



## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

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### **Publication of Graduation Requirements**

Prior to registering in high school and each year thereafter, each student and his/her parents or guardians will be provided with a copy of the current graduation requirements. Requirements will also be available on the Mead School District web page.

### **Period of Eligibility to Earn Credits**

Generally, credit towards high school graduation will be earned in grades nine through twelve. However, upon request, a student who has completed high school courses while in seventh or eighth grade will be given high school credit towards fulfilling graduation requirements if:

- A. The course was taken with high school students and the student successfully passed the same course requirements and examinations as the high school students enrolled in the class; or
- B. The course taught at the middle school level has been determined by the district to be similar or equivalent to a course taught at the high school level.

### **High School and Beyond Plan**

Each student is to develop, update as necessary, and initially have on file a High School and Beyond Plan approved by the parent. Counselors, principals and staff will provide assistance to incoming ninth graders and their families in developing educational plans. Changes in plans should normally reflect parent consent and should be submitted to the appropriate counselor/staff member. At the conclusion of each year, the school will provide the student and their parents or guardians with a report which reflects the progress that has been made toward satisfying the graduation requirements. If progress is not normal, the school will identify alternative courses that can be taken to correct the deficiencies.

In assisting students with developing a High School and Beyond Plan the district should:

- A. Provide internal and external resources to ensure successful development and implementation of the High School and Beyond Plan;
- B. Provide the opportunity for student choice, voice and ownership of the High School and Beyond Plan;
- C. Teach students a planning process that provides a capacity to create, review and revise the High School and Beyond Plan;
- D. Prepare all students for post-secondary options;
- E. Align the High School and Beyond Plan with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements, State Learning Goals and district goals and link to the district high school graduation requirements;
- F. Collect and analyze data to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the High School and Beyond plan; and

- G. Ensure parental involvement in the planning process, including the student's development of the High School and Beyond Plan.

### **Credits**

Students in the classes of 2016-2020 shall be expected to earn a minimum of 22 credits in order to complete graduation requirements. The classes of 2021 and beyond shall be expected to earn a minimum of 24 credits to complete graduation requirements.

### **Earning Credits in District**

High school credit will be awarded for successful completion of a specified unit of study. In this district, successful completion of a specified unit of study means:

1. Earning a passing grade according to the district's grading policy and/or
2. Demonstrating proficiency/mastery of content standards as determined by the district; and/or
3. Successfully completing an established number of hours of planned instructional activities to be determined by the district.
4. The district will establish a process for determining proficiency/mastery for credit-bearing courses of study.

### **Credits from Other Programs**

The principal or designee is responsible for determining which credits will be recognized by the district for students enrolling from another state approved learning program (public school, approved private school, or home school), or from out-of-state, or out-of-country. Credits from another Washington public school or accredited state private school or accredited out-of-state public or private school shall be accepted to the extent the credit matches a district graduation requirement, or may be counted as an elective credit. Credits from an accredited program or home school shall be evaluated as described below for home school students. Decisions of the principal or designee may be appealed to the superintendent within fifteen (15) school days of initial decision.

A High School and Beyond Plan is also required.

### **Seal of Biliteracy**

To be awarded the Washington Seal of Biliteracy, graduating high school students must meet the following criteria:

- A. Demonstrate proficiency in English by 1) meeting statewide minimum graduation requirements in English as established by the Washington State Board of Education and 2) meeting state standards on the reading and writing or English language arts assessment.
- B. Demonstrate proficiency in one or more World Languages. For purposes of this section, "world language" is defined as a language other than English, including American sign language, Latin and Native American or other indigenous languages or dialects. Proficiency may be demonstrated by:
  1. Passing a foreign language Advanced Placement exam with a score of 3 or higher;
  2. Passing an International Baccalaureate exam with a score of 4 or higher;
  3. Demonstrating intermediate-mid level or higher proficiency on the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines using assessments approved by OSPI for

competency-based credits; and demonstrating using reading assessments approved by OSPI (when developed);

4. Qualifying for four competency-based credits by demonstrating proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the world language at intermediate-mid level or higher on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines; or
5. Demonstrating proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the world language through other national or international assessments approved by OSPI.

### **Waiver of Graduation Requirements**

The following procedure shall be followed in graduation waiver requests:

- A. The principal is responsible for evaluating educational experiences of individual students and recommending graduation to the superintendent when requirements have been met.

