

# FRESHMAN/SOPHOMORE HANDBOOK 2020-2021



# Lewisville Independent School District

## 9th-10th Grade Handbook

The LISD Guidance Department has created this handbook, with input from campus high school counselors, as an aid for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and parents. We hope the information will be helpful when formulating your child’s four-year plan. Please feel free to contact the counseling staff at your child’s high school if you have any questions about the information included in this handbook.

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# The Road to Graduation

## **Grade Promotion**

The following credit requirements shall be met before a student is promoted:

Sophomore: 6 credits

Junior: 12 credits

Senior: 18 credits

## **Credit Accrual**

Credit for courses may be received through LISD's credit by exam (CBE). For courses without prior instruction, a mastery level of 80% is required for credit. For courses where the required amount of prior instruction has been certified, a mastery level of 70% is required for credit to be awarded. A schedule for testing dates can be obtained from the campus counselor. Students who are fluent (read, write, and speak) in Spanish, French, German, and Latin may take a CBE to receive their foreign language credit. CBE for mastery can only be taken once.

## **Local Credits**

No local credits count towards high school graduation plans. Students receive local credits for courses that are not state approved as well as P.E. credits in excess of 4.0. Local courses also include courses such as Student Aide, Academic Decathlon, STAAR Remediation, & Student Council. See the High School Course Description Guide (CDG) to determine which courses are state or local. Students are advised to limit the number of courses they take for local credit.

## **Grade Point Values**

Below is a list of the three Grade Point Average (GPA) and their uses:

- Weighted Numerical Scale - GPA used to determine Rank in Class (RIC)
- Weighted 4.0 Scale - NCAA Eligibility Center, scholarships, other requests
- Unweighted 4.0 All Scale - Many colleges and universities

Only grades in the areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Languages Other Than English, Advanced Placement and ACDEC will be used for determining GPA and RIC. The unweighted 4.0 All Scale includes all state credits in GPA.

For Grade Point & Rank in Class, consult the [LISD Course Description Guide](#).

## **State Assessment Requirements**

Students are required to meet the passing standard (or at least make the minimum score) 5 STAAR EOC assessments (English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. history) depending on their graduation program. See the Course Description Guide for more information.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities both at high school and in the community play an important role in the admissions process. Colleges frequently state that they look for students who will make a significant contribution to the college community. Most students can balance academics along with extracurricular activities. Colleges look for a well-rounded student- musicians, editors, actors, photographers, athletes, leaders, volunteers, etc. Beginning in the freshman year, it is recommended that students keep a list of volunteer work and extracurricular activities in their LISD ePortfolio. Each high school has a list of extracurricular activities posted on their website.

## **Make the Most of Your School Day**

High school is a time to make new friends, discover new skills and expand your horizons. Make the most of these opportunities and this time in your life!

- **Participate in class**
  - Ask questions, volunteer answers, participate in discussions
- **Know your teachers**
  - Every teacher has slightly different expectations
- **Have a positive attitude**
  - Go to class ready to learn and confident in your ability to succeed
- **Come to class with your homework done**
  - Missing work affects your grade
- **Ask for help**
  - Tutorials within the school day and after school
- **Get involved**
  - Students who are involved tend to do better academically
  - Colleges look for students who are involved in a variety of activities
- **Make new friends**
  - Make an effort to talk to people
  - Seek out people who have the same interests as you.

## **Parent Action Plan: 9th Grade**

The beginning of high school is an exciting time. Your child may be adjusting to a new school, making new friends and becoming more independent. But your child still needs your help and involvement. Here are some things you can do together to succeed this year.

### **Summer Before High School**

- Visit a college campus together. It's a great way to get your child excited about college. Learn more about how you and your child can [prepare for a campus visit](#).
- Get the facts about what college costs. You may be surprised at how affordable higher education can be. Start by reading [Understanding College Costs](#). Show your child how to explore career ideas. He or she can make a list of interests, talents and favorite activities and start matching them with occupations. Learn more about how your child can [complete a career worksheet](#)
- Come up with fun reading ideas. Look for magazines or newspapers your child may like and talk about the books you loved reading when you were your child's age. If your family makes reading enjoyable, it can become a daily habit.

