### KEEP YOUR FUTURE IN MIND. . .  SET YOUR GOALS EARLY

**HELP REACH YOUR GOALS BY:**

**MAKING THE MOST OF SCHOOL SUBJECTS**  
Employers, colleges and technical schools are concerned about your scholastic record as well as your attendance.

**PARTICIPATING IN VOLUNTEER WORK**  
Investing your time in our areas of interest will give you valuable information and experience.

**GETTING INVOLVED IN EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**  
School, church and community organizations allow you to gain experience in organizational skills, leadership training and accepting responsibility.

**WORKING AT A PART-TIME JOB**  
Part-time jobs can help you learn about different career fields.

---

**Planning Ahead**  
**For College**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9TH Grade</th>
<th>10TH Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Follow the Distinguished Level of Achievement Plan, and plan to earn at least one endorsement.  
- Be serious about your grades. Your class rank and GPA are an important part of the college admission process.  
- Participate in extra-curricular activities and keep records of honors and awards you receive.  
- Visit colleges (2 and 4 year), art, business and technical schools.  
- Find out what it will take to be considered “College/Career Ready” by the time you graduate.  
- Explore your career interests and the type of post high school education required in Xello. |  
- Participate in your individual planning session with your counselor and parent, to update your PGP (Personal Graduation Plan) that you began in 8th grade.  
- Take challenging course work and advanced academic classes.  
- Attend the HEB ISD College and Career Night to receive information from many college and business representatives.  
- Take the PSAT in the fall.  
- Concentrate on grades and stay involved.  
- Continue your college visits in the summer.  
  Work on doing what it will take to be considered “College/Career Ready” by the time you graduate. |
Graduation Requirements for Students Beginning 9th Grade in 2014-2015 or After

The default plan for HEB ISD students is the Distinguished Level of Achievement Plan, which includes one endorsement choice. Multiple endorsements are possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS</th>
<th>ENFORCEMENT CHOICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four credits:</td>
<td>STEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*English I</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*English II</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English III</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English IV</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATHEMATICS</th>
<th>BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four credits:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Algebra I</td>
<td>Architecture &amp; Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Arts, AV Technology, &amp; Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebraic Reasoning followed by Algebra II</td>
<td>Business, Marketing, &amp; Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra II followed by a 4th math credit</td>
<td>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sci &amp; Math</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation, Distribution, &amp; Logistics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>PUBLIC SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four credits:</td>
<td>Education &amp; Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Biology</td>
<td>Health Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Science Courses</td>
<td>Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 credits must include Chemistry or Physics)</td>
<td>Law &amp; Public Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES</th>
<th>ARTS AND HUMANITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four credits:</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Geography</td>
<td>Dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World History</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*U.S. History</td>
<td>Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Government (one-half credit)</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics (one-half credit)</td>
<td>World Languages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</th>
<th>MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One credit</td>
<td>Allows a student to complete prescribed courses from:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Each of the four foundation subject areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advanced Placement / International Baccalaureate courses from each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the four foundation subject areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 advanced courses from within one endorsement area or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>among endorsement areas not in a coherent sequence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH</th>
<th>HEALTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two credits in the same language</td>
<td>One half-credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINE ARTS</th>
<th>TECHNOLOGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One credit</td>
<td>One Credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEECH</th>
<th>ELECTIVES FOR ONE ENDORSEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-half credit - must be Professional</td>
<td>Four credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications, Debate, Oral Interpretation or Communication Applications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTH</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE ACKNOWLEDGMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One half-credit</td>
<td>A student may earn performance acknowledgments on their high school transcript for outstanding performance:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEM</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE ACKNOWLEDGMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>In a dual credit course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>On an AP or IB exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>For earning a nationally or internationally recognized industry certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>In bilingualism and biliteracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On the PSAT, ASPIRE, SAT or ACT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beginning with the graduating class of 2022, all students must successfully complete and submit one of the following forms:

- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- TAFSA (Texas Application for State Aid)
- Texas Education Agency’s Opt-Out form

Students will need to submit the form during the fall of their senior year in order to graduate from high school.

It is the responsibility of each college-bound student to research admission requirements, as each college’s requirements may differ.

(Subject to change based on decisions made by the Texas State Board of Education)
Testing Requirements for High School Graduation

STAAR EOC: In order to receive a high school diploma, students must earn the required credits for graduation and must pass 5 STAAR End-of-Course exams (EOC).

