

Policy 217 – Graduation

Purpose

It shall be the policy of the Board to acknowledge each student's successful completion of the instructional program appropriate to the student's interests and needs by the award of a diploma or certificate at fitting graduation ceremonies.

Authority

The Board shall adopt the graduation requirements students must achieve [in accordance with state law and regulations](#), which shall include specific course completion of twenty-five (25) credits and grades.[\[1\]\[2\]\[3\]\[4\]](#)

[Graduation requirements shall be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians, and made available in each school building and posted on the district's publicly accessible website. All changes to graduation requirements shall be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians, and made available in each school building and posted on the district's publicly accessible website immediately following approval by the Board.](#)[\[2\]\[5\]](#)

The Board shall award a regular high school diploma to every student enrolled in this district who meets the requirements of graduation established by this Board as part of the district's Strategic Plan. There shall be only one (1) diploma awarded by this district, and no distinctions shall be made between various programs of instruction or venues of instruction, with the exception of a "dual diploma" for students of the district who satisfactorily complete all of the graduation requirements of the York-Adams Academy. (This diploma shall state, "Spring Grove Area School District and the York-Adams Academy.") The York-Adams Academy shall conduct a graduation ceremony for students that complete the prescribed program of studies.[\[1\]\[4\]\[5\]\[2\]\[6\]\[7\]\[8\]\[9\]\[10\]](#)

There may also be a certificate awarded by this district which shall be based on special circumstances that support such an award.[\[6\]](#)

The Board shall permit a student with a disability, who has attended four (4) years of high school, to participate in commencement ceremonies with his/her graduating class and receive a certificate of attendance, even if the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) prescribes continued educational services. The student shall receive a high school diploma when s/he completes his/her ~~Individualized Education Plan~~ (IEP).[\[1\]\[9\]\[10\]\[11\]\[12\]\[13\]\[2\]\[14\]\[15\]\[16\]\[17\]\[18\]\[19\]](#)

[The district shall provide supports to ensure that students experiencing homelessness, in foster care, and/or experiencing educational instability graduate in a timely manner, in accordance with law and Board policy. A graduation plan shall be developed to facilitate this process for students in grades nine \(9\) through twelve \(12\) who are experiencing educational instability.](#)[\[12\]\[13\]](#)

The requirements for graduation shall be the completion of required assessments, work, and studies representing the instructional program assigned to grades 9 through 12. The Board shall also grant credit leading to graduation for high school classes taken prior to entering 9th grade, subject to prior administrative approval.

The minimum requirements for graduation shall include:

- Four (4) non-elective courses of Social Studies, which shall include American Society.
- Four (4) non-elective courses of English.
- Three (3) non-elective courses of Mathematics.
- Three (3) non-elective courses of Science.
- Four (4) courses in Health/Wellness, Health Education, and three (3) elective Physical Education courses.
- Four (4) courses in any combination of the Arts and Humanities and Practical Arts (Art, Business, Family and Consumer Science, Music, Technology Education, World Language), which shall include Career Skills for The Future.

The Board requires that each candidate for graduation shall have earned at least twenty-five (25) credits and demonstrated a mastery of the Pennsylvania academic standards.

In order to be considered for promotion to the next grade level on the secondary level (grades 9 through 12), the student must have satisfactorily completed a total of five (5) credits for advancement to 10th grade; a total of twelve (12) for advancement to 11th grade; and a total of eighteen (18) for advancement to 12th grade.

[A student may qualify for graduation by attending a district school part-time when lawfully employed part-time or when officially enrolled part-time in a postsecondary institution.\[20\]\[21\]](#)

No student who has completed the requirements for graduation shall be denied a diploma as a disciplinary measure, but s/he may be denied participation in the ceremony of graduation when personal conduct so warrants. Such exclusion shall be regarded as a school suspension ~~or expulsion~~. A student shall not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony who has not completed all the graduation requirements by the end of the last scheduled student day prior to graduation day.[115]

An exception to this policy may be made by the high school principal for medical reasons with a physician's note confirming illness or disability. In the event an exception is requested for psychological or psychiatric reasons, the note shall be received from a psychiatrist, or physician and psychologist.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for implementing this policy which include:

1. Accurate recording of each student's achievement of academic standards, as required by law and state regulations.[16]
2. The careful recording of each student's progress and accumulation of graduation requirements.[8]

3. Counseling of students to know what is expected of them for completion of the graduation requirements. [\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)[\[9\]](#)[\[10\]](#)[\[16\]](#)
4. Issuance of periodic warnings to students in danger of not fulfilling graduation requirements. [\[8\]](#)
5. Preparation and submission to the Board for its approval of a list of all candidates for the awarding of a diploma or certificate and of a list of all graduating students for the information to the Board and release to the public. [\[1\]](#)
6. Planning and execution of graduation ceremonies, which fittingly mark this important achievement.
7. [Publication and distribution of graduation requirements to students and parents/guardians. \[\\[2\\]\]\(#\)\[\\[5\\]\]\(#\)](#)

The Superintendent or designee shall annually, no later than December 1, report to the PA Department of Education (PDE) graduation information and data, as required by law. [\[1\]](#)

Guidelines

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

Part-Time College Enrollment

The Board recognizes that some students have the ability to complete college-level courses while being enrolled in our school system and wishes to provide the opportunity for these students to be enrolled in college courses on a part-time basis.