An individual student may be granted an exemption from any requirement in this policy if such requirement impedes the progress toward graduation provided there is a direct relationship between the failure to meet the requirement and the student's ability. When a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student transfers from another high school, the student may be permitted to graduate with a lesser number of credits provided that minimum state course and credit requirements are satisfied and the student successfully passes a full schedule of classes during his/her 12<sup>th</sup> year of school.

- B. Waiver of graduation requirements is determined by the principal. The procedure for processing requests for waiver shall be as follows:
  1. Request shall be initiated by the parent or the eligible student.
  2. The principal shall investigate the request for waiver of graduation requirements.
  3. The principal shall make a determination in writing based upon appropriate data and upon conclusions of the investigation.
  4. The principal shall develop appropriate record keeping procedures for storage of all the pertinent data relating to each waiver request.
  5. All state requirements must be satisfied except that Washington history and government may be waived for students who have completed and passed a state history and government course in another state during grades seven through twelve and who have fulfilled study of the Washington State Constitution through an alternative learning experience approved by the principal. Additionally, physical education, pursuant to RCW 28A.230.050, may be waived upon written request of a parent or guardian on account of physical disability, employment or religious belief or because of participation in directed athletics or military science and tactics, or for other good cause. This shall not alter the credit requirements established by the board. The principal and superintendent designee will consider a waiver in the senior year only if a student has enrolled in a full academic program throughout high school and has not been a TA/OJT or had a release period.
  6. The parent or eligible student shall be notified that an appeal to the decision on waiver requests must be made in writing to the Superintendent no later than thirty (30) days prior to the anticipated graduation date.

## **Other Methods to Accrue Credits**

### **Alternative Programs**

Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for planned learning experiences primarily conducted away from the facilities owned, operated or supervised by the Mead School District.

A proposal for approval of out-of-school learning activities shall be submitted by the student (or his/her parents), shall be at no additional cost to the district, and shall include at least the following information:

- A. The objective(s) of the program;
- B. The teaching components(s) of the program, including where and when teaching activities will be conducted.
- C. A schedule of the duration of the program, including beginning and ending dates within the school year;
- D. A description of how student performance will be supervised, evaluated, and recorded; A description of intervention techniques and criteria for their use;
- E. Description of how student performance will be assessed;
- F. Qualifications of instructional personnel;
- G. Plans for evaluation of program.

A list of approved programs shall be kept on file in the superintendent's office. Reasons for approval or disapproval shall be communicated to those making the request.

### **Running Start**

The Running Start program allows high school juniors and seniors to attend community college or university classes (100 level or above) for part or all of their schedule. Students must be of junior standing or above to be eligible for the program. Students earn college credit which is also converted and applied to their high school transcript.

In order to enroll in the Running Start program, students will be advised to:

1. Contact the college they are interested in attending and make arrangements to take the ASSET or COMPASS placement test. The test is offered at various times and results are often available the following day. Minimum scores in reading and writing are required.
2. Speak with their counselor to assess credits needed for graduation, then decide which courses they would like to take at the college. Note that part-time Running Start students will need to coordinate college classes so that they do not interfere with their high school classes. Full-time Running Start students will not be enrolled in courses at the high school, even when the community college or university they attend is not in session.
3. Obtain a Running Start authorization form from the college or their high school counselor. The counselor will sign the form after the student completes their portion. A parent signature is required if the student is under 18 years old.

4. Take the authorization form to the college and register for classes. Once the classes are completed, the college will notify the high school and credits will be added to the student's transcript.

### **Credit for Career and Technical Work-Based Learning**

The use of work experience as a part of the educational program of students should be regarded as part of the secondary school curriculum rather than just a device to relieve a manpower shortage.

The following are the basis upon which credit may be granted for work experience:

- A. The work program shall be supervised by the school.
- B. The work experience shall be specifically related to the High School and Beyond Plan.
- C. Credit given for work experience shall represent growth in the student and the type of work done should have definite educational value.
- D. The job in which experience is gained shall provide varied experience.
- E. A work experience program shall be supplemented by an adequate program of guidance, placement, follow-up and coordination between job and school by the career placement counselor.
- F. Work experience as a planned part of a school subject may be included in the credit given for that subject (e.g., sales training class).
- G. One work credit may be granted for not less than 360 hours of work experience related to a student's school program.
- H. A student participating shall be legally employed and must have passed his/her sixteenth birthday. Exceptions may be made for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- I. An employer's report of the student's work record indicating satisfactory progress on the job shall be filed with the school.
- J. The regular state apprenticeship program, where the training is worked out cooperatively with the school and meets the standards for graduation requirements, is acceptable.
- K. Program standards and procedures will be followed and aligned with the state career and technical work-based learning standards.