These exams are:

- **Algebra 1**
  - For the majority of students, Algebra is generally taken in 9th grade. 8th grade Pre-AP Algebra students will take this EOC in 8th grade.

- **Biology**
  - For the majority of students, Biology is generally taken in 9th grade. 8th grade Pre-AP Biology students (CJH only) will take this EOC in 8th grade.

- **English 1**
  - This course is taken at the 9th grade level. The test is a combined Reading/Writing test.

- **English 2**
  - This course is taken at the 10th grade level. The test is a combined Reading/Writing test.

- **U.S. History**
  - For the majority of students, this course is taken in 11th grade.

Performance Acknowledgment

For students who begin 9th grade in 2014-2015 and thereafter, a student may earn a performance acknowledgement for:

- **Outstanding performance** (as determined by the Texas Education Agency)
  - in a dual credit course
  - in bilingualism and biliteracy
  - on an AP test or IB exam
  - on the PSAT, the ASPIRE, the SAT, or the ACT

- **Earning a nationally or internationally recognized business or industry certification or license.**

Other Standardized Testing Options for Junior High Students

PSAT – All 8th graders will take the PSAT 8/9. This is a practice SAT exam that helps to identify students with AP (Advanced Placement) potential. Students scoring high enough on the PSAT as a 8th grader may earn the distinction as a “Superintendent’s Scholar” and receive additional test prep.
GPA Counts!

GPA – Grade Point Average - Refers to a grade point scale that assigns more points to grades earned in certain classes. Courses designated as AdvAc, Dual Credit, and certain selected and approved CTE courses will fall on the Tier II scale. Courses that culminate in a national or international exam, i.e. Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and other District determined courses will fall on the Tier III scale. All other courses fall under the Tier I scale.

GRADE SCALE AND GRADE POINT EQUIVALENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER GRADE</th>
<th>TIER III</th>
<th>TIER II</th>
<th>TIER I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>6.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>4.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-97</td>
<td>5.666</td>
<td>4.666</td>
<td>3.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>5.333</td>
<td>4.333</td>
<td>3.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>3.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>4.666</td>
<td>3.666</td>
<td>2.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>4.333</td>
<td>3.333</td>
<td>2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>2.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>3.666</td>
<td>2.666</td>
<td>1.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>3.333</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>1.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A grade point average (GPA) is a calculated average of the numeric grades you earn in school following a 4.0, 5.0, or 6.0 scale. Every semester, you will receive a GPA based on the grades you earned in all of your classes during that semester. Throughout high school, you will also maintain a cumulative GPA, which is an ongoing average of all your semester one and two grades beginning with freshman year. For some who begin earning high school credit in 7th & 8th grade, those credit earning courses count toward GPA.

Your GPA is important for your future because:

1. Even before college, your GPA can determine whether you are eligible or not to take Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses during your junior and senior years of high school.
2. For admission, prospective colleges consider both your GPA and your class rank, which is determined by your GPA. So the higher your GPA, the better your chances are of getting into the college of your choice. Your rank will also dictate how well you need to score on the SAT or ACT for college admissions.
3. Your GPA is a major consideration for both academic and athletic college scholarships as well as financial aid.

Start improving your GPA now.

4. You cannot wait until your junior or senior year to start worrying about your cumulative GPA. Every single class you take for high school credit gets averaged in, so all your grades are just as important. If you bomb every class in the first year or two, it will be impossible to graduate with an above average GPA. For example, if you receive all D’s or 1.0’s in 9th and 10th grade and all A’s or 4.0’s in 11th and 12th grade, your cumulative average GPA will be 2.5, which doesn’t meet the minimum many schools require for admission.

5. However, a little planning and hard work during your freshman year can go a long way toward a better cumulative GPA and make all the difference when you send in your college applications. In fact, the GPA on your college application may only reflect the first 3 or 3 ½ years of high school anyway since you will need to apply before your first semester grades of senior year are calculated.

GPA Tips & Tactics

- Work hard in your freshman and sophomore years to increase your chance of admission into AP, IB, honors and accelerated course—they’re your ticket to a higher GPA since they’re given more weight on the GPA scale.
- While a low GPA will not keep you from getting into college, some four-year colleges do require a 3.0 or higher for admission. The myth of an “easy” senior year is FALSE – Every grade you make counts!
- Don’t slack off once you receive your acceptance letter. Your future college will continue to monitor your grades through the end of your senior year and expect a final transcript.
### WHAT COUNTS IN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

What admissions staff found as “considerably important” in a national survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Considerable importance</th>
<th>Moderate Importance</th>
<th>Limited Importance</th>
<th>No Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades in college prep courses</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of curriculum</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission test scores (SAT, ACT)</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades in all courses</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay or writing sample</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student's demonstrated interest</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor recommendation</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Rank</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher recommendation</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject test scores (AP, IB)</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT II scores</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular activities</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State graduation exam</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2017

***Texas public universities and colleges will automatically accept the top 10% of the graduating class from public high schools, if the student graduates with a Distinguished Level of Achievement Diploma. The University of Texas at Austin automatically accepts the top 6%***
It’s Never Too Early To Start Planning!

