

## **Graduation Requirements**

In support of student development goals set out in KRS 158.6451 and the Kentucky Academic Standards, students must complete a minimum of twenty-two (22) credits and all other state and local requirements in order to graduate from high school in the District.

Credits shall include content standards as provided by the Kentucky Academic Standards established in 704 KAR Chapter 8. Additional standards-based learning experiences shall align to the student's individual learning plan and shall consist of standards-based content.

Each student shall be required to earn the following ten (10) foundational credits:

- (a) English/language arts – two (2) credits (English I and II);
- (b) Social studies – two (2) credits;
- (c) Mathematics – two (2) credits (Algebra I and Geometry);
- (d) Science – two (2) credits that shall incorporate lab-based scientific investigation experiences;
- (e) Health – one-half (1/2) credit;
- (f) Physical education – one-half (1/2) credit; and
- (g) Visual and performing arts – one (1) credit.

Each student shall be required to earn the following twelve (12) personalized credits:

- (a) Two (2) additional English/language arts credits;
- (b) Two (2) additional mathematics credits;
- (c) One (1) additional science credit;
- (d) One (1) additional social studies credit; and
- (e) Academic and career interest standards-based learning experiences – six (6) credits including four (4) standards-based learning experiences.

Each student shall complete the following additional requirements:

- (a) Successfully demonstrate performance-based technology;
- (b) Successfully meet the civics requirement; and
- (c) Successfully complete one (1) or more courses or programs that meet the financial literacy requirements.

### **ADVANCED COURSEWORK**

Students that successfully complete high school advanced coursework shall receive credit toward graduation in accordance with state law.<sup>5</sup>

### **CIVICS REQUIREMENT**

Beginning with the entering ninth grade class of the 2025-2026 school year, and each year thereafter, graduation requirements for each student in every public high school in Kentucky graduating with a regular diploma shall include successful completion of either:

## **Graduation Requirements**

### **CIVICS REQUIREMENT (CONTINUED)**

- a) A one-half (1/2) credit course in civic literacy meeting statutory curriculum and standards requirements; or
- b) A civics test composed of one hundred (100) questions drawn from those that are set forth within the civics test administered by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens.

The Board shall determine which option shall be required for graduates of the District.

If the Board requires completion of the civics test, the Board shall prepare or approve the test as described. The Board shall disseminate the test and it be administered by each high school in the District. By September 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, the District requiring a civics test for graduation shall submit annual testing data to the Kentucky Department of Education.

A minimum score of seventy percent (70%) is required to pass the test and students may take the test as many times as needed to pass without the use of instructional aids during testing including but not limited to textbooks and internet browser searching. A student shall not receive a regular high school diploma until the student successfully completes the test. Students that have passed a similar test within the previous five (5) years may provide the Board with evidence of successful completion and shall not be required to take the test. The test requirement shall be subject to the requirements and accommodations of a student's individualized education program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.<sup>4</sup>

### **FINANCIAL LITERACY REQUIREMENT**

For students entering grade nine (9) on or after July 1, 2025, successful completion of one (1) credit course in financial literacy. The course shall align to the student's individual learning plan and comply with KRS 158.1411.

The Superintendent, after consultation with the Board, the school-based decision-making council, and the Principal of each high school, shall determine curricula for course offerings that are aligned with the financial literacy academic standards.

The financial literacy course requirement shall be accepted as an elective course requirement for high school graduation.

### **INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN (ILP)**

The development of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each student shall be established within the first ninety (90) days of the sixth (6th) grade year and shall focus on career exploration and related postsecondary education and training needs.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE BOARD**

In addition to the content requirements established by the Kentucky Academic Standards, and the credits required by the minimum requirements for high school graduation in 704 KAR 3:305, the Board may impose other requirements for graduation from high school. Annual changes to the high school graduation requirements shall be reflective in the Highlands High School Course Catalog, with all updates subject to Board submission and approval. However, the Board shall not adopt any graduation requirements that include achieving a minimum score on a statewide assessment.

The high school student handbook shall include complete details concerning specific graduation requirements, including courses that meet the minimum requirements.