### **National Guard High School Career Training**

Credit may be granted for National Guard high school career training in lieu of either required or elective high school credits. Approval by the District shall be obtained prior to a student's participation in a National Guard training program as follows:

- A. MIL Form 115 or an equivalent form now or hereafter provided by the national guard shall be completed and filed with the school district; and
- B. The number of credits toward high school graduation to be granted shall be calculated, agreed upon by the student and an authorized representative of the school district and such agreement noted on MIL Form 115 or such equivalent form.

Credit toward high school graduation may be granted by the school district upon certification by a National Guard training unit commander on the completion of MIL Form 115 or such equivalent form that the student has met all program requirements.

### **Home School Credit**

Acceptance or non-acceptance of home schooling coursework is the prerogative of the Mead School District. For a home school student to earn a diploma he/she must enroll in and successfully complete a full student schedule for a minimum of one year in the Mead School District. Credit may be granted for a home school student for enrollment in the following approved schools:

1. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges and universities and approved private schools in the state of Washington, and
2. Other schools or institutions which are approved by the district after evaluation for a particular course offering.

### **Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

A student with a disability may fulfill graduation requirements as follows:

- A. By or before age 16, the students will participate with the IEP team (including special education teacher, general education teacher, parents, students and other school personnel and agency representatives who will assist the student in achieving the goals of the IEP) in a discussion of transition service needs that focuses on the student's course of study;
- B. As an outcome of the discussion, the IEP will include appropriate graduation requirements based on the individual needs and abilities consistent with their transition plan. Modifications to the district's standard graduation requirements may include:
  - a. Attainable alternate classwork and/or individualized activities substituted for standard requirements;
  - b. A statement of waiver for any waived standard graduation requirements; or
  - c. An extension of time for the student to remain in school to complete graduation requirements. The student may remain in school up to and including the school year in which the student reaches twenty-one years of age.
- C. The student will, in cooperation with their parent/guardian and the IEP team, determine:
  - a. The projected date by which all graduation requirements will be met; and
  - b. The projected date and conditions under which the students will participate in the graduation ceremony.
- D. The student will have an IEP that incorporates all issues and decisions from the above procedures. Any decisions that modify the district's standard graduation requirements will be made through the IEP process. Annually or as needed, the IEP will be reviewed/revised to accommodate the student's progress and development.

### **Correspondence Courses**

Credit for correspondence courses may be granted within the following requirements:

- A. Prior permission has been granted by the principal or designee.

- B. The program fits the educational plan submitted by the student.
- C. Credit is granted for the following approved schools:
  - 1. Schools that are members of the National University Continuing Educational Association, or accredited by the National Home Study Council;
  - 2. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges and universities and approved private schools in the state of Washington; and
  - 3. Other schools or institutions which are approved by the District after evaluation for a particular course offering.

### **Graduation Ceremonies**

Students must fulfill graduation requirements by the end of the last term of their senior year, in order to participate in graduation ceremonies. Each student shall be awarded a diploma after satisfactorily completing local and state requirements. Upon request, each graduating student shall receive a final transcript.

Graduation is a formal ceremony to recognize students who have completed high school graduation requirements. The ceremony is voluntary for students. Participation in the ceremony is pursuant to appropriate behavior throughout the school year and may be denied if inappropriate behavior has occurred. For students who are eligible to participate, the following expectations are established:

- A. Each student who participates in the graduation ceremony will purchase or rent the proper cap and gown as designated by the school administration and the class advisor and officers.
- B. Caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner, as designated by the school administration and class advisor.
- C. Appropriate dress and behavior expectations will be determined by the high school principal. Such expectations will be communicated in writing to students and their parents prior to graduation.
- D. Failure to comply with dress and behavior expectations will forfeit a student's privilege of participation in the graduation ceremony.
- E. Each student who participates will be expected to cooperate with the class advisor and to participate in all parts of the graduation ceremonies.
- F. Failure to comply with any of the above requirements will automatically forfeit a student's privilege of participation in the graduation ceremonies.

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