Financial Aid

Most financial aid is awarded based on financial need.

Cost of Attending College
   -Family Contribution**
   Financial Need

More than $8,180,000,000 in financial aid is awarded to students in Texas each year

Types of aid

   Grants and Scholarships* (Free Money) = 47%
   Work Study (Part-time jobs) = 1%
   Loans (To be paid back, with interest) = 52%

**Student Aid Index calculates based on the income and assets of the student and their parents or spouse, if applicable. The analysis formula used considers both taxed and untaxed income, as well as any assets and benefits received, such as unemployment or Social Security information provided using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

How Can I Prepare for College

- Prepare for college academics by taking the most rigorous classes you can.
- Grades are important; many scholarships are awarded on academic achievement.
- Participate in community activities as well as extracurricular school events.
- Begin to learn about the different colleges and universities through the internet and with campus visits.
- Investigate career options for your future and explore opportunities to learn more about specific careers.
Why Go to College?
(How about … to get a good job!)

Can’t I get a good job now?

Yes, maybe you could, but a college degree will make your chances even better. Check out the earnings and unemployment rates below for people 25 years and older with different levels of education.

![Earnings Comparison Chart]

Sometimes it’s hard to stay in school if you think you need to be working to earn money. But if you get an education beyond high school, you’ll have a wider variety of jobs to choose from, and you’ll earn more—especially in the long run.

But I don’t know what career to go into!

If you can’t decide what to do, talk to your school counselor or visit StudentAid.gov/prepare to find out how to prepare for college and explore your career options.

Doesn’t college cost a lot of money?

Think of college as an investment: You spend money now so you can earn more later. The U.S. Department of Education may help you pay for your education. Take a look at StudentAid.gov for information about our federal student aid programs. The site also links to a free scholarship search at StudentAid.gov/scholarships.

Still have questions? Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
# Helpful Websites

The following web sites can be beneficial to you throughout the application process and in your quest to financially support your college career. HEB ISD does not endorse or recommend any specific website. These are for informational purposes only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College for All Texans</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegeforalltexas.com">www.collegeforalltexas.com</a></td>
<td>scholarships for Texans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College is Possible</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegeispossible.com">www.collegeispossible.com</a></td>
<td>a campaign to provide information related to preparing for, paying for, and choosing the right college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Net</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegenet.com">www.collegenet.com</a></td>
<td>school information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast WEB</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fastweb.com">www.fastweb.com</a></td>
<td>extensive listings of scholarships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Application for Federal Student Aid</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a></td>
<td>government financial aid application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Scholarships</td>
<td><a href="http://www.highscholarships.com">www.highscholarships.com</a></td>
<td>scholarship search for high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelnet</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nelnet.com">www.nelnet.com</a></td>
<td>college planning, financial aid information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sallie Mae College Answer</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegeanswer.com">www.collegeanswer.com</a></td>
<td>college planning, financial aid information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a></td>
<td>SAT registration and testing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td><a href="http://www.scholarships.com">www.scholarships.com</a></td>
<td>scholarship search, financial aid information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ed.gov">www.ed.gov</a></td>
<td>college funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wired Scholar</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wiredscholar.com">www.wiredscholar.com</a></td>
<td>scholarship search, preparation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
XELLO
Tools to help you plan for the future

www.Xello.com
Xello is an online program your child is using in school to help them prepare for the future. It offers a variety of activities from kindergarten to the end of high school. These activities help students build self-knowledge, explore their options, and create achievable plans. They develop the 21st-century skills needed to thrive in the world of work.

It’s important for students to take ownership in planning for their future. But the caring adults in their life play an essential supporting role. Use your Xello Family account to see your child’s work in future-readiness. Use this opportunity to discuss and support their future goals and plans. Please see your student’s counselor for Xello assistance.
Encourage Students to Build Self-Knowledge

The first step of being future-ready is knowing who you are. Xello helps students discover more about themselves by encouraging them to record and reflect on their strengths, skills, and interests. They learn to think critically about how to apply all they discover to create a plan that gets them excited and ready to explore!