### **Fall**

- Make sure your child meets with the school counselor. Your child should schedule a meeting to talk about college and career options and to choose the most-appropriate classes. Learn more about [the high school counselor's role](#).
- Help your child set goals for the school year. Working toward specific goals helps your child stay motivated and focused.
- Make a plan to check in regularly about schoolwork. If you keep up with your child's tests, papers and homework assignments, you can celebrate successes and head off problems as a team. Get [homework tips for your child](#).
- Talk about extracurricular activities. Getting involved in clubs and other groups is a great way for your child to identify interests and feel more engaged in school. Read more about [the benefits of extracurriculars](#).

### **Winter**

- Start thinking about financial aid. It's not too early to look into types of aid that could help you cover college costs. Start by reading [7 Things You Need to Know About Financial Aid](#).
- Discuss next year's classes. Make sure your child is challenging him- or herself — and taking the courses college admission officers expect to see. Learn more about the [high school classes that colleges look for](#).

### **Spring**

- Help your child start a college list. Visit [College Search Step-by-Step](#) together to get tips on starting a college search and figuring out what matters most to your child when choosing a college.
- See how much you need to save for college. Use the [College Savings Calculator](#) to get an idea of where you are compared with your savings goal.
- Help your child make summer plans. Summer is a great time to explore interests and learn new skills — and colleges look for students who pursue meaningful summer activities. Find out ways your child can [stay motivated this summer](#).

## What Counts In College Admissions

Parents often ask what criteria are considered most important in their student’s college admissions process. The following chart illustrates responses by college admissions officials. From the chart, it is evident that the quality of courses taken should be a top priority for students planning to pursue a college education after high school.

Grades in College Prep Course & Strength Curriculum	Consider P-AP, AP, dual credit and other college preparation courses.
SAT/ACT Test Scores	Take one or both of these exams if you plan to enter a 4-year institution immediately out of high school.
Grades in All Courses	Apply yourself to all your courses as colleges want to see how well you perform in all subjects.
Admission Essay	Take your time with these and enlist help from parent or teacher.
GPA & Class Rank	All colleges will ask for your rank and GPA.
Counselor Recommendation	If a university requires a recommendation from your counselor it will contain information to provide an overall picture of you as a prospective college student.
School/Community Service	Colleges are looking for students who are more than just good students. They want to see extracurricular and community involvement with passion and persistence

### ***Pre-Advanced Placement and Advancement Placement Programs***

One of the most important things you can do during your high school years as preparation for college is to take courses that are considered “college preparatory” courses, which may include both Pre-Advanced Placement (P-AP) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

The P-AP and AP program, administered by the College Board, is available at LISD secondary schools. This program allows students an opportunity to participate in college preparatory courses. Students can possibly earn college credit while in high school if they show mastery on the AP exams taken in May. P-AP/AP courses allow students to select coursework suited to their academic strengths & interests.

#### Differences from Regular Program

- P-AP/AP courses may take more time and require more work.
- More student motivation and involvement is necessary.

## GPA, CLASS RANK, AND WEIGHTING

### CLASS OF 2019-2020

Calculation of Class Rank	Includes: English, math, science, social studies, LOTE (languages other than English), academic decathlon, an AP courses not associated with these subjects Only courses taken in grades 9-12.	
Exclusions from GPA/RIC	Credit by exam or acceleration (CBE/CBA) HS courses taken in MS	
Weighted Grade System	Level 0 1.0 multiplier	Courses with modified content as decided by a student's ARD committee. Night school, summer school for credit recovery, accelerated courses at LLC
	Level 1 1.1 multiplier	General education courses
	Level 2 1.2 multiplier	Pre-AP, Dual Credit
	Level 3 1.3 multiplier	AP courses, Academic Decathlon, IB courses (students transferring in with IB credit)

