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District 77 Policy 628

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## **628 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **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 9 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 on a nationally normed college entrance exam. 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, or (2) a locally adopted expectation for student learning in health, the arts, career and technical education, or world languages.
- B. “Credit” means 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 Plan,” or “IEP,” means a written statement developed for a student eligible by law for special education and services.

- E. “English Language 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.

#### **IV. TEST ADMINISTRATOR**

The Assessment Coordinator shall be named the school district test administrator. Said person shall be in charge of all test procedures and shall bring recommendations for implementing changes in accountability assessments to the school board for approval when appropriate.

#### **V. GRADUATION ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Students need to meet assessment requirements in math, reading, and writing by attaining proficiency on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, another state determined assessment, or a readiness assessment determined by the school district.

- 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 options which include the following:
  - 1. demonstrate understanding of required academic standards on a nationally normed college entrance exam in 11<sup>th</sup> grade;
  - 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 and which facilitations the monitoring of students’ continuous development of and growth in requisite knowledge and skills; analysis of students’ progress and performance levels, identification of students’ academic strengths and diagnosis of areas where students require curriculum or instructional adjustments, targeted interventions, or remediation; and determination of 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.E.*), 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 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.

## **VI. GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS**

All high school students need to complete the following course credits to earn a high school diploma:

- 24 Course Credits
- 4 credits English/Language Arts
- 3 credits Mathematics
- 3 credits Science
- 4 credits Social Studies
- 1.5 credits Physical Education
- .5 credit Health
- 1 credit Creative or Performing Arts
- 7 credits of Electives

## **VII. GRADUATION STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS**

- A. All students must demonstrate their understanding of the following academic standards:
  1. School District Standards, Health (K-12);
  2. School District Standards, Career and Technical Education (K-12); and

3. School District Standards, World Languages (K-12).
- B. Academic standards in health, world languages, and vocational and technical education will be reviewed as part of the curricular cycle.\*
- \* Reviews are required to be conducted on a periodic basis. Therefore, this time period may be changed to accommodate individual school district needs.
- C. All students must satisfactorily complete the following required Graduation Standards in accordance with the standards developed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE):
1. Minnesota Academic Standards, 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; and
  5. Minnesota Academic Standards, Physical Education K-12.
- D. State standards in the Arts K-12 are available, or school districts may choose to develop their own standards.
- E. The academic standards for language arts, mathematics, and science apply to all students except the very few students with extreme cognitive or physical impairments 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.

## **VIII. EARLY GRADUATION**

Students may be considered for early graduation, as provided for within Minn. Stat. 120.80, upon meeting the following conditions:

- A. All course, credit, and state graduation assessment 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.
- 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. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations for Minnesota’s Students)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.018 (Definitions)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.023 (Benchmarks)  
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 Postsecondary Education and Employment; Involuntary Career Tracking Prohibited)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.128 (Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) Program)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 (Statewide Testing and Reporting System)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0640 -3501.0655 (Academic Standards for Language Arts)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0700-3501.0745 (Academic Standards for Mathematics)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0800-3501.0815 (Academic Standards for the Arts)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0955 (Academic Standards in Science)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)  
20 U.S.C. § 6301, *et seq.* (Every Student Succeeds Act)

**Cross References:** District 77 Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)  
District 77 Policy 601 (School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals)  
District 77 Policy 619.1 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)  
District 77 Policy 619.2 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans and LEP Students)  
District 77 Policy 625 (School District System Accountability)