## **Graduation Requirements**

### **ACADEMIC LOAD**

All high school students shall be enrolled in at least six (6) subjects, unless assigned as a student assistant for one (1) period.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT**

In keeping with statutory requirements, the District shall accept for credit toward graduation and completion of high school course requirements an advanced placement or a high school equivalent course taken by a student in grades 5, 6, 7, or 8 if that student attains performance levels expected of high school students in the District as determined by achieving a score of "3" or higher on a College Board Advanced Placement examination or a grade of "B" or better in a high school equivalent.<sup>2</sup>

Middle school students may take designated courses that will count toward graduation requirements. However, the following requirement shall apply:

- Middle school student taking such courses must earn at least a B average and pass the final exam in the class for the course to count toward graduation.
- Grades earned in those courses shall not be used to calculate a student's high school grade point average (GPA).

### **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

In order to graduate, seniors must successfully complete requirements of the Student Assessment Program.

In collaboration with department chairs, the SBDM Council shall determine the courses that meet credit requirements.

The high school student handbook shall include complete details concerning specific graduation requirements.

### **OTHER PROVISIONS**

Diplomas shall be presented at Commencement. The Board, Superintendent, Principal, or teacher may award special recognition to students. (See Policy 08.2211.)

Only those senior students who meet all requirements of this policy shall be permitted to participate in graduation activities, except that, under procedures developed by the Superintendent, academically accelerated students assigned to a senior homeroom shall be permitted to participate in Commencement.

Seniors participating in Commencement shall wear caps and gowns approved by the Board.

Consistent with the District's graduation practices for all students, an alternative high school diploma shall be awarded to students with disabilities in compliance with applicable legal requirements. In addition, former students may submit to the Superintendent a request that the District provide them with an alternative high school diploma to replace the certificate of attainment they received at time of graduation from the District.<sup>3</sup>

## **Graduation Requirements**

### **OTHER PROVISIONS (CONTINUED)**

A student who is at least seventeen (17) years of age and who is a state agency child, as defined in KRS 158.135, shall be eligible to seek attainment of a High School Equivalency Diploma.

The Board may substitute an integrated, applied, interdisciplinary, occupational, technical, or higher-level course for a required course if the alternative course provides rigorous content.

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT CAPSTONE DIPLOMA**

Students who wish to earn the Capstone Diploma must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the requirements of Kentucky's Pre-college curriculum;
- Complete the College Board courses titled AP Seminar and AP Research and the accompanying exams; and
- Complete and earn a passing score of three (3) or better on four (4) additional Advanced Placement courses.

Students who meet the above criteria shall be awarded the Capstone Diploma and recognized at the Highlands High School Commencement. Students who earn a three (3) or better in both AP Seminar and AP Research as well as a three (3) or better in four (4) additional AP courses shall be awarded the AP Capstone Diploma through the College Board. Those who meet the requirements but not on four (4) additional courses will earn a Capstone Certificate through the College Board.

### **TRANSCRIPTS**

Upon graduation, each student shall receive an official transcript of his/her secondary school record. Additional copies shall be provided for a minimal fee upon student request.

### **DIPLOMAS FOR VETERANS**

In keeping with statute and regulation, the Board shall award an authentic high school diploma to an honorably discharged veteran who did not complete high school prior to being inducted into the United States Armed Forces during World War II, the Korean conflict, or the Vietnam War.<sup>1</sup>

### **REFERENCES:**

<sup>1</sup>KRS 40.010; KRS 158.140; 704 KAR 7:140

<sup>2</sup>KRS 158.622

<sup>3</sup>KRS 156.160; 20 U.S.C. § 1414

<sup>4</sup>KRS 158.141

<sup>5</sup>KRS 160.348; KRS 158.622

KRS 156.027; KRS 158.135

KRS 158.1411; KRS 158.1413; KRS 158.142; KRS 158.143; KRS 158.183

KRS 158.281; KRS 158.302; KRS 158.645; KRS 158.6451; KRS 158.6453; KRS 158.860

13 KAR 2:020; 702 KAR 7:125

704 KAR 3:305; 704 KAR 3:535; 704 KAR 7:090

704 KAR Chapter 8

OAG 78-348; OAG 82-386

**Graduation Requirements**

**RELATED POLICIES:**

08.1122; 08.1131; 08.11311; 08.14; 08.22; 08.2211; 08.222; 08.4  
09.126 (re: requirements/exceptions for students from military families)

**RELATED PROCEDURE:**

09.12 AP.25