### CLASS OF 2021 AND BEYOND

Calculation of Class Rank	Includes: English, math, science, social studies, LOTE (languages other than English), academic decathlon, an AP courses not associated with these subjects. Only courses taken in grades 9-12	<u>Class of 2024 &amp; beyond:</u> AP Spanish taken in MS
Exclusions from GPA/RIC	Credit by exam or acceleration (CBE/CBA) HS courses taken in MS	
Weighted Grade System	Level 0 1.0 multiplier	Courses with modified content as decided by a student's ARD committee, credit recovery courses completed on campus, Night school, summer school for credit recovery, accelerated courses at LLC
	Level 1 1.1 multiplier	General education courses
	Level 2 1.15 multiplier	Pre-AP <u>Class of 2024 and beyond:</u> All non-PreAP and non-AP LOTE
	Level 3 1.2 multiplier	Dual credit courses, AP courses, Academic Decathlon, IB courses (for students transferring in with IB credit)

## **Assessments**

### **Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)**

The **PSAT** is a standardized test that measures *critical reading skills, math problem solving skills and writing skills* important for success in college. Although students are not expected to recall or memorize facts for the PSAT-NMSQT, they need a good working vocabulary and knowledge of arithmetic, elementary algebra, and some geometry.

The PSAT provides first hand practice for the SAT Reasoning Test™ and also is the only route of entry into the **National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC)** scholarship programs. Each high school pays for all first time sophomores to take the PSAT. Student scores can be used as a diagnostic tool by both parents and students to identify strengths and weaknesses.

The PSAT, when taken as a junior, is the first step in entering the scholarship programs conducted by the **National Merit Scholarship Corporation**. Students also become eligible for access to MyRoad™ (see below).

The **SAT/ACT** college entrance examinations are an aspect of the college admissions process. The majority of colleges and universities pay close attention to the SAT/ACT because, when taken together with grades, they constitute a reliable predictor of academic achievement and college success.

## **College and Career**

### **MyRoad™**

MyRoad™--PSAT/NMSQT test-takers in high school receive access to MyRoad's in-depth major and career information, so they can chart their path to college and beyond. MyRoad is designed to make the process of choosing a major, college, or career, quicker and easier for students.

MyRoad is the easy-to-use, interactive Website that enables high school students to explore majors, colleges, and careers. The journey starts with a Web-based assessment that identifies students' strengths, learning preferences, motivators, and development opportunities. Students can use the findings of this validated assessment as a springboard into MyRoad's extensive database of the latest college, major, and career information.

How students benefit...

- Discover who they are and what they're capable of
- Learn about careers from professionals in the real world
- Relieve stress from the college application process
- Organize their resumes
- Narrow college choices to a manageable list
- Bring parents into the planning process

## **AchieveTexas**

The AchieveTexas College and Career Initiative centers on establishing career clusters in all of our schools as a strategy for improving high school completion rates and college and workforce readiness. It is based on the belief that the curricula of the 21st century should combine rigorous academics with relevant career education that incorporates the College Readiness Standards, personalized learning environments, academic and social support, relevant teaching and learning designed to promote postsecondary success, and effective educators and leaders. Career clusters are a way of reorganizing learning around programs of study that will prepare students for an ever more competitive global economy.

In Texas, we have adopted the U. S. Department of Education's Career Clusters System. The 16 broad career clusters and 79 programs of study support the Governor's Industry Cluster Initiative, which identifies high-growth/high-paying jobs for the 21st- century Texas economy.

AchieveTexas offers guidance to help students plan their educational experience based on their career goals and allows students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful transition into skilled employment, advanced training, an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or technical certification. Career programs of study represent a recommended sequence of courses based on a student's personal interests and career goals. The idea is to connect what students learn in school every day to what they aspire to do tomorrow, thus increasing engagement with school and motivation to achieve.

### **AchieveTexas 16 Career Clusters:**

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology and Communication
- Business Management and Administration
- Education and Training
- Finance
- Government and Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Public Safety, Corrections and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing, Sale and Services
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

## **Choices 360**

Choices is a program designed to help you explore and discover possibilities for future education, training and careers. Choices 360 is your personal guide to finding what interests, abilities and values you have that should be considered in choosing a career path. Choices 360 platform can be accessed through the LISD Learning Hub.

