

**Graduation Toolkit
Information for Planning
Your High School Years &
Beyond**
Foundation High School Program



Fort Worth
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



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Foundation High School Program

- A new more flexible graduation program that allows students to pursue their interests.

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 achievements



Distinguished Level of Achievement (26 credits)

- English - 4 credits
 - English I
 - English II
 - English III
 - An advanced English course
- Mathematics - 4 credits
 - Algebra I
 - Geometry
 - Algebra II
 - An advanced Math course
- Science - 4 credits
 - Biology
 - Integrated Physics & Chemistry
 - 2 Advanced Science courses
- Social Studies - 4 credits
 - World History
 - World Geography
 - U.S. History
 - U.S. Government (one-half credit)
 - Economics (one-half credit)
- Languages Other Than English - 2 credits
 - 2 credits in the same language or
 - 2 credits from Computer Science I, II, III
- Physical Education - 1 credit
- Fine Arts - 1 credit
- Health - 0.5 credit
- Speech - 0.5 credit
- Electives - 5 credits

****Students may opt to Foundation-only with 22 credits only after completing the Sophomore year****

Distinguished Level of Achievement - Benefits

Choices Determine Options

- Most of the very best jobs available now and in the future require education and training beyond a high school diploma.
- 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 the TEXAS grant to help pay for university tuition and fees
- Ensure you are a more competitive applicant at the most selective colleges and universities.

Distinguished Level of Achievement - Benefits

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



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 Math and Science and 2 additional electives)

* STEM

*Business & Industry

*Public Service

*Arts & Humanities

*Multi-Disciplinary
Studies



Endorsements

- 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.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses related to STEM
- Mathematics
- Science
- Computer Science

Students can choose one or a combination of two of the categories listed above.



Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Must complete one of the following:

1. A coherent sequence of courses for 4 or more credits in CTE. The final course in the sequence must be selected from the STEM career cluster.
2. A coherent sequence of four credits in computer science selected certain courses.
3. A total of 5 credits in math by successfully completing Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and 2 additional Math courses for which Algebra II is a prerequisite.
4. A total of 5 credits in science by successfully completing biology, chemistry, physics, and 2 additional science courses.
5. In addition to Algebra II, chemistry, and physics, a coherent sequence of 3 additional credits from no more than two of the three areas listed in 1, 2, 3, and 4.



Business & Industry

- Agriculture
- Arts, Audio/Video
- Finance
- Marketing
- Food and Natural Resources
- Hospitality and Tourism
- 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 including newspaper and yearbook.

Students can choose one or a combination of areas.

Business & Industry

Must complete one of the following:

1. Coherent sequence of courses for 4 or more credits in CTE. The final course in the sequence must be selected from one of the courses listed previously.
2. Four English elective credits by selecting three levels in one of the following areas:
 - Advanced Broadcast Journalism
 - Advanced Journalism: Newspaper
 - Advanced Journalism: Yearbook
 - Debate
 - Public Speaking
3. Four technology application credits listed below:
 - 3-D Modeling & Animation
 - Digital Art & Animation
 - Digital Communication
 - Digital Design & Media Production
 - Digital Video & Audio Design
 - Independent Study in Evolving/Emerging Technologies
 - Web Communication
 - Web Design
 - Web Game Development
4. Coherent sequence of four credits from 1, 2, or 3



Public Service

- Human Services
- Law
- Corrections and Security
- Health Science
- Public Safety
- Education and Training
- Government and Public Administration
- Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC)



Students may choose one of the categories listed above.

Public Service

Must complete one of the following:

1. Coherent sequence of courses for 4 or more credits in CTE. The final course in the sequence must be selected from one of the courses listed previously.
2. Four courses in JROTC



Arts and Humanities

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

Students may choose one of the categories listed above.