Career Matchmaker
Students participate in an interactive assessment with situation-based questions. Their answers match them with careers that align to their passions and skills, engaging and exciting them in planning for the future.

Personality Style Assessment
Based on the Holland Model, the Personality Style assessment helps students learn why certain careers are a good match for them based on their unique traits, likes, and dislikes.

Learning Style Assessment
By completing the Learning Styles assessment, students discover how they learn best, and are equipped with the tools and awareness to maximize their learning techniques.

After High School
Students begin by thinking about what they might want to do after high school - giving them a base to start from when planning their future.

Favorite Clusters
Viewing similar careers in favorite clusters helps inspire students and broadens their choices.

Experiences
With an interactive timeline, students track their accomplishments in life, education, work, and volunteer experiences, prompting them to reflect on, and learn from, their experiences.

Skills & Interests
Students identify and reflect on their skills and interests to learn how to apply them to their future.

Storyboard
Students collect and store in one place their favorite photos, videos, links, and files that tell the story of who you are.
Build an Actionable Plan
Texas Education Agency

Graduation Toolkit

- Graduation Program - Overview
- Distinguished Level of Achievement - Benefits
- Texas High School Diploma - Steps
- Endorsements - Choices
- Graduation Program - Checklists
- Information - University
- Information - Workforce
- Graduation Program - Glossary
Foundation High School Program

A new, more flexible graduation program that allows students to pursue their interests will be in place for all students who enter high school, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

The program contains up to four parts:

- A 22-credit foundation program which is the core of the new Texas high school diploma
- Five endorsement* options that allow students to focus on a related series of courses
- A higher performance category called Distinguished Level of Achievement
- Performance Acknowledgments that note outstanding achievement

The Foundation requirements (22 credits) include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (4 credits)</td>
<td></td>
<td>English I · English II · English III · An advanced English course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics (3 credits)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Algebra I · Geometry · An advanced math course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (3 credits)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Biology · Integrated Physics &amp; Chemistry or an advanced science course · An advanced science course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies (3 credits)</td>
<td></td>
<td>World History or World Geography · U.S. History · Economics (one-half credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Other Than English (2 credits)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 credits in the same language or 2 credits from Computer Science I, II, III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education (1 credit)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fine Arts (1 credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrated proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Endorsements Total credits with endorsements 26

Enhancements

Additionally, a student may earn the Distinguished Level of Achievement and/or a Performance Acknowledgment for outstanding performance. The Distinguished Level of Achievement must be earned to be admitted to a Texas public university under the Top 10 percent automatic admission law.

Distinguished Level of Achievement

- Foundation Program requirements
- 4 credits in math including Algebra II
- 4 credits in science
- at least 1 endorsement

Performance Acknowledgments

- dual credit course
- bilingualism and biliteracy
- PSAT, ACT’s Plan, SAT or ACT
- Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exam
- earning a nationally or internationally recognized business or industry certification or license

* A student entering 9th grade must indicate an endorsement he or she plans to follow. A student may change or add an endorsement at any time.

A student may graduate without earning an endorsement if, after his or her sophomore year, the student’s parent signs a form permitting the student to omit the endorsement requirement.
Choices determine options

Most of the very best jobs available now and in the future require education and training beyond a high school diploma. Whether you intend to pursue a high-demand, industry workforce credential from a community or technical college or a traditional four-year degree from a university, the choices made in high school will determine your future options.

To best prepare yourself now for the transition to post-high school education or quality workforce training, choosing and taking the right classes is essential. The Distinguished Level of Achievement will ensure the best preparation for your future.

Why it matters — Benefits

The Distinguished Level of Achievement opens a world of educational and employment opportunities for you beyond high school. The Distinguished Level of Achievement will:

- Allow you to compete for Top 10% automatic admissions eligibility at any Texas public university;
- Position you among those first in line for a TEXAS Grant* to help pay for university tuition and fees; and
- Ensure you are a more competitive applicant at the most selective colleges and universities.

*Must be financially qualified

What it means

The Distinguished Level of Achievement requires more math and more science than the Foundation High School Program. The Distinguished Level of Achievement requires:

- A total of four credits in math, including Algebra II;
- A total of four credits in science; and
- Successful completion of an endorsement in your area of interest.