- **Find the Right Career:** Find careers that match your interests
  - Learn more about yourself by taking inventories
  - Learn about occupations that best fit your interests, abilities and values
  - Explore occupations and save your favorites
  - Explore education requirements to prepare yourself for an occupation
  
- **Explore Careers:** Learn about hundreds of different careers – everything from accountant to zookeeper. Get the “inside story” on careers by checking out multimedia interviews with real people. Explore education requirements to prepare yourself for an occupation.
  
- **Explore Schools and Financial Aid:** Search for schools that offer the education and training you need. Find financial aid programs to help you achieve your goals.
  
- **Build Your Own Career Portfolio:** Keep track of your career exploration activities, plan your future, and create a resume.

## ***Other Sources of Information***

- ❖ **Career Questionnaire (College Board):** <http://www.collegeboard.com/apps/careers/index>
  - Website for understanding the vertical process of high school to college.
  
- ❖ **Texas Reality Check:** <http://www.texasrealitycheck.com/>
  - Website for discovering what a potential job might pay, what you might need to live your daily life on your own, what jobs match your interests and skills.
  
- ❖ **MyMajors:** <http://www.mymajors.com/>
  - A great way for students to think about questions to consider when selecting a major. Linked to 140 school counseling sites, 45 university academic advisement sites and the National Academic Advisement Association.
  
- ❖ **Planning a Career (Adventures in Education):** <http://www.aie.org/>
  - Website for college planning.
  
- ❖ **Occupational Outlook Handbook:** <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>
  - The handbook created by the Federal Bureau of labor statistics gives the most accurate information about potential job opportunities.

- ❖ **FedWorld Information Network:** <http://www.fedworld.ntis.gov>
- ❖ **Military Career Guide Online:** <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/military/military-careers.htm>
- ❖ **Todays Military:** <http://www.todaysmilitary.com>
- ❖ **The Riley Guide - Career Guidance:** <http://rileyguide.com>
- ❖ **America's Job Bank:** <http://www.ajb.dni.us/>
  - Database of careers and online search for possible job opportunities
- ❖ **Netline Career Center:** <http://www.tradepub.com/>
  - Online magazines grouped according to careers
- ❖ **Career Resource Center:** <http://www.careers.org/>
  - Career guide to explore potential careers
- ❖ **Health Careers:** <http://www.healthmanagementcareers.org/>
- ❖ **College Search Navigator:** <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>
  - College research website
- ❖ **College Money:** [www.collegeforalltexas.com](http://www.collegeforalltexas.com)
  - A calculator to determine your college financial needs

## Timeline for College Admissions

### Grade 9

- Attend the College Fair in September and start talking with college representatives.
- Study: grades go on the permanent transcript.
- Check grades at every progress period.
- Select challenging classes.
- Use Choices 360 and Skyward to update your 4 year plan and explore your interests and skills for possible career choices.
- Explore extracurricular interests and volunteer work.
- Create a file to keep a list of honors, awards, and activities.
- Pursue reading outside of school.

- Visit college campuses.
- Read the 9th/10th Grade Handbook.

### **Grade 10**

- Attend the UNT College Fair on September 14th, 2015, and discuss individual college admissions with representatives.
- Take PSAT in October.
- Request information from colleges.
- Evaluate PSAT results.
- Use MyRoad™ and Choices 360 to investigate colleges and careers.
- Use Choices 360 to create your academic resumé and compare favorite colleges.
- Gain knowledge as counselors outline the college application process and standardized tests.
- Search the Internet and books for college information.
- Update your list of honors, awards, and activities.
- Take AP exams in May, if appropriate.
- Make productive use of summer.
- Visit college campuses.

### **Grade 11**

- Attend the College Fair held each year in September, and discuss individual college admissions with representatives (bring a list of questions to ask).
- Read the Junior/Senior Handbook:
- Try for a leadership role within your activity or organization.
- Talk to college representatives that visit your campus during lunches.
- Take the PSAT in October.
- Use Choices 360 to create or update your academic resumé and explore your college choices.
- Meet with your counselor in the spring schedule college visits.
- Take standardized tests in March-June.
- Begin formulating a resume.
- Begin looking into college admissions essays.
- Meet with college reps that visit your high school campus.
- Get on mailing lists of colleges.
- Visit colleges

### **Grade 12**

- Attend the College Fair in September, and discuss individual college admissions with representatives (bring a list of questions to ask).
- Read the Junior/Senior Handbook:
- Use Career Cruising to create or update your academic resume.
- Meet with college representatives that come to your campus.
- Line up recommendations.

