Exploring Their Future

Revised Dec. 2025

Getting ahead in high school!

Waller Independent School District

Agenda

- Welcome
- Junior High Credits
- Exploring the TEA Graduation Toolkit & Waller High School Graduation Requirements
- Important Information
- Getting Ahead in High School
- Resources
- Questions & Answers

Junior High Credits

Required Junior High Courses

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
ELAR (2 period block)	ELAR (2 period block)	ELA
ELAR (2 period block)	ELAR (2 period block)	Math
Math	Math	Science
Science	Science	American History
World Cultures	Texas History	3 Electives * *Students are required to take one year of a Fine Arts credit in junior high.* *
Physical Fitness Class	Physical Fitness Class	
1 Elective	1 Elective	

Which high school credits did you take in junior high?

7th Grade

- Language Other Than English
  - Spanish I

8th Grade

- Math
  - Algebra I
- Fine Arts
  - Art I, Dance I, Theatre Arts I
- Language Other Than English
  - Spanish I or II
- Elective Credit
  - Principles of Business- 1, Principles of Hospitality- 1, Principles of Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources -1, Principles of Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications- 1, Health- ½, Speech- ½, Leadworthy The Course- ½

TEA Graduation Toolkit & Waller High School Graduation Requirements

TEA Graduation Toolkit

- Foundation High School Program
- Endorsement Options
- General Checklist
- College and Career Resources

TEA Graduation Toolkit: Foundation High School Program with Endorsements

4 Credits of English

- English I
- English II
- English III
- 4th Year English

4 Credits of Math

- Algebra I
- Geometry
- 3rd Year Math
- 4th Year Math

4 Credits of Science

- Biology
- IPC, Chemistry, or Physics
- 3rd Year Science
- 4th Year Science

3 Credits of Social Studies

- World History
- U.S. History
- U.S. Government (1/2 credit)
- PFL (1/2 credit)

Foundation High School Program with Endorsements

- 2 Credits of Languages Other Than English (in the same language)
  - WISD Options: Spanish, French, or Computer Science*
- 1 Credit of Fine Arts
  - WISD Options: Band, Choir, Art, Theatre, Music, Dance, Floral Design
- 1 Credit of Physical Education
  - WISD Options: PE, Color Guard, Athletics, Drill Team, AFJROTC, Marching Band, Cheerleading
- 7 Credits of Electives or Pathway Courses

TOTAL 26 CREDITS

Distinguished Level of Achievement

(Requires a completed endorsement and Algebra II)

Why it matters — *Benefits*

- Allows you to compete for Top 10% automatic admissions eligibility at almost any Texas public university;
- Makes you a more competitive applicant at selective colleges and universities;
- Prepares you for college-level coursework at community/technical colleges and universities;
- Lays a strong foundation for successful completion of an industry workforce credential or college degree.

College, Career, and Military Ready

Indicators include meeting criteria:

- Earn a qualifying score on common college readiness exams:
  - SAT
  - ACT
  - TSIA2
- Earn college credit through:
  - Advanced Placement (AP)
  - Dual Credit courses
- Enlistment in the US Armed Forces

CTE students complete a coherent sequence of CTE courses and earn an industry-based certification or license in one of the following Programs of Study.

Endorsements

- An area of specialized study
- Endorsement = Career Interest and Goals
- Elective courses related to career interests and goals
- A student may earn an endorsement by successfully completing:
  - Curriculum requirements for the pathway of study
  - 4 credits in mathematics
  - 4 credits in science

Endorsements Options

1. **STEM** (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) - includes courses related to science, technology, engineering and advanced mathematics
2. **Business and Industry** - includes courses related to construction, A/V technology, accounting, finance, graphic design, automotive technology, culinary arts and agricultural science
3. **Public Services** - includes courses related to health sciences, education and training, law enforcement, cosmetology and hospitality
4. **Arts and Humanities** - includes courses related to fine arts, history, world languages, cultural studies, English literature, and political science
5. **Multidisciplinary Studies** - allows for students to further study a foundation area or a wide range of curriculum sets

Endorsements Decision

- Each student shall specify in writing an endorsement the student intends to earn upon entering Grade 9.
- Students have the opportunity to change endorsements with parent/guardian approval during high school.
- Students can earn more than one endorsement.

Important Information

Testing Requirements for Graduation

Students take STAAR EOC (End-of-Course) assessments for courses in which they are enrolled as part of their graduation requirement.

- English I
- Biology
- Algebra I
- English II
- U.S. History

**Students must earn an "Approaches Grade Level" on each of the five (5) assessments.*

Attendance

State law mandates that “every student must be in attendance for 90% of the semester IN ORDER TO RECEIVE CREDIT”.

