

Board File: IKF

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Douglas County School District is committed to ensuring that every student is college and career ready and receives a high school diploma. To receive a high school diploma, district students must meet the requirements set forth in this policy.

Minimum Credits and Credit Calculation

To graduate and receive a diploma from a district school, a student must earn a minimum of 24 credits as set forth in more detail below. A unit of credit is defined as the amount of credit given for the successful completion of a course which meets at least 40 minutes daily, five days per week for one academic year (36 weeks) on a traditional schedule or a four-or-more-hour college semester hour course (1 credit). One unit of credit is equivalent to 120 clock hours. One half credit is given for successful completion of a class which meets at least 40 minutes daily five days per week for one semester (18 weeks) on a traditional schedule or a two-or-more-hour college semester course. The district will use these measurement standards to calculate credits earned by students who have non-traditional schedule.

District students begin accruing credits towards earning a diploma and graduation upon completion of high school level courses identified in IKF-R-1.

Students with disabilities and students involved in the criminal justice system must be provided access to all graduation pathways provided by this policy and must have the opportunity to earn a high school diploma from the district.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate and receive a diploma from a district school, a student must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. Academic Requirements
 - a. Attain a minimum of 24 units of credit in the following areas:
 - **16 Credits in the following CORE Curricular Areas as follows**
 - Language Arts 4.0
 - Mathematics 3.0*
 - Science 3.0
 - Social Studies 3.0 **
 - Practical Arts 1.0
 - Fine Arts 1.0
 - Physical Education 1.0

*At least one of the three credits of mathematics must include Algebra 1
**At least 0.5 credits must include Civics/US Government
 - **8 Credits in Electives**
 - b. To earn credit in a class, students must demonstrate proficiency on the content

standards embedded in the course. Documentation that these standards have been achieved will be through teacher judgement based on District assessments, end of course tests or other measurements, as well as satisfaction of other stipulated course expectations.

Students who do not achieve these standards will be enrolled in courses or programs as prescribed by the school principal and faculty.

Course content and/or graduation requirements may be adjusted for those students with individualized education plans (IEPs) in accordance with applicable law.

With prior approval of the high school principal, up to a total of six credits of approved correspondence, college/university courses (for 11th/12th grade students only through the post-secondary options act), and/or online courses from an accredited educational institution, as identified in IKF-R-2, may be used to meet either the electives or required portion of the academic requirements to receive a diploma.

2. Document a minimum of twenty hours community service while enrolled as a high school student as identified in IKFB.
3. Demonstrate college and career readiness via one of the approved methods. Students must provide documentation of meeting or exceeding the required level of readiness in both Mathematics and English. (beginning with the graduating class of 2021)
4. Completion of the requirements and goals as listed on a student's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) and/or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which may include modified content standards. (beginning with the class of 2021)

Residency Requirements

A diploma will be issued from the school in which the student spent his/her last full semester prior to meeting the district's graduation requirements unless prior written arrangements have been secured from the principal of the receiving school. Ninth, tenth, and first semester eleventh grade students who transfer into a district high school must satisfy all of the graduation requirements set forth in this policy to receive a diploma from a district school.

Second semester eleventh grade students and twelfth grade students who transfer into a district school must satisfy all of the district's "Core Credit" requirements and at least 6.5 credits of the "Elective Credit" requirement, the district's Responsible Citizenship Expectations, and the district's community service requirement to receive a diploma from a district school.

Participation in Graduation Exercises

To participate in graduation exercises students must meet all of the following:

1. Successfully complete all of the "academic requirements," as described above, including correspondence and other out-of-school coursework no later than forty-eight hours prior to graduation exercises;

2. Be a full time student (as defined as taking the equivalent of five classes per semester which are transcribed through a district school);
3. Demonstrate behavior (during the semester prior to graduation) deemed by the building principal, to be compatible with the district's Responsible Citizenship Expectations and, as described in IKF-R-1; and
4. Cooperate fully with the school's staff during all school sponsored senior activities, including graduation exercises.

Graduation Attire

- A. Schools may require students participating in graduation ceremonies to wear the designated attire, including but not limited to the cap and gown. Students may adorn their graduation attire or wear recognized objects of cultural or religious significance, subject to the following definitions and limitations.
 1. "Adornment" means something attached to, or worn with, but not replacing or covering in its entirety, graduation attire, and is not limited to decorating graduation caps;
 2. "Cultural" means a recognized practice or tradition of a certain group of people and includes only a protected class based on disability, race, ethnicity, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, family composition, religion, age, national origin, or ancestry. "Cultural" does not include objects related to tribal regalia (except for qualifying students), incitement, defamation, fraud, obscenity, child pornography, fighting words, or threats.
- B. Nothing in this policy shall impair a school's ability to prohibit an adornment that is likely to cause substantial disruption of or material interference with the graduation ceremony.
- C. Subject to the following definitions and limitations, a qualifying student may wear tribal regalia during a graduation ceremony, except that a qualifying student who is not an enrolled member of a tribe shall not wear eagle feathers. Wearing tribal regalia includes decorating graduation attire with tribal regalia.
 1. "Qualifying student" means a student who is a descendant of people who were living in North America prior to the time people from Europe began settling in North America, is an enrolled member of a federally recognized or state-recognized Indian tribe, or is a lineal descendant of a tribally enrolled parent or grandparent.
 2. "Tribal regalia" means a tribe's traditional dress or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance and includes the following items of cultural significance:
 - i. Tribal symbols;
 - ii. Beads; and
 - iii. Feathers, in line with the federal "Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918".
 3. "Tribe" means a tribe, band, nation, or Alaskan Native village that is recognized by federal law or that a state formally acknowledges.

Certificate of Attendance (foreign exchange students)

A foreign exchange student may participate in the high school graduation ceremony and receive a certificate of attendance if the student has successfully completed all enrolled courses.

Notification of Postsecondary Opportunities

Students are encouraged to begin planning during their high school years so they will be adequately prepared for postsecondary opportunities upon graduation. The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) is required to provide information to the parents/guardians of eighth grade students about postsecondary educational opportunities including admission requirements for institutions of higher education in Colorado. Prior to a student's enrollment in ninth grade courses, the District will make information available to the parents/guardians of eighth grade students concerning the courses the District offers that meet the CCHE admission requirements.

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Revised: March 19, 1991

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LEGAL REFS.:

C.R.S. 22-1-103 through 22-1-111

C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(ff)

C.R.S. 22-1-142

C.R.S. 22-1-142.5

CROSS REFS.:

IKE, Promotion and Retention of Students

IKFA, Early Graduation

IKF-R-3, Graduation Competencies (beginning with the Class of 2021)

JECBA, Admission of Foreign Students and/or the School District.