- Schedule appointments with your counselor to go over college admissions questions.
- Complete college applications.
- Check your campus website and office for scholarships on a regular basis.
- Sign up with fastweb.com and salliemae.com for scholarships.
- January – Complete FAFSA (financial aid application) online.
- May 1st – National reply date for regular and early action

### ***Top Ten Percent Rule – Automatic Admissions Law***

Top students are eligible for automatic admission to any public university in Texas under admissions policies. Under TEC 51.803(a-2), students who are in the **top 10 percent** of their graduating class are *eligible for automatic admission to most public university in Texas*.

To be eligible for automatic admission, a student must:

- Graduate in the top 10 percent of his or her class at a public or private high school in Texas, or graduate in the top 10 percent of his or her class from a high school operated by the U.S. Department of Defense and be a Texas resident or eligible to pay resident tuition;
- Graduate on the Foundation HS Program at the Distinguished Level of Achievement; and
- Enroll in college no more than two years after graduating from high school; and
- Submit an application to a Texas public university for admission before the institution's application deadline (check with the university regarding specific deadlines).
- Students admitted through this route may still be required to provide SAT or ACT scores, although these scores are not used for admissions purposes. Students must also take the THEA test, unless exempted from the test requirement. Check with the admissions office regarding THEA, SAT, and ACT requirements.

After a student is admitted, the university may review the student's high school records to determine if the student is prepared for college-level work. A student who needs additional preparation may be required to take a developmental, enrichment, or orientation course during the semester prior to the first semester of college.

Admission to a university does not guarantee acceptance into a particular college of study or department. *Remember that you may not be admitted even if you are eligible if you do not meet the admission deadline.*

### ***Modifications to Texas' Automatic Admission Law***

Senate Bill 175, passed by the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature in the spring of 2009, modifies TEC 51.802 for The University of Texas at Austin. Under the law:

- The University is to automatically admit enough students to fill 75% of available Texas resident spaces.

- Each fall by September 15<sup>th</sup> The University will notify Texas school officials of the class rank that current high school juniors need to attain by the end of their junior year in order to be automatically admitted two years out of high school.
- Currently admitting top 7% but it is subject to change each year.

## Admission Requirements

**Public Universities** – Under TEC 51.802, the Uniform Admission Policy for admission at a Texas Four-Year Public Institution, students must meet one of the following in order to be eligible for admission:

- Successfully complete the curriculum requirements for the recommended, distinguished or Foundation high school program.
- Satisfy the College Readiness Benchmarks on SAT or ACT assessments.
  - o SAT – 480 EBRW, 530 Math
  - o ACT – 18 English, 22 Reading, 22 Math, 23 Science

**NOTE: The admission offices of specific schools will be able to give you the most current and accurate information about being admitted to their university.**

## Cost of Higher Education

### *Keeping College Costs Down*

- Enroll in challenging courses in high school to avoid taking developmental or remedial courses in college.
- Keep all options open, including: community colleges, technical colleges, universities, and the military.
- Take advanced placement courses and exams and/or dual credit to earn college credit, avoiding the tuition and associated fees for taking the courses on campus. Students placing out of 12-15 hours of college work can save an equivalent of a full semester. According to College Board, the average tuition and fees for a public university in Texas is \$8,240 per year and \$28,500 per year at independent institutions. Public 2 year institutions average \$2,690 per year.

## ***Financial Aid***

### **How to Apply for Financial Aid**

- All students **should** complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*, or **FAFSA**, whether or not they feel they will qualify for financial aid.
- Eighty-five percent of money given to students headed for college comes in the form of loans. That means, of course, that only 15% is scholarship money. Most universities request students complete the Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). *The FAFSA can be submitted in October of the student's senior year.* To estimate expected family contribution you can access the FAFSA home page at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). A "Student Guide to Financial Aid" detailing types of aid available from the federal government is available at no cost by contacting 1-800-433-3243.