- Credit in EACH course
- Be mindful of appointments
- Denial of credit can negatively affect class rank if not cleared

FAFSA / TASFA

In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.0256, beginning with students enrolled in 12th grade during the 2021-2022 school year, each student must do one of the following in order to graduate:

- Complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- Complete and submit a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA); or
- Submit a signed opt-out form.

Credit By Exam (CBE)

- Students may take a credit by exam for courses in which they have had previous instruction or are wishing to accelerate.
- To award recovery credit, the score on the exam must be 70 or above on a criterion-referenced test.
  - Exam fee: $30 per exam
- For Acceleration credit to be awarded, the score on the exam must be 80 or above on a criterion-referenced test.
  - Exam Deposit: $10 per exam
- Credit from Credit by Exam does not get calculated into GPA

Transcripts

- Permanent academic record that shows:
  - Semester Grades
  - Grade Point Average
  - Class Rank
  - Performance Acknowledgements
- Seen by colleges, employers, and the military
- 11th & 12th graders can request a transcript at anytime via their graduating canvas pages

Standardized test scores (STAAR, SAT and ACT) are on separate test card

Grade Point Average (GPA)

- “Cumulative” = Re-averaged each semester of high school
- The GPA for Waller ISD is based upon a 4.0 weighted scale
- GPA is calculated by using only credits earned on the high school campus in the following content areas:
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies
  - Foreign Language / LOTE

GPA Points- Class of 2029 and On

Grade	Regular Class
100	4.0
99	3.9
98	3.8
95	3.5
90	3.0
85	2.5
80	2.0
75	1.5
70	1.0

Grade	Honors or AP/Dual Credit
100	5.0
99	4.9
98	4.8
95	4.5
90	4.0
85	3.5
80	3.0
75	2.5
70	2.0

Rank

Class ranking is calculated twice yearly following the fall and spring semesters.

Class rank for senior students:

- Is calculated by averaging grades earned in grades 9-12 for which the student earned state graduation credits in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and languages other than English.
- The numeric semester average shall earn grade points according to the District's weighted grade point scale.
- The estimated class rank for graduation purposes only will duplicate the third nine-week grading period average for the fourth nine-week grading period average.
- The actual class rank will be determined after all grades are reported on the final transcripts.

Honors Course

- Open enrollment for all students -parent permission to enroll in advanced courses (signed course selection sheet):
  - Successful completion of prerequisite coursework
  - Current or previous successful performance in related area/course
  - Demonstrates mastery on course-related state-mandated performance assessments including STAAR
  - Teacher recommendation
  - Careful consideration of demands of extracurricular activities, employment, community service, outside of school activities, and homework
- Honors may require summer homework

AP (Advanced Placement)

- Advanced Placement Program: The College Board offers exams and courses so students can earn credit for college subjects studied in high school. Tests are scored on a scale from one to five, with five being the highest.
- Not all universities accept AP scores as a replacement for the specific course.
- Student needs to research university of choice to determine if scores are accepted, and if so, what scores are needed to receive college hours.

Online resource – https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/

Dual Credit

- Must meet college readiness standards set by Blinn College to enroll.
- Enrolled as a Blinn College student and a Waller High School student.
- Texas Administrative Code 4.85 does not require test scores for dual credit students for the first 15 semester credit hours earned. An institution of higher education may exempt a non-degree-seeking or non-certificate-seeking student from Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requirements under the Education Code. Dual credit students eligible for this exemption can only have 0 - 14 cumulative semester credit hours. Dual credit students will have to show college readiness by the time they earn 15 cumulative semester credit hours by one of these two options:
  - Dual credit student will submit test scores to demonstrate college readiness
  - Dual credit student successfully completes MATH and ENGL 1301
- Courses offered FREE at WHS currently. Students are responsible for books and any other materials needed for the class.
- Grade in course determines college credit.
- Credit transfers to most public and many private universities.

Online resource – http://statecore.its.txstate.edu/

Dual Credit

- Students looking to be in dual credit will begin the process in 9th grade.
  - Fill out a college application via ApplyTexas
- Students are provided with a packet via their graduating canvas page on how to do the process and are given opportunities in the Spring to get assistance.
- Students must have applications submitted by the end of the school year. Test scores must be submitted by June 15.
- Point of contact for dual credit is Mrs. Bourgeois- lbourgeois@wallerisd.net / Mrs. Wallace - cwallace@wallerisd.net.

