

Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements are based on the units of credit earned in high school coursework. A unit of credit is defined as 120 hours of instructional time, except for all science courses, and career and technical education courses is defined as 150 hours of instructional time (NDCC 15.1-21-03).

In order to be eligible for graduation from the Bismarck School District, students shall satisfactorily complete the minimum required coursework established by the School Board and State statute as contained in NDCC 15.1-21-02.1, and shall have earned 24 graduation credit requirements to include:

- Four credits of English
- Three credits of Mathematics, including 1 credit required in Algebra I (unless waived by administration through specified criteria)
- Two credits of Physical Education
- Three credits of Lab Science, including 1 credit required in Physical Science and 1 credit in Biology (Life Science)
- Three credits of Social Studies, including 1 credit required in American History, .5 credit in Government, .5 credit in Economics, and 1 credit in Global Studies/World History
- Three elective credits in foreign or Native American languages, fine arts, or career and technical education courses
- Six more additional credits

In order to graduate, each student must be enrolled as a full-time student (enrolled in a minimum of 5 half-units of credit bearing courses) in a secondary high school of the Bismarck Public School District the entire last semester of their senior year, unless the student's parent/guardian has moved into the district during the last semester. To graduate from South Central High School, students must meet the established alternative high school graduation requirements. Moreover, it is recognized that some students will be involved in special and adaptive programs, whereas successful completion will result in graduation. Any exception to this provision shall require authorization from the superintendent or their designee.

A student who wants to become an "Early Graduate," must complete their educational program by the end of the first semester of their senior year and accept the early graduation guidelines as prescribed by the secondary school in which they are enrolled. A student who wishes to accelerate their education (graduate at the end of their junior year) must meet the guidelines established by the secondary school in which they are enrolled.

Bismarck Public Schools will grant credit toward graduation for approved dual credit and career and technical education courses taken at any postsecondary institution accredited by a regional accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of Education. When determining full-time high school student status, dual enrollment courses can account for no more than 2 half units of the required minimum of 5 half units. Post secondary enrollment standards are contained in GACCA.

Other college courses taken for credit may be taken with the approval of the principal, but will not count for high school graduation. Correspondence courses approved by the principal may be counted in partial satisfaction of graduation requirements.

Students must have completed the required course of study for graduation in order to participate in commencement exercises. Foreign exchange students may participate in commencement exercises and will receive a certificate of attendance.

Students receiving services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for a disability may request to continue to attend Bismarck Public Schools until the student has met their academic goals or upon completion of the school year in which they turn 21 with the decision to be made by the IEP team. Students may participate in the graduation ceremony of their original school cohort and be awarded a diploma if completing high school or certificate of attendance if continuing to attend. Upon reaching 21 or upon meeting IEP goals, they may participate in the ceremony of their final year at Bismarck Public Schools and be awarded a diploma.

There will be no formal graduation exercises for elementary and middle schools.