### **Texas Grant**

The "Toward Excellence, Access & Success (TEXAS)" Grant Program establishes grants to cover tuition and fees to Texas public and independent colleges and universities, including community colleges and technical schools for students who demonstrate financial need and meet the following requirements:

- Be registered with Selective Service, or be exempt;
- Have a 9 month EFC of no more than \$5,088;
- Be classified by the institution as a Texas resident;
- Have not been convicted of a felony or crime involving a controlled substance;
- Be enrolled at least three-quarter time as:
  - A Baccalaureate student who:
    - Graduated from an accredited public or private high school in Texas;
    - Completed the Foundation, Recommended, or Distinguished Achievement high school program ([or the equivalent](#)); and
    - Enrolled in an undergraduate degree or certificate program at an approved institution within 16 months from high school graduation having not accumulated more than 30 SCH's (excluding credits for dual enrollment or by examination);OR
  - A Baccalaureate student who:
    - Earned an associate's degree from a public or private nonprofit institution of higher education in Texas, and
    - Enrolled in an eligible institution within 12 months after receiving the associate's degree; OR
  - A Baccalaureate student who:
    - Graduated from an accredited public or private high school in Texas May 1, 2013 or later;
    - Completed the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement high school program (or its equivalent); and
    - Enlisted in military service within 12 months of high school graduation and enrolled in an eligible GATI within 12 months of receiving an honorable discharged

Additional Texas Grant funds are available through the Texas Grant II and the Teach for Texas Conditional Grant Programs. See <http://window.state.tx.us/scholars/aid/txtexas.html> and [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)

## Other Opportunities

### *Credit Accrual*

#### **Dual Credit**

Dual credit allows students to enroll in classes that earn both high school and college credits simultaneously. Students are responsible for all financial requirements including tuition, fees and textbooks with the exception of Technical Preparation Career and Technical Education dual credit courses. To take a dual credit course, the following criteria must be met:

- Juniors and seniors are eligible for dual credit with the exception of Language Other Than English courses.
  - The grade earned at the college level will be recorded on the student's high school transcript. Students receiving a D (below 70) will not earn high school credit.
  - Half-credit will be awarded per semester of any college course.

LISD has partnered with two local colleges in order to provide more dual credit courses. Students may take courses on the college campus or high school campus if offered there. Students who attend Hebron and The Colony High Schools may take dual credit courses at Collin College, formerly known as Collin County Community College or NCTC. Students who attend Lewisville, Marcus and Flower Mound High Schools may take dual credit courses at North Central Texas College. Classes available include economics, sociology, American Government, psychology, U.S. History to 1865, U.S. History from 1865.

Dual credit classes are not calculated in the student's GPA and students earning more than nine hours of dual credit may not be eligible for freshman scholarships at some universities. If you are interested in finding out about Dual Credit courses, please contact your high school counselor for more information.

#### **E-Courses/Virtual Learning Academy**

LISD eSchool/Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) provides the opportunity to participate in an online course as part of the high school experience. This program offers students a flexible, relevant and challenging alternative to complete a portion of their graduation requirements. LISD eSchool/Virtual Learning Academy was developed to provide greater flexibility to students to schedule their student time and complete their courses. To find out more about LISD eSchool/Virtual Learning Academy, go to <http://vla.lisd.net>.

#### **Other Credit Opportunities**

For more information on correspondence courses, night school, credit by exam (CBE) with or without instruction, summer school, or TxVSN (Virtual School Network), please see your designated counselor.

## ***Early Graduation***

What are the benefits? What are the disadvantages? In order to help students answer these questions, this comparison sheet is based on information from college representatives from both the public and private sector.

### Advantages:

- A student who does not feel connected to the high school may spend less time enrolled.

