613 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

[NOTE: The requirements set forth in this policy govern the graduation standards that Minnesota public schools must require for a high school diploma for all students.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth requirements for graduation from the school district.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The policy of the school district is that all students must demonstrate, as determined by the school district, their satisfactory completion of the credit requirements and their understanding of academic standards. The school district must adopt graduation requirements that meet or exceed state graduation requirements established in law or rule.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. "Credit" means a student's successful completion of an academic year of study or a student's mastery of the applicable subject matter, as determined by the school district.

B. "English language learners" or "ELL" student means an individual whose first language is not English and whose test performance may be negatively impacted by lack of English language proficiency.

C. "Individualized Education Program" or "IEP" means a written statement developed for a student eligible by law for special education and services.

D. "Required standard" means a statewide adopted expectation for student learning in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, health, and the arts. Locally developed academic standards in health apply until statewide rules implementing statewide health standards under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 3, are required to be implemented in the classroom.

[NOTE: The 2024 Minnesota legislature enacted this change. Paragraphs B and C are flipped to create alphabetical order.]

E. "Section 504 Accommodation" means the defined appropriate accommodations or modifications that must be made in the school environment to address the needs of an individual student with disabilities.

IV. DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

The designated staff member shall be named the District Assessment Coordinator. Said person shall be in charge of all test procedures and shall bring recommendations to the school board annually for approval.

V. ASSESSMENT GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Graduation Requirements

Students' state graduation requirements, based on a longitudinal, systematic approach to student education and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation, include the following:

1. Achievement and career and college readiness in mathematics, reading, and writing, consistent with paragraph (k) and to the extent available, to monitor students' continuous development of and growth in requisite knowledge and skills; analyze students' progress and performance levels, identifying students' academic strengths and diagnosing areas where students require curriculum or instructional adjustments, targeted interventions, or remediation; and, based on analysis of students' progress and performance data, determine students' learning and instructional needs and the instructional tools and best practices that support academic rigor for the student; and

2. Consistent with this paragraph and Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.125 (see Policy 604, Section II.H.), age-appropriate exploration and planning activities and career assessments to encourage students to identify personally relevant career interests and aptitudes and help students and their families develop a regularly reexamined transition plan for postsecondary education or employment without need for postsecondary remediation.

3. Based on appropriate state guidelines, students with an IEP may satisfy state graduation requirements by achieving an individual score on the state-identified alternative assessments.

B. Targeted Instruction Plan

1. A student must receive targeted, relevant, academically rigorous, and resourced instruction, which may include a targeted instruction and intervention plan focused on improving the student's knowledge and skills in core subjects so that the student has a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without need for postsecondary remediation.

2. Consistent with Minnesota Statutes, sections 120B.13, 124D.09, 124D.091, 124D.49, and related sections, an enrolling school or district must actively encourage a student in grade 11 or 12 who is identified as academically ready for a career or college to participate in courses and programs awarding college credit to high school students. Students are not required to achieve a specified score or level of proficiency on an assessment under this subdivision to graduate from high school.

3. As appropriate, students through grade 12 must continue to participate in targeted instruction, intervention, or remediation and be encouraged to participate in courses awarding college credit to high school students.

[NOTE: The revisions in Paragraphs A and B align the model policy language with Minnesota Statutes 120B.303.]

C. A student's progress toward career and college readiness must be recorded on the student's high school transcript.

VI. GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Students must successfully complete, as determined by the school district, the following high school level credits for graduation:

A. Credit Requirements

1. Four credits of language arts sufficient to satisfy all academic standards in English language arts;

2. Three credits of mathematics sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in mathematics;

3. Three credits of science, including one credit to satisfy all the earth and space science standards for grades 9 through 12, one credit to satisfy all the life science standards for grades 9 through 12, and one credit to satisfy all the chemistry or physics standards for grades 9 through 12;

4. Three and one-half credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship in either grade 11 or 12 for students beginning in grade 9 in the 2025-2026 school year and later or an advanced placement, international baccalaureate, or other rigorous course on government and citizenship under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.21, subdivision 1a, and a combination of other credits encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship, world history, and economics sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in social studies;

   [NOTE: This revision includes the 2024 change on implementation of the government and citizenship requirement to the 2025-26 school year.]

5. One credit in the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in the arts;

6. Credit sufficient to satisfy the state standards in physical education; and

7. A minimum of seven elective credits.

8. Students who begin grade 9 in the 2024-2025 school year and later must successfully complete a course for credit in personal finance in grade 10, 11, or 12. A teacher of a personal finance course that satisfies the graduation requirement must have a field license or out-of-field permission in agricultural education, business, family and consumer science, social studies, or math.

