

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Policy 345.6

Waunakee Community School District

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The School Board awards diplomas to recognize those students who have met District-established requirements for high school graduation as set forth in this policy. The District Administrator and High School Principal(s) shall be responsible for the general supervision and management of the graduation of students under this policy. The District's general student nondiscrimination policy applies in all respects to the methods, practices, and materials used for determining the graduation status of students.

A. Attendance/Participation Requirements

One requirement of high school graduation is that the high school student, throughout his/her enrollment in the District, must have been enrolled in a class or participated in an activity approved by the Board during each class period of each school day, or enrolled in an alternative education program approved by the District. The only exceptions to this enrollment and participation requirement are those authorized under state law and approved by the District for the individual student.¹

Four years of high school attendance is generally required for high school graduation. The Board of Education acknowledges that some students are pursuing educational goals which include graduation from high school at an earlier date than their designated class. An application for early graduation must be submitted to the high school principal in accordance with school regulations. The principal may honor this request if all conditions for graduation are met, and the student fulfills the graduation requirements. If a decision is made to deny the early graduation request, the student or parent/guardian may appeal the decision to the District Administrator whose decision shall be final. The student may participate in the graduation ceremonies with his/her designated class.

A student who has attended a high school program (or an equivalent educational program) for the equivalent of four regular school terms (i.e., the equivalent of completing grades 9 through 12) and who has satisfied all other requirements to receive a regular high school diploma does not have the option to unilaterally choose to defer his/her high school graduation date and continue to attend high school.

The District also requires a meaningful period of enrollment in the District and attendance in a District school or program in order to earn a District high school diploma. The minimum period of attendance shall generally include the full semester immediately preceding the student's graduation, during which period the student earned high school credit. An exception to this minimum period may be granted by the District Administrator in extraordinary circumstances where the District Administrator determines that (1) the reason the student did not meet the requirement was reasonably beyond the control of the student and, if under the age of 18, the student's parent or guardian; and (2) instructional staff are able to make a sufficient assessment of the student's academic performance.

B. Course Credit Requirements

The District has established standard credit requirements for high school graduation. All required credits must be earned by completing the course with a minimum passing grade

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while the student is enrolled in the high school grades. High school course(s) enrolled in by middle school students will not be counted toward high school course credit requirements or GPA..

1. Standard Credit Requirements for Students Granted a Diploma:

- English/Writing Composition 4 credits
- Social Studies 3 credits
- Math 3 credits
- Science 3 credits
- Physical Education 1.5 credits
- Personal Financial Literacy 0.5 credit
- Health Education 0.25 credit
- Career Workshop 0.25 credit

- Career and Technical Education, World Language, Fine Arts, and other courses 8.5 credits

0.5 Health credits are required for graduation by Wisconsin Statute 118.33(1)(a). 0.25 Credits are graded through completion of the Health class at the Middle School and the remaining 0.25 credits are required per the Health Class at the High School.

Up to 0.5 credits of Physical Education requirements may be earned through district approved virtual learning.

The personal financial literacy requirement applies to students graduating from high school beginning in 2028 and beyond.

2. Credit and Graduation Requirement Determination:

- a. The high school principal shall determine if a student has met all requirements for graduation. This includes an evaluation of courses taken at other schools and institutions and accommodations made for students with exceptional educational needs, interest or requirements.
- b. Courses taken at other institutions or schools must have the prior approval of the high school principal to be granted credit at Waunakee Community High School. This prior approval stipulation applies only to students enrolled in the Waunakee Community School District and not to transfer students. Transfer students' records will be evaluated by the high school principal upon the student's acceptance into Waunakee Community High School and the student and his/her parents/guardians will be informed of the remaining credits necessary to meet graduation requirements.
- c. The decision of the high school principal may be appealed to the District Administrator within ten calendar days of the above notification. Appeals to the Board of Education must be made within ten days of the notification of the District Administrator's decision.

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3. Certain courses may satisfy one of the state-mandated credit requirements under an equivalency standard. Where the District approves and offers a course under a credit equivalency standard, a student may be eligible to take the course to satisfy a state-mandated credit requirement. One limitation is that the student must not have already taken and received a state-mandated credit for any course that is a direct substitute for the proposed equivalent course such that the student would be repeating essentially the same content/learning standards in two courses. It is the responsibility of the student to verify that he/she will be eligible to receive the specified equivalency credit toward a state-mandated credit requirement.

C. Civics Test Requirement

In order to be eligible for a District high school diploma, a student must have taken and successfully completed the state-required civics test while enrolled in the high school grades in the District or, as determined by the administration, in another qualifying school or program. For students with disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP), this requirement shall be modified or waived to the extent provided by the student's IEP and/or by applicable law.

D. Alternative Education Programs and Other Accommodations for Students with Exceptional Educational Interests, Needs or Requirements

Any high school student who has satisfied each of the graduation requirements defined above shall be awarded a diploma signifying his/her graduation from high school. In addition, the District provides other routes to high school graduation, including the following:

A student with a disability who has not otherwise satisfied the District's high school graduation requirements shall earn his/her high school diploma if the student meets the requirements established in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), including goals, objectives, accommodations or modifications that provide the student with an opportunity to be eligible for high school graduation.

1. The District provides one or more Board-approved alternative education programs for high school students that provide an opportunity for the student to become eligible for high school graduation. In order to receive a District-issued high school diploma through an alternative education program, the District Administrator, High School Principal or designated program administrator must determine, in consultation with instructors who are familiar with the student's work and progress, that the student has successfully completed the program and demonstrated a level of proficiency in the subjects for which credit is required under the state's minimum graduation requirements that is equivalent to the proficiency the student would have attained if he/she had satisfied the applicable minimum credit requirements defined in state law.
2. For students with exceptional needs, interests or requirements not otherwise addressed in this section, the District may also approve, on an individualized basis, a curriculum or program modification for a high school student that provides an opportunity for the student to become eligible for high school graduation.

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3. In the event that a qualified veteran, as determined under state law, requests the Board to award a high school diploma, the request shall be filed with the District Administrator and brought to the Board for review and approval.

Legal References:

Wisconsin Statutes

Section 38.12(14)	[attendance at technical college courses]
Section 115.28(7)(e)1	[alternative education program definition]
Section 115.915	[accommodations for school-age parents]
Section 115.997(7)	[on-time graduation of children of military families; waiver and other requirements]
Section 118.13	[student nondiscrimination]
Section 118.15	[compulsory attendance; programs for at-risk students and program/curricular modifications]
Section 118.35	[gifted and talented students]
Section 118.52	[part-time open enrollment]
Section 118.55	[early college credit program]
Section 118.153	[children at risk of not graduating from high school]
Section 118.33(1)	[high school graduation standards, including requirements and local options]
Section 118.33(1)(f)1	[required periodic review and revision of graduation requirement policy]
Section 118.33(1m)(a)	[high school graduation; civics test requirement]
Section 120.12(17)	[school board duty; payment of tuition for University of Wisconsin system courses taken by students for high school credit under certain conditions]
Section 120.13(37)	[awarding high school diplomas to veterans]
Section 121.02(1)(p)	[school district standards; graduation standards]
Chapter 115, Subchapter V	[children with disabilities]

Wisconsin Administrative Code

PI 18	[high school graduation standards]
PI 25	[children at risk plans and programs]

Cross References:

WASB PRG Sample Policy 1

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