### Disadvantages:

- Students are losing the opportunity to take additional AP courses in which that student may be able to receive college credit.
- Students are losing the opportunity to take Dual Credit courses in which for a small investment that student can receive college and high school credit.
- Students lose competitiveness in the college process.
  - Cannot take as many AP courses
  - Cannot graduate as valedictorian or salutatorian
  - Ranking suffers because they cannot take as many advanced courses
  - Students will be forced to take ACT or SAT earlier. Data shows that the higher the level the course work completed, the better the student does.
- Students may lose many opportunities for college programs and scholarships.
  - Summer admissions and/or other alternative admissions programs
  - Treated as a transfer student if they take classes between January and August causing them to lose their high school admission status
- If students are 16, they will be taking classes with students 18 and older.

### Questions to ask students planning to graduate early:

- What is the goal of graduating early?
- What do you plan to do if you are a January graduate?
- Have you been accepted to a college and when do you plan to begin?
- Have you checked with your chosen college to make sure early graduation does not affect enrollment or scholarship opportunities?
- Have you taken every advanced and/or dual credit course that you can on the high school campus?
- Have you and your parents discussed what life will be like if you live on campus and you are under 18?

# APPENDIX

Texas Education Agency

# Graduation Toolkit

Information for Planning Your High School Years & Beyond



including information about the new  
**Foundation High School Program**

◆ *Overview*

◆ *Choices*

◆ *Resources*

◆ *Benefits*

◆ *Checklists*

◆ *Glossary*

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*

# Graduation Program – Overview

## 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:

**English (4 credits)** • English I • English II • English III • An advanced English course

**Mathematics (3 credits)** • Algebra I • Geometry • An advanced math course

**Science (3 credits)** • Biology • Integrated Physics & Chemistry or an advanced science course  
• An advanced science course

**Social Studies (3 credits)** • World History or 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)**

**Electives (5 credits)**

**Speech:** Demonstrated proficiency

**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.

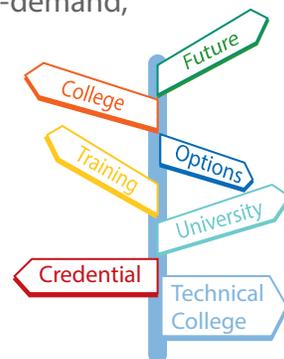


## Distinguished Level of Achievement – *Benefits*

### Choices determine options

Most of the very best jobs available now and in the future require education and training beyond a high school diploma. 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

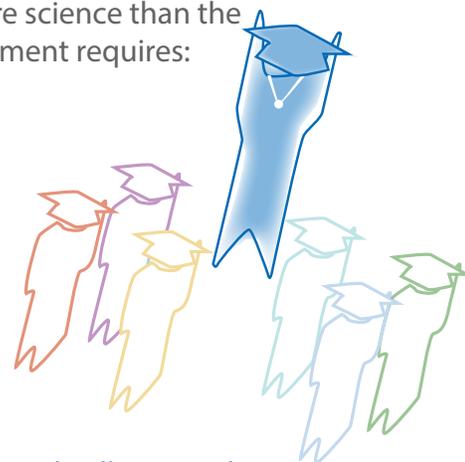
### What it means

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



## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Endorsements – Choices

### 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
- Computer 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.

ENDORSEMENTS

## 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

## 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> 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.

## 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> 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/](http://www.texasrealitycheck.com/).

## Resources

### House Bill 5

[www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx](http://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](http://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?



\*Center on Education and the Workforce, "The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings," August 2011. Georgetown 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.
- 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... training

many of the high-demand jobs<sup>1</sup> will require some postsecondary education?

## tuition

students attending community colleges or trade schools may also be eligible for state or federal financial aid?<sup>2</sup>

## 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 (CAN) or computer tech certification (CTC) while in high school?

## earnings

over their lifetime, high school graduates with a workforce certificate from a community or technical college earn 20 percent more<sup>3</sup> than those with only a high school diploma?