   [NOTE: The revisions above align the policy language with Minnesota law, including changes enacted by the 2024 Minnesota legislature concerning physical education credit and state standards in health. Paragraph 8 was enacted in 2023; it affects students who begin grade 9 in the 2024-25 school year.]

B. Credit equivalencies

1. A one-half credit of economics taught in a school's agricultural, food, and natural resources education or business education program or department may fulfill a one-half credit in social studies under Paragraph A.4, above, if the credit is sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in economics.

2. An agriculture science or career and technical education credit may fulfill the elective science credit required under Paragraph A.3, above, if the credit meets the state physical science, life science, earth and space science, chemistry, or physics academic standards or a combination of these academic standards as approved by the school district. An agriculture or career and technical education credit may fulfill the credit in chemistry or physics required under Paragraph

A.3, above, if the credit meets the state chemistry or physics academic standards as approved by the school district. A student must satisfy either all of the chemistry academic standards or all of the physics academic standards prior to graduation. An agriculture science or career and technical education credit may not fulfill the required biology credit under Paragraph A.3, above.

3. A career and technical education credit may fulfill a mathematics or arts credit requirement under Paragraph A.2 or Paragraph A.5, above.

4. A computer science credit may fulfill a mathematics credit requirement under Paragraph A.2, above, if the credit meets state academic standards in mathematics.

5. A Project Lead the Way credit may fulfill a mathematics or science credit requirement under Paragraph A.2 or Paragraph A.3, above, if the credit meets the state academic standards in mathematics or science.

6. An ethnic studies course may fulfill a social studies, language arts, arts, math, or science credit if the course meets the applicable state academic standards. An ethnic studies course may fulfill an elective credit if the course meets applicable local standards or other requirements.

[Note: The revisions above align the policy language with Minnesota law, including changes enacted by the 2024 Minnesota legislature. Starting in the 2026-27 school year, a high school must offer an ethnic studies course; in elementary and middle schools by the 2027-28 school year.]

VII. GRADUATION STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

A. All students must demonstrate their understanding of the following academic standards:

1. School District Standards, Health (K-12);

2. School District Standards, Career and Technical Education (K-12); and

3. School District Standards, World Languages (K-12).

B. Academic standards in health, world languages, and career and technical education will be reviewed on an annual basis.* A school district must use the current world languages standards developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

* Reviews are required to be conducted on a periodic basis. Therefore, this time period may be changed to accommodate individual school district needs.

C. All students must satisfactorily complete the following required Graduation Standards in accordance with the standards developed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE):

1. Minnesota Academic Standards, English Language Arts K-12;

2. Minnesota Academic Standards, Mathematics K-12;

3. Minnesota Academic Standards, Science K-12;

4. Minnesota Academic Standards, Social Studies K-12; and

5. Minnesota Academic Standards, Physical Education K-12.

D. State standards in the Arts K-12 are available, or school districts may choose to develop their own standards.

E. The academic standards for language arts, mathematics, and science apply to all students except the very few students with extreme cognitive or physical impairments for whom an IEP team has determined that the required academic standards are inappropriate. An IEP team that makes this determination must establish alternative standards.

VIII. EARLY GRADUATION

Students may be considered for early graduation, as provided for within Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.07, upon meeting the following conditions:

A. All course or standards and credit requirements must be met;

B. The principal or designee shall conduct an interview with the student and parent or guardian, familiarize the parties with opportunities available in post-secondary education, and arrive at a timely decision; and

C. The principal's decision shall be in writing and may be subject to review by the superintendent and school board.

Legal References:
Minn. Stat. § 120B.018 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations and Graduation Requirements for Minnesota's Students)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 (Required Academic Standards)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.023 (Benchmarks)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.024 (Credits)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.07 (Early Graduation)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement Goals; Striving for Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.125 (Planning for Students' Successful Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment; Personal Learning Plans)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 (General Requirements; Statewide Assessments)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.303 (Assessment Graduation Requirements)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.307 (College and Career Readiness)
Minn. Rules Part 3501.0660 (Academic Standards For Kindergarten through Grade 12)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0700-3501.0745 (Academic Standards for Mathematics)
Minn. Rules Part 3501.0820 (Academic Arts Standards for Kindergarten through Grade 12)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0960 (Academic Standards in Science)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1200-1210 (Academic Standards for English Language Development)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1400-3501.1410 (Academic Standards for Physical Education)
20 U.S.C. § 6301, *et seq.* (Every Student Succeeds Act)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 601 (School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (School District System Accountability)