The Board shall grant students credit toward promotion or graduation for completion of college-level courses on a part-time basis.

Students of the Spring Grove Area High School shall be permitted to enroll in college courses on a part-time basis while enrolled as students in the Spring Grove Area School District, with the courses being counted toward promotion and/or graduation upon submission of evidence that they have been satisfactorily completed and with prior approval being granted by the Spring Grove Area High School Principal. The Board gives the Assistant Superintendent and the High School Principal the authority to substitute college credit for a high school graduation requirement as deemed appropriate.

High school credit shall also be awarded to students for the successful completion of courses taken through the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) Dual Enrollment Program. The Dual Enrollment Program requires that credit taken under this program automatically substitute for high school credit. These credits shall be identified as credits earned through an eligible postsecondary institution on a dual enrollment student's official secondary transcript.

College credit shall be included in a student's grade point average (GPA) if the credit is a replacement for a high school graduation requirement or follows the next level of progression for individual student

achievement in the subjects of Math, English, Science and/or Social Studies. College credit from one (1) college course shall be the equivalent of one (1) high school credit.

Academic college-level courses shall carry a 1.15 weight except for Physical Education courses, which shall be given the same weight as is given under the district weighted system. For two (2) credit or lower courses, the weight assigned shall be 1.05 unless the course is in the student's area of concentration. In this case, the weight shall be 1.1.

Grades for college courses shall be recognized as follows:

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| A | = | 96% |
| A- | = | 93% |
| B+ | = | 89% |
| B | = | 86% |
| B- | = | 83% |
| C+ | = | 79% |
| C | = | 76% |
| C- | = | 73% |
| D+ | = | 69% |
| D | = | 67% |
| D- | = | 65% |

The district in granting this status to students takes no responsibility for the cost of travel or tuition incurred in taking college-level courses except for dispersing grant money that may be received from the PDE Dual Enrollment Grant Program, when available, acknowledging that the grant money may not cover the total costs of tuition, books or fees.

Full-Time College Enrollment

The Board further acknowledges that some students in their senior year may wish to pursue college-level course work full-time on a campus of higher learning outside of the high school as a step toward a career choice while at the same time desiring to graduate and receive a diploma from the Spring Grove Area High School.

The Board shall permit this option so long as the senior high school graduation requirements can be successfully met with the alternative college-level courses being counted toward graduation upon submission of evidence that the courses have been satisfactorily completed and with prior approval being granted by the Spring Grove Area High School Principal. The Board gives the Assistant Superintendent and the high school principal the authority to substitute college credit for a high school graduation requirement as deemed appropriate.

There shall be no cost incurred by the Board with respect to travel, tuition, room and board or any other costs associated with this alternative college-level course work.

Career Skills Programs

The Board recognizes that some students may want to take advantage of career-related advanced skills' training, which is not available in our high school program while maintaining enrollment in our school system. The Board shall permit this option as long as the high school graduation requirements can be met. Credit for these courses may be counted toward graduation upon submission of evidence that the courses have been satisfactorily completed and with prior approval being granted by the Spring Grove Area High School Principal. The Board gives the Assistant Superintendent and the high school principal the authority to substitute this credit for a high school graduation requirement as deemed appropriate.

There shall be no cost incurred by the Board with respect to travel, tuition, materials or any other costs associated with these courses.

Legal

[1. 22 PA Code 4.24](#)

[2. 22 PA Code 4.51](#)

[3. 22 PA Code 4.52](#)

[4. 24 P.S. 1611](#)

[5. 24 P.S. 1613](#)

[6. Pol. 102](#)

[7. Pol. 127](#)

[8. Pol. 212](#)

[9. 24 P.S. 1614](#)

[10. 22 PA Code 4.12](#)

[11. 22 PA Code 11.27](#)

[12. 34 CFR 300.102](#)

[13. 34 CFR 300.305](#)

[14. Pol. 113](#)

[15. Pol. 233](#)

[16. Pol. 216](#)

[22 PA Code 11.4](#)

[22 PA Code 11.5](#)

[22 PA Code 11.8](#)

[34 CFR Part 300](#)

[1. 24 P.S. 121](#)

[2. 22 PA Code 4.24](#)

[3. 22 PA Code 4.51](#)

[4. 22 PA Code 4.52](#)

[5. 24 P.S. 510.2](#)

[6. 24 P.S. 1611](#)

[7. 24 P.S. 1613](#)

[8. Pol. 102](#)

[9. Pol. 127](#)

[10. Pol. 212](#)

[11. Pol. 233](#)

[12. 24 P.S. 1331.1](#)
[13. Pol. 251](#)
[14. 24 P.S. 1614](#)
[15. 22 PA Code 11.27](#)
[16. 22 PA Code 4.12](#)
[17. 34 CFR 300.102](#)
[18. 34 CFR 300.305](#)
[19. Pol. 113](#)
[20. 22 PA Code 11.5](#)
[21. 22 PA Code 11.8](#)
[22 PA Code 11.4](#)
[Pol. 216](#)
[34 CFR Part 300](#)