Advantages

- Opportunity to earn an endorsement in an area of interest
- More college and university options
- More financial aid options
- Better preparation for college-level coursework at community/technical colleges and universities
- Opportunity for immediate enrollment in classes related to your chosen field of study
- Strong foundation to successfully complete an industry workforce credential or college degree
**Endorsements**

For the first time, students will be able to earn one or more endorsements as part of their graduation requirements. Endorsements consist of a related series of courses that are grouped together by interest or skill set. They provide students with in-depth knowledge of a subject area.

Students must select an endorsement* in the ninth grade. Districts and charters are not required to offer all endorsements. If only one endorsement is offered, it must be multi-disciplinary studies.

Students earn an endorsement by completing the curriculum requirements for the endorsement, including 4th credit of math and science and 2 additional elective credits.

**Students can choose from 5 endorsement areas**

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)**
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses related to STEM
- Mathematics
- Science
- Combination of no more than two of the categories listed above

**Business and Industry (one of the following or a combination of areas)**
- Agriculture
- Arts
- Audio/Video
- Finance
- Marketing
- Food and Natural Resources
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Technology Applications
- Architecture and Construction
- Technology and Communications
- Business Management and Administration
- Transportation or Distribution and Logistics
- English electives in public speaking, debate, advanced broadcast journalism, advanced journalism including newspaper and yearbook

**Public Service (one of the following)**
- Human Services
- Law
- Corrections and Security
- Health Science
- Public Safety
- Education and Training
- Government and Public Administration
- Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC)

**Arts and Humanities (one of the following)**
- 2 levels each in two languages other than English (LOTE)
- 4 levels in the same LOTE
- Courses from one or two areas (music, theater, art, dance) in fine arts
- English electives not included in Business and Industry
- Social Studies
- American Sign Language (ASL)

**Multi-Disciplinary Studies (one of the following)**
- 4 advanced courses from other endorsement areas
- 4 credits in each foundation subject area, including English IV and chemistry and/or physics
- 4 credits in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or dual credit selected from English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, LOTE or fine arts

*Visit your school counselor to learn more about your options. Students may earn more than one endorsement.*
8th Grade

- **Review** choices offered under the Foundation High School Program and the Endorsements to decide on your future academic path.
- **Select** the endorsement that best fits your area of personal interest and the major you plan to study in college.
- **Recognize** that most college entrance requirements include rigorous advanced courses including Algebra II, higher-level science courses and languages other than English.

9th/10th Grade

- **Monitor** high school credits; be sure to meet all local and state requirements by the end of the senior year.
- **Take** dual enrollment or Advanced Placement courses if possible to earn college credit while still in high school.
- **Keep** list of awards, honors and extracurricular activities for scholarship and college applications.
- **Research** colleges or universities you are interested in attending. **Check** admission and application requirements and timelines.
- **Explore** interests and take advantage of Career Day opportunities.
- **Attend** college nights hosted by your high school. **Talk** with school representatives about the types of financial aid available.
- **Take** the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in your sophomore year for practice. In your junior year, take the PSAT for eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Students who take the PSAT or ACT’s PLAN tend to score higher on the SAT or ACT than those who do not.

11th/12th Grade

- **Take** dual enrollment or Advanced Placement courses if possible to earn college credit while you are still in high school.
- **Check** with your counselor’s office to learn about available scholarships. Be sure to apply early and for as many scholarships as possible. Do not limit yourself to local scholarships.
- **Consider** taking SAT/ACT preparation classes. **Sign up** and take the ACT and/or SAT test, preferably in your junior year but no later than the fall of your senior year.
- **Fill out** the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) early in the spring of your senior year.
- **Apply** to college during the fall of your senior year.

If you plan to pursue technical training or enter the workforce after graduation, see the Information - Workforce Resources page or visit Texas Reality Check at www.texasrealitycheck.com.
Resources

House Bill 5
www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx
In 2013, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 5 creating a new graduation plan for Texas students — the Foundation High School Program. This webpage provides an array of information including:

- A side-by-side comparison of the Foundation High School Program and the previous graduation plans (PDF)
- A Foundation High School Program Frequently Asked Questions (PDF)
- Approved Foundation High School Program Rules — Detailed information about the state’s graduation plan (PDF)

Compare College TX
www.comparecollegetx.com
Compare College TX is an interactive, mobile-friendly web tool designed to help students and parents learn more about Texas public universities and community/technical colleges.

