HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In pursuit of its goal of ensuring that all students reach their learning potential and are prepared for post-secondary and career opportunities, students must meet or exceed the District's academic standards, required credits and additional graduation requirements set forth in this policy to obtain a diploma. High school credits are awarded when a student achieves proficiency relative to a locally defined graduation competency. As described in Board policy IK, graduation competencies and credits may be earned through multiple pathways, including extended learning opportunities (ELOs), CTE programs, transfer credits, a dual/concurrent enrollment opportunity, home education programs, remote instruction programs, and other alternative learning opportunities. Additionally, and especially for students entering 9th grade after 2026-27, the required "credits" in the tables below, may include competencies that can be earned in more than one subject area.

A. GRADUATION AND DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Recognizing that graduating students have diverse interests and aspirations for life after high school, the School District offers its graduating students the following diploma options to best suit the individual student's needs.

Lin-Wood High School Diploma

The Lin-Wood High School Diploma is the standard High School Diploma awarded to any student who earns a minimum of 24 credits, including those listed in Section C, below, completes 40 hours of community service as described below and all addition requirements (a) in Section E, below, and (b) in the Lin-Wood High School Program of Studies under the Lin-Wood High School Diploma description.

Lin-Wood High School Diploma with Honors

The Lin-Wood High School Diploma with Honors is awarded to an student who graduates in the top 15% of the graduating class as determined by the weighted grade point average (GPA), earns a minimum of 24 credits, including those listed in Section C, below, completes 40 hours of community service as described below and all addition requirements (a) in Section E, below, and (b) in the Lin-Wood High School Program of Studies under the Lin-Wood High School Diploma with Honors description.

New Hampshire Standard Diploma

The school Principal in conjunction with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and School Counselor may recommend a student pursue a New Hampshire Standard 20 Credit Diploma. The student must declare intention to receive a New Hampshire Standard 20 Credit Diploma by the end of sophomore year. The New Hampshire Standard Diploma is awarded to any student who earns a minimum of 20 credits as specified in Section C, below, completes 40 hours of community service as described below and all additional requirements included in the Lin-Wood High School Program of Studies under the New Hampshire Standard Diploma description.

40 Hours of Community Service are required for all High School students prior to graduation. **Community service** is defined as work performed by a person or group of people for the benefit and betterment of their community without any form of compensation. *Wikipedia/Merriam-Webster: Merriam-Webster Incorporated retrieved August 2020.*

a. Community service hours must be approved by the School Counselor or designee prior to completing the activity.
    i. Community service hours will not be accepted if completed without prior approval.
b. Class fundraising activities will not be approved and counted toward the community service graduation requirement.
c. Community service required for each class toward their senior trip cannot count toward the required community service hours to graduate.

d. All Community service hours must be supervised by an adult overseeing the project or activity. The adult must sign off on the community service form at the end of the service activity.
e. No students shall earn money for their community service nor should any entity earn money from a student's involvement in community service.

B. EARLY GRADUATION

The Board supports early graduation as a means to earn a high school diploma. Parental involvement for students under the age of 18 is required. The high school Principal shall approve such requests if he/she determines that all state and local graduation requirements will be met and that early graduation is related to the career and/or educational plans of the student making the request. Upon approval by the high school Principal, the minimum 3 credit requirement per year for enrolled students shall be waived, the student shall be awarded a high school diploma and be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

C. STATE GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Graduation Credit Requirements for Students ENTERING 9TH GRADE PRIOR to the 2026-27 School Year - (N.H. Dept. of Education Rule Ed 306.23, Table 306-1)	
Arts education:	1/2 credit
Digital literacy:	1/2 credit
English:	4 credits
Mathematics:	3 credits (including algebra credit that can be earned through a sequential, integrated, or applied program)
Physical sciences:	1 credit
Biological sciences:	1 credit
US and NH history:	1 credit
US and NH government/civics:	1/2 credit
Economics, including personal finance:	1/2 credit
World history, global studies, or geography:	1/2 credit
Health education;	1/2 credit
Physical education:	1 credit
Open electives:	6 credits
Totals:	**20 credits**

Graduation Credit Requirements for Students ENTERING 9TH GRADE STARTING in 2026-27 School Year - (N.H. Dept. of Education Rule Ed 306.23, Table 306-2)	
Arts education:	1/2 credit
Digital literacy:	1/2 credit

English:	3.5 credits, to include 1/2 credit in writing
Mathematics:	3 credits (including algebraic concepts and at least 1/2 credit in statistics or data analysis)
Physical sciences:	1 credit
Biological sciences:	1 credit
US history	1/2 credit
NH history	1/2 credit
Logic and rhetoric	1/2 credit
Civics	1/2 credit
History, government and the US and NH Constitutions	1 credit
Economics	1/2 credit
Financial literacy	1/2 credit
World history, global studies, OR geography	1 credit
Health and wellness education	1/2 credit
Physical education	1 credit
Open electives:	4 credits
Totals:	**20 credits**

D. <u>CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS</u>

Students who are eligible for special education have the option of receiving a Certificate of Achievement ("Certificate") as provided in this Section. The intent to receive a Certificate will be documented in the student's current individualized education program (IEP) as part of the student's transition plan. **NOTE:** Under Ed 306.23 (d)(4) a Certificate does not equate to a High School Diploma per the State of New Hampshire Department of Education.