Arts and Humanities

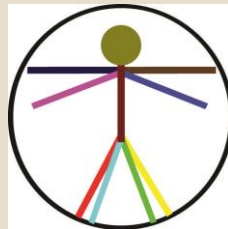
Must complete one of the following:

1. Total of 5 social studies credits
2. Four levels of the same language in language other than English
3. Two levels of the same language in language other than English and two levels in a different language in language other than English
4. Four levels of American Sign Language
5. Coherent sequence of 4 credits by selecting courses from 1 or 2 categories or disciplines in fine arts or innovative courses approved by the commissioner
6. Four English elective credits by selecting from the following:
 - AP English Literature & Composition
 - Creative Writing
 - English IV
 - Humanities
 - IB Lang Studies A1 Higher Level
 - Independent Study in English
 - Literary Genres
 - Research and Technical Writing
 - Communication Applications

Multi-Disciplinary Studies

- 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, language other than English, or fine arts

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





Multi-Disciplinary Studies

Must complete one of the following:

1. Four advanced courses that prepare a student to enter the workforce successfully or postsecondary education w/o remediation from w/in one endorsement area or among endorsement areas that are not in a coherent sequence.
2. Four credits in each of the four foundation subject areas to include English IV and chemistry and/or physics.
3. Four credits in advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, or dual credit selected from English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, languages other than English, or fine arts.

Graduation Program - Checklist



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- 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.



Graduation Program - Checklist



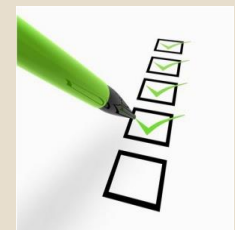
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- Monitor** high school credits; be sure to meet all **local and state requirements** by the end of the senior year.

- Take dual enrollment** or **Advanced Placement** courses if possible to earn college credit while still in high school.

- Keep** a 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.



Graduation Program - Checklist

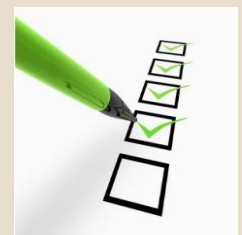


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- ❑ **Explore** interests and take advantage of **Career Day** opportunities.

- ❑ **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.



Graduation Program - Checklist



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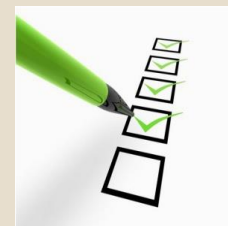
- Take dual enrollment** or **Advanced Placement** courses if possible to earn college credit while you are still in high school.

- 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.





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
- A Foundation High School Program Frequently Asked Questions
- Approved Foundation High School Program Rules – Detailed information about the state’s graduation plan.

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...



Credit

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?

Eligible

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?

Earnings

Over their lifetime, high school graduates with a bachelor's degree earn 84 percent more than a high school graduate?

Tuition

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?

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.

Career, continued

- Explore** new career opportunities.
- Research** wage and occupation information, required level of education and training requirements.
- Discover** your interests and abilities; use labor market resources at www.texasrealitycheck.com and at www.texasworkforce.org/customers/jsemp/career-exploration-trends.html
- Research** which jobs are amount the fastest and most in-demand in Texas at www.texascaresonline.com/hotshots/hotshotslist.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

Did You Know...



Training

Many of the high-demand jobs will require some post-secondary education?

Credential

That Texas public school students can earn a Performance Acknowledgement with their diploma by earning a nationally- or internationally-recognized credential for a specific professional occupation, such as certified nurses' aid certification or computer tech certification while in high school?

Tuition

Students attending community colleges or trade schools may also be eligible for state or federal financial aid?

Earnings

Over their lifetime, 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?



Foundation High School Program

The basic 22- credit graduation program for Texas public school students.

- **Students may opt to Foundation-only with 22 credits only after completing the Sophomore year.*

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 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 Acknowledgements

Students may earn an additional acknowledgement on their diploma because of outstanding performance in areas such as:

- dual credit courses,
- bilingualism and biliteracy;
- 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.
- Industry Workforce Credentials align with the knowledge and skill 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 or the automotive service excellence certification in the automotive industry.

STAAR

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

- 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.



Questions???

***Please contact your school counselor or the Academic Advisement office
(academic.advisement@fwisd.org) 817-814-2575.***

** Presentation adopted from “Graduation Toolkit” by Texas Education Agency*



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