Did you know...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Eligible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>students can earn college credit while still in high school by taking Advanced Placement courses and earning high scores on the AP tests or by enrolling in and passing dual credit courses?</td>
<td>students ranked in the Top 10 percent of their graduating class from an accredited public or private Texas high school are eligible for automatic admission to any Texas public university if they have completed the Distinguished Level of Achievement?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earnings</th>
<th>Tuition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>over their lifetime, high school graduates with a bachelor’s degree earn 84 percent more* than a high school graduate?</td>
<td>the highest ranking graduate at each Texas public high school receives a certificate from the Texas Education Agency that can be used as a scholarship to cover tuition costs at any Texas public college or university?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Career

If you are considering going straight into the workforce or into a technical training program following graduation, you still need to complete your high school education and earn a high school diploma.

While in high school, you will want to:

- **Look** at the five endorsements offered under the Foundation High School Program.
- **Determine** your area of interest.
- **Complete** your selected endorsement along with the required foundation program to earn your high school diploma.
- **Learn** about available jobs, and any required post-high school or technical training.
- **Explore** new career opportunities.
- **Research** wage and occupation information, required levels of education and training requirements.
- **Discover** your interests and abilities; use labor market resources at [www.texasrealitycheck.com](http://www.texasrealitycheck.com/) and at [www.texasworkforce.org/customers/jsemp/career-exploration-trends.html](http://www.texasworkforce.org/customers/jsemp/career-exploration-trends.html).
- **Research** which jobs are among the fastest and most in-demand in Texas at [www.texascaresonline.com/hotshots/hotshotslists.asp](http://www.texascaresonline.com/hotshots/hotshotslists.asp).

Community College & Career Schools

- **Find** training and certifications for specific occupations or skills through community colleges or career schools and colleges at [www.texasworkforce.org/svcs/propschools/career-schools-colleges.html](http://www.texasworkforce.org/svcs/propschools/career-schools-colleges.html).

Did you know...

- Many of the high-demand jobs require some postsecondary education?
- Students attending community colleges or trade schools may also be eligible for state or federal financial aid?
- High school graduates with a workforce certificate from a community or technical college earn 20 percent more than those with only a high school diploma?

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1. Texas Workforce Commission
2. Get the facts at [www.collegeforalltexans.com](http://www.collegeforalltexans.com) or [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov)
3. Center on Education and the Workforce, “Certificates: Gateway to Gainful Employment and College Degrees,” June 2012. Georgetown University
Foundation High School Program
The basic 22-credit graduation program for Texas public school students.

Endorsements
Areas of specialized study. The areas are:
• Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) • Business and Industry
• Arts and Humanities • Public Service
• Multidisciplinary Studies
A district or charter that offers only one endorsement must offer Multidisciplinary Studies.

Distinguished Level of Achievement
A high level of academic achievement earned by going beyond the Foundation High School Program. It requires a total of 26 course credits, including Algebra II, a fourth science credit and an endorsement. A student must earn this designation to be eligible for Top 10 percent automatic admission to a Texas public university.

Performance Acknowledgments
Students may earn an additional acknowledgment on their diploma because of outstanding performance in areas such as dual credit courses and bilingualism and biliteracy; on Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, PSAT, ACT’s Plan, the SAT or ACT exams; or by earning a nationally- or internationally-recognized business or industry certification.

Course Credit
A unit of measure awarded for successful completion of a course. Completion of a one semester course typically earns one-half credit for a student.

Industry Workforce Credential
A state, nationally, or internationally-recognized credential that aligns with the knowledge and skills standards identified by an association or government entity representing a particular profession or occupation and valued by business or industry. Examples include a credential for certified nurse aid (CNA) or the automotive service excellence (ASE) certification in the automotive industry.

STAAR
State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) is the state-mandated test given annually to students in grades 3-8 and in five high school courses.

EOC
STAAR end-of-course exams are state mandated tests given during the final weeks of a course. In addition to meeting graduation course requirements, students are required to pass five end-of-course exams to earn a diploma from a Texas public high school. Those five exams are given when a student takes English I and II, Biology, Algebra I and U.S. History courses.
Distinguished Level of Achievement
26 Credits • Algebra II Required • Eligible for Top 10% Automatic Admissions to Texas Public Universities

22 Credits for the Foundation High School Program

Requirements of 1 Endorsement
(including 4th credit of Math and Science and 2 additional electives)

STEM
Business & Industry
Public Service
Arts & Humanities
Multi-Disciplinary Studies

Be sure to visit your school counselor to learn more about your options. Students may earn more than one endorsement.

Texas Education Agency • Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board • Texas Workforce Commission