The following conditions will apply to students earning a Certificate:

a. The student is identified with an eligible educational disability and is eligible to receive special education services.

b. The student has a current, signed IEP with an agreed-upon transition plan, with the Certificate included in the child's transition plan, Individualized Education Program (IEP), or other documentation,

c. The student has spent the majority of their high school program in either non-credit, granting courses or was unable to demonstrate competency in required courses as documented in the child's official high school transcript and, therefore, was unable to attain the required credits for a regular high school diploma, AND

d. The student was considered/enrolled as a full-time student for a minimum of four years of high school.

The IEP Team will determine if the student has met the criteria for a Certificate as documented and agreed upon in writing by the student's IEP team, which writing shall include the IEP team's decision as to when the student will receive the Certificate in one of three predetermined opportunities:

i. At the time of graduation with common age peers,

ii. At the conclusion of the student's agreed-upon IEP program, OR

iii. Upon reaching the age of 22

The granting of a Certificate and/or participation in the commencement activities does not negate the right of a special education student to receive FAPE until they reach age 22. Rather, a student eligible for special education is entitled to continue their high school educational program until such time as each student has earned a regular high school diploma, has attained the age of 22, or the IEP team responsible for evaluating the child and determining whether the child has a disability determines that the child no longer has a disability, whichever comes first.

A student receiving a Certificate under this Section who wishes to participate in a graduation ceremony may do so in accordance with either the IEP, the transition plan, or other documentation relating to the Certificate. If the student receiving a Certificate participates in a traditional graduation ceremony, the student's name will be included in the ceremony and written graduation publication(s) with no difference in listing from his/her peers awarded a regular diploma.

E. PASSAGE OF CIVICS EXAM & U.S. CITIZENSHIP TEST.

The district will develop a competency assessment of the United States government and civics, consistent with pertinent and applicable law. This assessment will be administered to students as part of the high school course in history and government of the United States and New Hampshire. Students must attain a passing grade on this assessment to be eligible to receive a high school diploma or other graduation certificate.

The District will also administer the 128-question civics (history and government) naturalization examination developed by the 2020 United States Citizen and Immigration Services ("U.S. Citizenship Test"). This exam may be modified for a student with a disability in accordance with the student's individualized education program. Students must earn a grade of 70 percent or better to be eligible to receive a high school diploma or other graduation certificate.

Under RSA 189:11, II, the Superintendent will submit the composite results of the U.S. Citizenship Test to the N.H. Department of Education.

F. FEDERAL STUDENT AID APPLICATION (FAFSA).

The Superintendent shall ensure each student eligible for graduation shall receive information on completing and submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Initial information shall be provided no later than October 1 of a student's senior year, and shall include, but not be limited to:

a. Eligibility requirements for student financial aid that may be applied for using the FAFSA;

b. Application timelines and submission deadlines; and

c. The importance of submitting applications early, especially when student financial aid may be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Before the start of each school year, the Superintendent will designate the personnel responsible for disseminating the information. The designee will provide a specific written outline for the Superintendent's approval of the proposed means of dissemination, which may include such things as in-class instruction, college information fairs or programs,

family information sessions, individual or group sessions with school counselors, information booklets.

Upon request of a student or a person authorized to act on behalf of the student, the Superintendent/Superintendent's designee shall ensure that either a physical or digital/online copy of a student's completed FAFSA is provided or is available to that student.

The Superintendent /Superintendent's designee shall ensure that any information shared under this section is handled according to applicable state and federal privacy laws, regulations, and administrative rules.

Legal References:
RSA 189:11
RSA 193:26-a, Graduation Requirements: Free Application for Federal Student Aid
N.H. Dept. of Education Administrative Rule – Ed 306.27

Legal References Disclaimer*: These references are not intended to be considered part of this policy, nor should they be taken as a comprehensive statement of the legal basis for the Board to enact this policy, nor as a complete recitation of related legal authority. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.*

First Reading:	January 24, 2012
Second Reading:	February 14, 2012
Revised:	February 14, 2012
First Reading:	July 22, 2014
Second Reading:	August 26, 2014
Revised:	August 26, 2014
First Reading:	December 8, 2021
Second Reading:	January 12, 2022
Revised:	January 12, 2022
First Reading:	June 22, 2022
Second Reading:	July 20, 2022
Revised:	July 20, 2022
First Reading:	August 21, 2024
Second Reading:	September 11, 2024
Revised:	September 11, 2024
First Reading:	November 13, 2024
Second Reading:	December 11, 2024
Revised:	December 11, 2024
First Reading:	September 10, 2025
Second Reading:	September 24, 2025
Revised:	September 24, 2025