal or designee.
  - 1. If the nonpublic and home schools are accredited by a Minnesota recognized accrediting agency, the district will:
    - i. Accept all credits certified on the transcript;

- ii. Accept all letter grades;
  - iii. Accept all standardized testing that fulfills the District 199 requirements for graduation;
  - v. Compute class rank and grade point average from the student's transcript; and,
2. If the nonpublic and home schools are not accredited by a Minnesota recognized accrediting agency, the district will:
- i. Review the transcript and attempt to equate all transferred curriculum and/or course content with District 199 curriculum and/or course content;
  - ii. Accept all standardized testing that fulfills the District 199 requirements for graduation;
  - iii. Compute class rank and grade point average only if letter grades have been awarded; and,
  - iv. Require the student to be enrolled in District 199 during their entire senior year in order to receive a District 199 diploma.
  - v. Satisfactory documentation of curriculum and/or course content may be required before credit and letter grades will be awarded.

## **XII. Other Credits**

- A. Study Abroad – Credits earned by students studying abroad (e.g., American Field Service [AFS] students) will be evaluated by the high school principal and may be approved and applied to meet graduation requirements.
- B. ABE (Adult Basic Education) Diploma Program – Credits may be earned from the District 199 ABE Diploma Program by adults aged 21 and over and by students aged 16 to 20 who are eligible under the Minnesota Education Options Program Law. Students receive a diploma from a District 199 high school.
  - 1. When contacted by a candidate for the program, information about credit needs will be exchanged between the student's original high school and the ABE Diploma Program. ABE Diploma Program staff will send the

appropriate high school principal a student information form, including a request for the following information:

- i. Confirmation of support of the student's enrollment in the ABE Diploma Program;
  - ii. Description of credits and basic skills tests needed by the student to complete graduation requirements; and,
  - iii. The student's health record.
2. For students aged 16 to 20, the counselor at the identified District 199 high school will assess the student's individual learning plan from the ABE Diploma Program after each seven credits earned by the student.
  3. With approval from the appropriate District 199 high school principal, students may earn credits from the ABE Diploma Program under dual attendance by continuing full-time attendance at their original high school and seeking additional credits in the ABE Diploma Program during flexible study times.
  4. ABE Diploma Program students must adhere to ABE policies regarding attendance, credit and graduation standards requirements, and District 199 policies on student behavior.

### **XIII. Grading System**

The high school academic year is divided into three marking periods, or trimesters, which are approximately twelve weeks long. A final grade is given for each credit taken at the end of each trimester. The grade point average (GPA) will be calculated on a 4.0 system.

### **XIV. Class Rank**

Class rank is cumulative from the beginning of ninth grade and is based on the final grades in all trimester classes. Class rank is officially calculated at the end of each academic school year for grades 9-11. For seniors, final class rank is determined at the end of the second trimester. Honors and Advanced Placement courses are not weighted.

### **XV. Early Graduation**

Students may be considered for early graduation, as provided for within Minn. Stat. § 120B.07, upon meeting the following conditions:

- A. All course or standards and credit requirements must be met;
- B. The principal or designee shall conduct an interview with the student and parent or guardian, familiarize the parties with opportunities available in post-secondary education, and arrive at a timely decision; and
- C. The principal's decision shall be in writing and may be subject to review by the superintendent and school board.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. § 120A.24, subd.2, Availability of documentation  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 - Educational Expectations for Minnesota's Students  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 – Required Academic Standards  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.024 – Graduation Requirements; Course Credits  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.07 - Early Graduation  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 - School District Process  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.125, Planning for students' successful transition to post-secondary education and employment  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 – Statewide Testing and Reporting System  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.445, Minnesota Nonpublic Education Council  
Minn. Stat. § 124D.68, Graduation incentives program  
Minn. Rules Parts 3500.3100, Issuance of General Education Development (GED) Diploma  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0640-3501.0655 – Graduation Standards – Language Arts  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0700-3501.0745 – Graduation Standards – Mathematics  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0800-3501.0815 – Graduation Standards – Arts  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0955 – Graduation Standards – Science  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1200-3501.1210 – Graduation Standards – English Language Development  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 – Graduation Standards – Social Studies  
20 U.S.C. § 6301, et seq. – Every Student Succeeds Act

**Cross References:** MSBA/MASA Policy 104 - School District Mission Statement  
MSBA/MASA Policy 601 - School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals  
MSBA/MASA Policy 614 - School District Testing Plan and Procedure  
MSBA/MASA Policy 615 - Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students  
MSBA/MASA Policy 616 - School District System Accountability