Benefits of Honors & AP Core Classes

- Exposes students to a challenging/rigorous curriculum to prepare for college-level/post secondary curriculum in future years
- Increase student's overall GPA
- Helps students prepare for Advanced Placement/Dual Credit courses
- Improve performance on standardized assessments
- Helps you (parents) save $$$$

Top 10%

Applicants from accredited Texas schools who graduate in the top ten percent of their high school class shall be admitted to any public university in Texas if the students meet the following conditions:

- Apply no later than two years after graduating from high school
- Submit a completed application prior to filing deadlines set by the college
- Graduate under the Foundation High School Program with Endorsements as well as the Distinguished Level of Achievement
- Provide additional documents requested by the college, including essays, letters of recommendations, admissions tests, and high school transcript.

Testing

- PSAT
  - Is offered to 9th, 10th, & 11th grade students
  - Small Fee to take the exam
  - Can be used to exempt the TSIA2 for Dual Credit
- SAT/ACT
  - SAT School Day is offered free to all juniors each year
  - 11th & 12th grade students who are on Free or Reduced Lunch can obtain a waiver to waive the fee for the test
  - Can be used to exempt TSIA2 for both Dual Credit and College
- TSIA2 (formally the TSI)
  - It is offered to Seniors and students wanting to be in Dual Credit
  - Fee is between $5-$10.
  - Opportunities available in the Fall and Spring to students via their graduating canvas pages. Exams will not be available on campus in December and May.
- ASVAB
  - Is offered to students for free twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring.

Schedule Changes

Last day to make changes is on the last day of the school year -

May 20

Getting Ahead in High School

Getting Ahead in High School

- Have a high school plan
- Explore a list of careers and majors that fit their personality and strengths
- Research colleges/universities
- Learn what Dual Credit/AP courses are accepted as transfers
- Start keeping track of all accomplishments, community service and extracurricular
- Build relationships

What Colleges Look For

- A challenging high school curriculum
- Strong grades and an upward trend
- Solid scores on standardized tests
- Quality involvement in activities
- A record of community service
- Work or out of school experiences
- A well-written heartfelt essay
- Positive recommendations from school personnel
- Additional recommendations from adults who know the student well
- Special attributes or awards

Freshman (9) & Sophomore (10)

- If possible take Honors courses
- Work hard and make sure to earn good grades
- Review which Dual Credit/AP courses earn college credit
  - Dual Credit Sign up will be posted to your Graduating Canvas page
- Take the PSAT
  - Review results and work on weak subjects

GET INVOLVED – clubs, extracurricular activities, volunteer, etc. Keep track of hours and all that you are involved in, you will need it your senior year for college applications.

Juniors (11)

- Take Dual Credit/AP courses
- Take the SAT/ACT by spring semester
- Work on resume
- Visit your counselor
- Research scholarships -Graduating Class Canvas Page
- Go on College Visits (You are given two excused college visit days as a junior)
- For additional information:
  - SAT - www.sat.collegeboard.org
  - ACT - www.actstudent.org

GET INVOLVED –clubs, extracurricular activities, volunteer, etc.

Seniors (12)

- Request transcript - fill out the Final Transcript/FERPA Form in February to ensure your final transcript is sent to the correct location
- Go on College Visits - you are given two excused college visit days as a senior, you must pick up a college visit form from Mrs. Wallace before you plan to go
- Fill out the FAFSA – opens for seniors tentatively on Oct. 1. However the last 2 years it has opened in December.
- Apply to college during the summer before your senior year, you can get assistance during the spring of your junior year on setting up an Apply Texas or Common App account with Mrs. Wallace in the College and Career center.
- Have admissions test results(TSIA2, SAT, or ACT) and dual credit transcripts (if applicable) sent to colleges of your choice. Keep in mind there maybe a small fee.
- Ask for teacher recommendations if needed at the beginning of the school year since some may have additional questionnaire for your to fill out to help complete your letter of recommendation.
- Start applying for scholarships (check you graduating canvas daily for new scholarships posted) - Local Scholarship Book released in February
- Note all deadlines!!!

Resources

Resources

- TEA Graduation Toolkit
  - http://wisd.fyi/TEAGradToolkit2020
- Waller High School Course Book
  - https://wisd.fyi/WHSCourses26-27
- TEA Graduation Requirements
  - http://wisd.fyi/TEAGradReq
- Waller ISD CTE Programs of Study
  - https://www.wallerisd.net/departments/cte/wisd-cte-programs-of-study

Pathway to Success - 8th & 9th Grade Family Night

Tuesday, January 13 at 6:30 p.m. starting in the WHS Auditorium

WHS Counselors & Secretaries

Lori Bourgeois - Lead Counselor
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Cristal Wallace - Lead Counselor Secretary
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Attendance / Exit Ticket

We value your feedback!

Click to give us your feedback

Questions?

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