<sup>1</sup> Texas Workforce Commission

<sup>2</sup> Get the facts at [www.collegeforalltexans.com](http://www.collegeforalltexans.com) or [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov)

<sup>3</sup> 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)
- Arts and Humanities
- Public Service
- Business and Industry
- 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

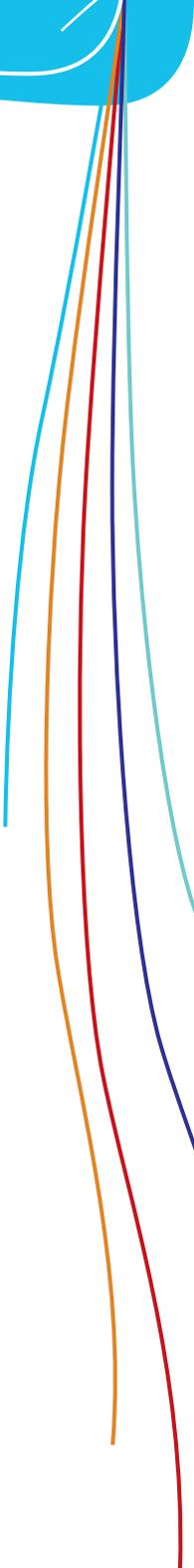
STAAR end-of-course exams are state mandated tests given during the final weeks of a course. In addition to meeting graduation course requirements, students are required to pass five end-of-course exams to earn a diploma from a Texas public high school. Those five exams are given when a student takes English I and II, Biology, Algebra I and U.S. History courses.



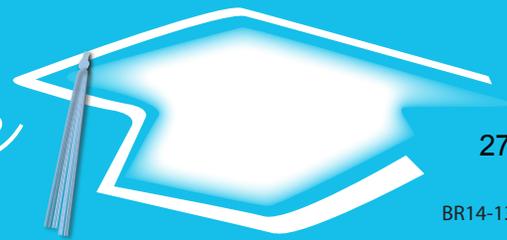
# My Notes



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# My Graduation Date





# TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

1701 N. Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701-1494  
512 463-9734  
[www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us)

Produced by the  
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in cooperation with the  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
and the  
Texas Workforce Commission

BR14-130-02

## **SAMPLE RESUMÉ**

**VISIT THESE SITES FOR FREE RESUME TEMPLATES:**

[WWW.RESUME.COM](http://WWW.RESUME.COM)

[WWW.RESUME-NOW.COM](http://WWW.RESUME-NOW.COM)

Your Name  
Your Street Address  
North, TX 75000  
Your Telephone Number

### **EDUCATION**

Senior at North High School  
GPA: 92.45  
Class Rank: 83 in a class of 402  
Significant Academic Endeavors: (International Baccalaureate candidate, etc.)

### **SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

National Honor Society, junior and senior years  
Fellowship of Christian Athletes Vice President, junior year  
Basketball team, four years  
Key Club, sophomore, junior, and senior years

### **AWARDS AND HONORS**

National Merit semi-finalist  
Ranked in the top quarter of class for four years  
Spanish Achievement Award  
Eagle Scout

### **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

President of National Honor Society  
Vice President of Senior Class

### **COMMUNITY AND CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

North Hispanic Youth Council, senior year  
Church Youth Group, Church Name, sophomore, and junior year  
Boy Scouts of America, eight years

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Materials Transportation Company welder, senior year  
McDonald's Restaurant cook, junior year

### **VOLUNTEER SERVICE**

Olin E. Teague Veterans Center, summer volunteer – 2011-2013  
Denton County Rehabilitation Center, after school recreation volunteer – 2 years

## ***Safe and Drug Free Program - CHOICES***

**C.H.O.I.C.E.S. (Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program)** offers programs and activities which are coordinated with other schools and community based services and programs that foster an emotionally and socially safe learning environment that supports academic achievement. The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program is present on every campus in LISD. C.H.O.I.C.E.S. supports campuses in prevention programming as well as intervention. The major components of C.H.O.I.C.E.S. are:

- Programs and curricula to address substance abuse and violence for both students and parents
- Interventions for students who are at-risk
- Free counseling center
- Mentor programs
- Community resource referrals for mental health, substance abuse, basic needs and more

**Contact your school counselor or CHOICES 469-948-8680 if you know of someone who could benefit from this program.**



# COUNSELING & SOCIAL WORK

LISD COUNSELING AND SOCIAL WORK  
972-350-4768 | [LISD.NET/COUNSELING](http://LISD.NET/COUNSELING)  
1565 W. MAIN ST., LEWISVILLE TX 75067



LEWISVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT