

## 5.2.7.0.0 Graduation Requirements Effective for - Graduating Class of 2011

### .1.0 Purpose

The Board of Education's purpose in establishing graduation requirements is for all students to be well prepared as life-long learners to meet the challenges of college, career, entrepreneurship, and other future advancements. The requirements established include the academic knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary for graduates to be successful in the twenty-first century as citizens in a democracy, as parents, as workers in a global economy, and in other adult roles.

### .1.1 Required Number of Credits

The student shall have satisfactorily completed a minimum of 24 units of credit during grades 9-12. Seventeen and one-half (17.5) credits shall be from the Required Core Curriculum and six and one-half (6.5) credits from a chosen Graduation Path and other electives. In addition to credits earned during the traditional school day in grades 9-12, these units may include credits earned:

- X through approved correspondence courses,
- X through approved credit-by-examination opportunities,
- X through approved after-school and summer school credit programs,
- X through approved distance-learning opportunities, and
- X through approved dual credit agreements with colleges and/or universities.

#### .1.1.1 Middle School Credits

Students may count and Spanish IA and IB (1 unit) successfully completed in middle school toward satisfaction of high school graduation requirements. Both Spanish IA and IB must be successfully completed (passing grades) before any high school credit can be awarded.

High school credits earned during middle school can be counted towards meeting graduation requirements; however, they do not count as part of the 24 credits required.

Grade 9 begins upon successful completion of 8th grade course work.

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### .1.0 Purpose (continued)

All middle schools are required to provide opportunities for students to earn credit for Spanish IA in grade 7 and Spanish IB in grade 8. These courses must include the same course standards and benchmarks as the same courses taught at the high school level.

#### .1.1.1.1 Sumner Academy, Grade 8 Courses

Students who attend grade 8 at Sumner Academy and then transfer to another high school in the district are to receive high school credit for the following courses if taken in grade 8:

- Speech A (½)
- Algebra I (1)
- Latin I, French I, German I, or Spanish I (1 each)
- Etymology (½)
- Principles of Physical Education (1)
- Introduction to Computer Science A (½)
- Visual Art, Music, or Theatre course from high school curriculum (1)
- Communications Technology (1)

#### .1.1.2 Correspondence Courses

The Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning must approve the award of credit for all courses taken through correspondence courses. Before such an approval is granted, the appropriate Curriculum Coordinator and the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning must ensure that the correspondence course reflects the essential standards and benchmarks for the equivalent course in the district's curriculum.

#### .1.1.3 Credit by Examination

The Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning must approve the award of credit earned by examination. Before such an approval is granted, the appropriate Curriculum Coordinator and the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning must ensure that the examination is aligned with the course standards and benchmarks.

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### .1.0 Purpose (continued)

#### .1.1.4 After-School and Summer School Credit

Courses taught in the district's Evening High School program and Summer School program must reflect the same standards and benchmarks for those courses taught in the district's high schools. The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction must approve any award of credit for courses taken in other evening or summer school programs. Before such an approval is granted, the appropriate Curriculum Specialist and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction must ensure that those courses reflect the essential standards and benchmarks for the equivalent courses in the district's curriculum.

#### .1.1.5 Distance Learning

The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction must approve the award of credit earned through distance learning, including Internet courses. Before such approval is granted, the appropriate Curriculum Specialist and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction must ensure that the course reflects the essential standards and benchmarks for the equivalent course in the district's curriculum.

#### .1.1.6 Concurrent Enrollment

The Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning must approve all dual credit agreements with area colleges and universities and must ensure equity of such course offerings in the district's high schools. He/she shall publish annually in the district's Curriculum Catalog the list of dual credit agreements. (See also Policy 5.2.8.0.0 Concurrent Enrollment with Eligible Postsecondary Education Institution.)

### .1.2 Required Core Curriculum- 17.5 Units

Satisfactory completion by all students of the following specified core curriculum is required for graduation. These requirements shall not be waived or altered except by an Individual Education Program team for a student identified with disabilities.

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.1.0 Purpose (continued)

.1.2 Required Core Curriculum - 17.5 Units (continued)

.1.2.1 English Language Arts - 4.5 Units

Honors English I or English I or ESL (1)

Honors English II or English II or ESL (1)

English III AP or English III (1)

English IV AP or English IV (1)

Speech A, Composition and Research or Debate (½)

.1.2.1.1

Only two years of ESL may substitute for required English courses. There are no substitutions for English III or IV.

