

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 entering grade 8 in the 2012-2013 school year and later must demonstrate, as determined by the school district, their satisfactory completion of the credit requirements and their understanding of academic standards. The school district must adopt graduation requirements that meet or exceed state graduation requirements established in law or rule.

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, career and technical education, or world languages.
- B. “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.
- D. “Individualized Education Program” or “IEP” means a written statement developed for a student eligible by law for special education and services.
- E. “English language learners” or “ELL” student means an individual whose first language is not English and whose test performance may be negatively impacted by lack of English language proficiency.

IV. TEST ADMINISTRATOR

The Director of Assessment and Accountability shall be named the school district test administrator.

V. GRADUATION ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- A. For students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2012-13 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. Encouragement to participate on a nationally normed college entrance exam in grade 11 or grade 12;
 2. Achievement and career and college readiness tests in mathematics, reading and writing. The tests must have 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. In addition, the tests must ensure that the foundational knowledge and skills for student's successful performance in postsecondary employment or education and articulated series of possible targeted interventions are clearly identified and satisfy Minnesota's postsecondary admission requirements. To the extent available, the tests should:
 - a. Monitor students' continuous development of and growth in requisite knowledge and skills; analyze 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. Based on analysis of students' progress and performance data, determine student's learning and instructional needs and the instructional tools and best practices that support academic rigor for the students; 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 an IEP 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 must be 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 under this subdivision 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. GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

- A. Students beginning 8th grade in the 2012-2013 school year and later must successfully complete, as determined by the school district, the following high school level course credits for graduation:
 1. Four credits of language arts; sufficient to satisfy all academic standards English Language arts;
 2. Three credits of mathematics, including an Algebra II credit or its equivalent, geometry, statistics and probability, or its equivalent, sufficient to satisfy the academic standards in mathematics. Students in the graduation class of 2015 and beyond must complete algebra 1 credit by the end of the 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th grade standards in mathematics.
 3. Three credits of science, including at least: (a) one credit of biology; (b) one credit of chemistry or physics; and one elective credit of science. The combination of credits must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry or physics and (ii) all other academic standards in science;

4. Four credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship, world history, and economics, or three credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship, and world history, and one-half credit of economics.
 5. One credit in the arts; to satisfy all of the state or local academic standards in arts; and
 6. A minimum of 9.5 elective course credits.
- B. All students must satisfactorily complete the following required and elective standards, in accordance with the standards adopted by the school district:
1. Physical Education, 1 credit
 2. Health, .5 credit
 3. Computer Related Course, .5 credit
 4. Business Related Course, .5 credit
 5. World Languages (K-12), 2 credits
- C. All students must satisfactorily complete the currently adopted Minnesota Academic Standards, in accordance with the standards developed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE):
1. Minnesota Academic Standards, English Language Arts K-12;
 2. Minnesota Academic Standards, Mathematics K-12;
 3. Minnesota Academic Standards, Science K-12;
 4. Minnesota Academic Standards, Social Studies K-12;
 5. Minnesota Academic Standards, Arts K-12; and
 6. Minnesota Academic Physical Education K-12
- D. A career and technical education credit may fulfill a mathematics or arts credit under VI.A.2. or VI.A.6., above.

- E. A computer science credit may fulfill a mathematics credit requirement under VI.A.2., if the credit meets state academic standards in mathematics
- F. The academic standards for language arts, mathematics, and science apply to all students except the very few students with extreme cognitive or physical impairment for whom an IEP team has determined that the required academic standards are inappropriate. An IEP team that makes this determination must establish alternative standards.

VII. 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 or designee.

Adopted: 6/25/2013

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