

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Before entering high school, students need to know the standards for attaining a high school diploma in order to plan an appropriate, sequential, educational program to meet that goal.

The Superintendent, through the high school principal or other designee, shall be responsible for making accurate information concerning diploma requirements available to incoming students and their parents prior to the start of their ninth grade school year. A copy of this policy will be disseminated to all incoming ninth grade students at the time of course selection. This policy will also be included in every edition of the high school student handbook.

The Board has approved this schedule of minimum requirements for graduation, which includes minimum requirements specified by the State. The Board is aware that current law and regulations are subject to change.

The Board expects the Superintendent/designee to inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any additional State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma.

I. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS' GRADUATION FROM WISCASSET HIGH SCHOOL

Students who anticipate graduating at the end of the 2009 school year and thereafter must meet the following minimum requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

- A. The student must successfully complete a total of 24 credits. Of these credits, 12 ½ (twelve and one-half) must be those specified by the State of Maine. They are:
 1. English/language arts – 4 credits;
 2. Mathematics – 2 credits;
 3. Social studies and history, including one year of American history and government – 2 credits;
 4. Science, including at least one year of laboratory study – 2 years;
 5. Fine arts, which may include art, music, forensics or drama – 1 credit;
 6. Health – 1/2 credit; and
 7. Physical education – 1 credit.

- B. The State also requires that students demonstrate computer skills according to the school unit's standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.
- C. In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following graduation requirements established by the Board:
 - 1. Math – 1 additional credit;
 - 2. Science – 1 additional credit;
 - 3. Social Studies – 1 credit;
 - 4. Technology Education – 1 credit;
 - 5. Foreign Language –1 credit;
 - 6. Fine Arts - ½ credit;
 - 7. Computer – ½ credit;
 - 8. Physical Education – 1 credit;
- D. Citizenship/Community Service – 6 hours per year for a minimum total of 24 hours
- E. The remaining credits may be selected by the student based upon the student's interests, abilities, and the requirements of the field that the student plans to enter upon graduation.

II. ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDITS

A student who is deficient in these requirements may meet these requirements in accordance with the provision of this section. A student who wishes to meet a credit requirement through an alternative method must have prior written approval as specified in this section. The student may participate in the next regular graduation ceremony following successful completion of the requirements.

- A. A student may earn up to two credits through the RSU#12 Adult Education Program. The student must have prior written approval from the Director of Adult Education, Guidance Counselor, Department Chair and Principal.
- B. A student may obtain credits through summer school in classes that he/she completed at Wiscasset High School but did not pass. The student must obtain prior written approval from the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair and Principal.

- C. A student may earn credits through distance learning/virtual courses provided 1) the course is approved in advance by the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair and Principal and 2) progress is monitored by a member of the High School's professional staff. Normally only elective credits are approved.
- D. Advanced courses or courses not available at Wiscasset High School may be taken at approved post-secondary institutions with the approval of the Guidance Counselor and Principal.
- E. A student with a GPA of 2.5 or higher may earn credits through independent study approved by the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair and Principal and monitored by the teacher(s) of the subject(s) to which the independent study is related.
- F. Credits from RSU#12 alternative education are aligned with and are fully transferable to Wiscasset High School.

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM WISCASSET HIGH SCHOOL

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Wiscasset High School from another state or from an educational program that is not required to be aligned with the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the Wiscasset High School Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards meeting graduation requirements.

B. Home-schooled Students

For home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Wiscasset High School, the Wiscasset High School Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation credit requirements. A home schooled student must have attended Wiscasset High School for at least their senior year in order to receive a Wiscasset High School diploma.

C. Students Receiving Special Education Services

Students who successfully meet the content standards of the Learning Results, as specified in the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP), will be awarded diplomas.

D. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Wiscasset High School to attend an accredited, degree-granting

institution of higher education may upon satisfactory completion of the freshman year be awarded a high school diploma, provided that the student has notified the principal at the time of the early admission.

E. Early Awarding of Diplomas

A student who has met the State's and the Board's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma.

F. Extended Study

Students are eligible for extended years of study to complete the requirements of a diploma if they have not reached the age of 20 at the start of the school year. Students eligible for extended years of study may be referred to adult education or other resources suitable to young learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

G. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

A student must complete all Board requirements for a high school diploma in order to participate in graduation exercises.

H. Honors and Awards at Graduation

In order to be eligible for honors or awards based wholly or in part on academic achievement (e.g., valedictorian, salutatorian, class speaker, "Top 10"), the student must have been enrolled full time at Wiscasset High School for the year preceding graduation. If transferring from a non-accredited institution the student must have been enrolled full time at Wiscasset High School for two years preceding graduation. Students who do not meet this enrollment requirement will not be "ranked" for the purpose of determining eligibility for graduation honors, awards, or scholarships. Only a student's grades earned at an accredited institution may be included in the calculations of academic achievement for "ranking" purposes.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. § 4722
Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options
IK – Student Achievement
IKFA - Early Graduation

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