.1.2.2

Mathematics - 3 units

Algebra/Geometry I

Algebra/Geometry II

Algebra/Geometry III

.1.2.3

Science - 3 units

Physical Science (1)

Biology I, to include Human Sexuality Education (1)

Choose one: Chemistry I, Physics, Anatomy/Physiology,  
Biology II, Biology AP or other advanced science lab  
course (1)

.1.2.4

Social Studies - 3 units

World History (1)

American History (1)

American Government (½)

Economics (½)

.1.2.5

Fine Arts - 1 unit

One unit from art, dance, music, or theatre courses (1)

.1.2.6

Physical Education - 1 unit

Principles of Physical Education A (½)

Principles of Physical Education B (Human Sexuality will  
be included in this course) (½)

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.1.0 Purpose (continued)

.1.2 Required Core Curriculum - 17.5 Units (continued)

.1.2.6 Physical Education - 1 unit (continued)

.1.2.6.1 Waivers

The one unit of physical education required may be waived (1) upon receipt of a statement by a licensed physician that a student is mentally or physically incapable of participating in a regular or modified physical education program; or (2) when the requirement is contrary to the religious teachings of the student, as indicated in a written statement, signed by a lawful custodian of the student.

.1.2.6.2 Athletic Practice

Athletic Practice for competition shall not be conducted during physical education classes or be counted for credit toward graduation requirements.

.1.2.7 Business/Vocational - 2 Units

Introduction to Computer Science A (½)

Introduction to Computer Science B (½)

Consumer Resource Management (½)

Business Life Skills (½)

.1.3 Graduation Path and Electives - 6.5 Units

Each student must satisfactorily complete six and one-half units of elective courses. Four units must be completed in one of the following three Graduation Paths:

Fine Arts

Humanities

Sciences

Within these three (broad) Graduation Paths, there are courses of study specific to the Small Learning Communities (SLCs). These theme-based courses provide a progressive sequence of study, they promote the unique characteristics of the SLC, and meet the Pathway graduation requirement for USD 500.

These Small Learning Communities course offerings include, but are not limited to, the following career interest areas.

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.1.0 Purpose (continued)

.1.3.1 Fine Arts

Musical Arts  
Visual Arts  
Performing Arts

.1.3.2 Humanities

Media and Communications  
Visual Communications  
Global Communications  
Humanities

.1.3.3 Sciences

Business & Management  
Health & Nature  
Invention & Technology  
Career & Business Technology  
Health & Consumer Sciences  
ROTC & Business  
Applied Skill & Technology  
Hospitality

.1.4 Honors Transcript and Diploma

A student who successfully completes (with a grade of “C” or better) at least five Honors and/or Advanced Placement core curriculum courses and who earns an overall grade-point average of at least 3.0 shall be awarded an Honors seal on both his/her transcript and diploma.

.1.4.1 Honors and Advanced Placement Courses

To ensure equity and to ensure student opportunity to qualify for delayed admission to the Sumner Academy, all high schools shall offer and teach each year the Honors and Advanced Placement courses available in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Other available Honors and Advanced Placement courses shall be taught based on student interest and need.

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### .1.0 Purpose (continued)

### .1.6 Foreign Languages

College-bound students, regardless of the graduation paths they have chosen, shall be strongly encouraged to take a minimum of two years of one foreign language since many colleges and universities require two years for admission, and almost all recommend at least two years of foreign language in high school.

### .1.7 Continuous Improvement Plan

Each middle school student, in collaboration with his or her parent/guardian, teachers, and counselors, as a part of the grade 7 course in Career Exploration, will develop a continuous improvement plan, including a Four-Year Graduation Plan.

#### .1.7.1 Renewal of Continuous Improvement Plan

During the junior or senior year, as a part of the required core curriculum course in Business Life Skills, all students must renew their continuous improvement plans to include a learning plan for the next five years.

### .1.8 School and Community Service

Students shall not be enrolled during the school day as office, library, nurse, or teacher aides. However, students interested in this service to the school shall be encouraged to perform the service as a volunteer before or after school or during lunch. Such school service opportunities shall also include peer tutoring, peer mediation, and other such projects that build a community of caring.

Service to the school and community outside of the school day shall be encouraged and facilitated by the school as important contributions made by citizens in a democracy. Each extracurricular club or organization shall have a school/community service project.

