

STUDENTS

GRADUATION

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. “Required standard” means: (1) a statewide adopted expectation for student learning in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, ~~or~~ and the arts, and (2) a locally adopted expectation for student learning in health, career and technical education, or world languages.
- B. “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.
- C. “Section 504 Accommodation” means the defined appropriate accommodations or modifications that must be made in the school environments to address the needs of an individual student with disabilities.
- D. “Individualized Education Program” or “IEP” means a written statement developed for a student eligible by law for special education and services.
- E. “English language learners” or “ELL” student means an individual whose first language is not English and whose test performance may be negatively impact by lack of English language proficiency.

IV. DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

Michele Baker 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. GRADUATION ASSESSMENT 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:

- A. Encouragement to participate on a nationally normed college entrance exam in grade 11 or grade 12;

- B. Achievement and career and college readiness tests in mathematics, reading, and writing, as measured against a continuum of empirically derived, clearly defined benchmarks focused on students' attainment of knowledge and skills so that students, their parents, and teachers know how well students must perform to have a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without the need for postsecondary remediation and which facilitates the monitoring of students' continuous development of and growth in requisite knowledge and skills; analysis of students' progress and performance levels, identification of students' academic strengths and diagnosis of areas where students require curriculum or instructional adjustments, targeted interventions, or remediation; and determination of students' learning and instructional needs and the instructional tools and best practices that support academic rigor for the student based on analysis of students' progress and performance data; and
- C. Consistent with this paragraph and Minnesota Statutes § section 120B.125, 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
- D. 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.
- E. Students meeting the state graduation requirements under this section must receive targeted, relevant, academically rigorous, and resourced instruction which may include a targeted instruction and intervention plan focused on improving the students' 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.
- F. Students meeting the state graduation requirements under this section and who are students in grade 11 or 12 and who are identified as academically ready for a career or college are actively encouraged by the school district 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.
- G. 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. Four credits of language arts sufficient to satisfy all academic standards in English language arts;
- B. Three credits of mathematics, including an algebra II credit or its equivalent, sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in mathematics.
- C. An algebra I credit by the end of 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th grade standards in mathematics;
- D. Three credits of science, including at least: (a) one credit in biology; (b) one credit of chemistry or physics; and (c) one elective credit of science. The combination of credits must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry or physics and (ii) all other academic standards in science;
- E. Three and one-half credits of social studies, 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;
- F. One credit in the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in the arts; and
- G. A minimum of ten elective credits.
- H. 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 E., 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 D., 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 D., 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 or physics academic standards prior to graduation. An agriculture science or career and technical education credit may not fulfill the required biology credit under Paragraph D., above.

3. A career and technical education credit may fulfill a mathematics or arts credit requirement under Paragraph B. or Paragraph F., above.
4. A computer science credit may fulfill a mathematics credit requirement under Paragraph B., 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 B. or Paragraph D., 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.

VII. GRADUATION STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

- A. All students must demonstrate their understanding of the following academic standards on a nationally normed college entrance exam:
 1. School District Standards, Health and Physical Education (K-12);
 2. School District Standards, Career and Technical Education (K-12);
 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;
 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 as inappropriate. An IEP team that makes this determination must establish alternative standards.

VIII. EARLY GRADUATION

Students may be considered for early graduation, as provided within Minnesota Statutes, Sections 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.

IX. RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS

- A. A standard diploma will be granted to all students who attain a minimum of 26 credits and meet the requirements outlined in Section II in addition to being in "good standing" with the school. Any student who is not in "good standing" with the school will not receive a signed diploma until that status is changed. The High School Principal or designee will determine if a student is in "good standing" and will authorize student, parent, and superintendent notification.
- B. High Honor Students
Students who have earned a cumulative 3.67 GPA or above at the end of the third quarter of their Senior year will be recognized as students who have achieved "High Honors".
- C. Honor Students
Students who have earned a cumulative 3.33 GPA or above at the end of the third quarter of their Senior year will be recognized as students who have achieved "Honors".

X. EXPECTATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Graduation is considered a formal ceremony and the students' final representation of Martin County West Schools. Students should present themselves in an acceptable manner and dress appropriately. Students must wear the caps and gowns that are selected in the manner in which they are intended to be worn. Garments worn under the gown should not be a distraction from the ceremony or its intentions. Students unable to follow these expectations will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony.

To be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony with their “chronological class”, students must have accumulated 25 or the 26 credits required for graduation. Students who have not reached this level will not be allowed to participate until they have earned at least 25 credits.