### .1.9 Early Graduation

Students who wish to graduate in less than the traditional four years may do so with the consent of their parent/guardian, provided that they have successfully completed the 24 units of credit required for graduation. Early graduates shall be included in the spring semester senior activities, including graduation ceremonies.

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### .1.0 Purpose (continued)

#### .1.10 Promotion from Middle Schools

High schools shall admit students who satisfactorily complete a minimum of five units of middle school credit during the eighth grade year. Three of the five units must be required courses in English, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

.1.10.1 Students failing one or more core courses shall be advised and encouraged to attend summer school for mastery of the knowledge and skills required for success in grade 9.

.1.10.2 The parent/guardian of a student who fails more than one core course must be advised in writing of the need for the student to attend summer school.

#### .1.11 Age Promotions

Students from middle school who will be 15 years old prior to September 1 of the current school year shall be admitted to high school on the recommendation of the middle school principal.

.1.11.1 Such students, if necessary, may be placed in an alternative program designed to accelerate their academic performance.

#### .1.12 Transfer Students from Accredited Schools

A student who transfers into a USD 500 high school from another accredited high school shall immediately have his or her transcript evaluated and a Graduation Plan established that is approved by the parent.

.1.12.1 Credit for courses determined to be below-level or remedial shall not be accepted toward satisfaction of USD 500 core curriculum requirements.

.1.12.2 Transfer students from accredited schools shall be expected to complete the graduation requirements established for their graduation class.

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.1.0 Purpose (continued)

.1.12 Transfer Students from Accredited Schools (continued)

In the event that the student is not able to meet USD #500 requirements within the four-year plan, he or she may petition the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning to approve an individualized graduation plan that meets his or her needs. In any case, however, the student shall be required to complete the core curriculum requirements of this policy and to complete a total of 24 units.

.1.13 Transfer Students from Unaccredited Schools (including home schooling)

Grade placement and graduation requirements for credits earned at an unaccredited school or schools not recognized by the State Board of Education shall be as follows:

.1.13.1 Credit shall be allowed toward graduation for work done at an unaccredited school if the student completes the next course in sequence in a USD #500 school with a grade of "C" or better.

.1.13.2 Courses which are not ordinarily followed by a sequential course may be accepted for credit at the discretion of the principal, except that no credit shall be accepted for transfer credit for a course under the general classification of "religion."

.1.13.3 No course determined to be below-level or remedial shall be accepted for credit toward satisfaction of graduation requirements.

.1.13.4 Students transferring from unaccredited schools must complete a minimum of six units of credit in a USD #500 high school with an average grade of "C" during the senior year in order to graduate.

.1.13.5 Qualified resident students transferring from unaccredited schools shall be admitted directly to high school if the student will be over 15 years old prior to September 1 of the current school year.

If necessary, such a student shall be tested and placed in an appropriate alternative program designed to accelerate his or her academic performance.

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### .1.0 Purpose (continued)

- .1.13.6 In exceptional cases and upon recommendation of a review committee, a student who does not qualify for high school enrollment because of age may be enrolled in a high school.

The Review Committee shall be composed of the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, the Assistant Superintendent for Student and Parent Services, the high school counselor, and the principal. The Assistant Superintendent for Student and Parent Services shall call and chair all such committee meetings and shall vote only in cases of a tie.

- .1.13.7 A student who transfers into a USD #500 high school from an unaccredited high school shall immediately have his or her transcript evaluated and a Graduation Plan established that is approved by the parent/guardian. Such students shall be expected to complete the graduation requirements established for their graduation class. In the event that the student is not able to meet USD #500 requirements within the four-year plan, he or she may petition the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction to approve an individualized graduation plan that meets his or her needs. In any case, however, the student shall be required to complete the core curriculum requirements of this policy and to complete a total of 24 units.

### .1.14 Participation in Graduation Ceremony

Effective for the graduating class of 2000, in order to be a participant in the graduation ceremony, the student must have completed all 24 of the required units for graduation. An exception may be made for the student who has completed 23 units. He/she may participate in the graduation ceremony, but will not receive his/her diploma until proof of the final unit taken during summer school, evening school, etc. is presented to the principal.

Principals shall make a determination of eligible participants periodically and inform students and their parents immediately if it is determined that the student is in danger of losing or has lost his/her eligibility to participate in the graduation ceremony.

### .1.15 Award of Diploma

The award of the high school diploma shall not be made until all graduation requirements have been met.