

INSTRUCTION – GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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 entering grade 8 in the 2012-2013 school year and later 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: a statewide adopted expectation for student learning in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, health and the arts. Locally developed academic standards in health apply until statewide rules implementing statewide health standards under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 3, are required to be implemented in the classroom.
- 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. Within ISD #31, a student can earn ½ credit for the successful completion of each course for a total of 2.5 credits per term.
- C. “Section 504 Accommodation” means the defined appropriate accommodations or modifications that must be made in the school environment 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 impacted by lack of English language proficiency.~~

IV. DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

The Director of Curriculum & Administrative Services 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.

A. 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:

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1. Achievement and career and college readiness in mathematics, reading, and writing, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B307, subdivision 4, paragraph (d) and to the extent available, to monitor 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 based on analysis of students' progress and performance data, determine students' learning and instructional needs and the instructional tools and best practices that support academic rigor for the student; and
2. Consistent with this paragraph and Minn. Stat. § 120B.125 (*see Policy 604, Section II.H.*), 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.
3. 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.

B. Targeted Instruction Plan

1. A Student must receive targeted, relevant, academically rigorous, and resourced instruction which may include a targeted instruction and intervention plan focused on improving the student's 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.
2. Consistent with Minnesota Statutes, sections 120B.13, 124D.09, 124D.091, 124D.49, and related sections, an enrolling school or district must actively encourage a student in grade 11 or 12 and who is identified as academically ready for a career or college 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.
3. As appropriate, students through grade 12 must continue to participate in targeted instruction, intervention, or remediation and be encouraged to participate in courses awarding college credit to high school students.

C. A student's progress toward career and college readiness must be recorded on the student's high school transcript.

VI. GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Bemidji High School:

A. Students must successfully complete, as determined by the Bemidji School District, the following high school level credits for graduation:

1. Four credits of Language Arts sufficient to satisfy all academic standards in English language arts;
 2. Four credits of mathematics, including an algebra II credit or its equivalent, sufficient to satisfy the academic standards in mathematics.
 3. An algebra I credit by the end of 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th grade standards in mathematics.
 4. Four credits of science, including one credit to satisfy all the earth and space science standards for grades 9 through 12, one credit to satisfy all the life science standards for grades 9 through 12, and one credit to satisfy all the chemistry or physics standards for grades 9 through 12;
 5. Three and one-half credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship in either grade 11 or 12 for students beginning in grade 9 in the 2025-2026 school year and later or an advanced placement or other rigorous course on government and citizenship under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.21, subdivision 1a, and a combination of other credits 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;
 - 6 One credit in the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the state or local academic standards in the arts; and
 7. One credit physical education
 8. One-half credit health
 9. Beginning with the class of 2027, Personal Finance will be a requirement for graduation at Bemidji High School. Students who begin grade 9 in the 2025-2026 school year and later must successfully complete a course for credit in personal finance in grade 10, 11, or 12. A teacher of a personal finance course that satisfies the graduation requirement must have a field license or out-of-field permission in agricultural education, business, family and consumer science, social studies, or math.
 10. (Due to the transition to a 5-period day for the 2023-2024 school year, elective credit will vary for the graduating classes of 2024 - 2027.
- ~~Class of 2026: 33 credits to graduate which includes 14.5 credits of electives (18.5 core required credit + 14.5 elective credits)~~
 - **Class of 2027 and beyond:** 35 credits to graduate (19 core required credit + 16 elective credits)

B. Credit equivalencies

- a. A one-half credit of economics taught in a school's agricultural, food and natural resources education or business education department may fulfill a one-half credit in social studies under VI.A.5., above, if the credit is sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in economics.
- b. An agriculture science or career and technical education credit may fulfill the elective science credit required under VI.A.4., 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 VI.A.4. above, if the credit meets the state chemistry or

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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 VI.A.4., above

c. A career and technical education credit may fulfill a mathematics or arts credit requirement under VI.A.2. or VI.A.6., above.

d. A computer science credit may fulfill a mathematics credit requirement under VI.A.2., above, if the credit meets state academic standards in mathematics.

e. A Project Lead the Way credit may fulfill a science or mathematics credit requirement under VI.A.2. or VI.A.4., above, if the credit meets the state academic standards in science or mathematics.

f. 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.

Credit requirement changes due to transition to a 5-period day in the 2023-2024 school year:

Subject	2026	2027 and beyond
Language Arts	4.00	4.00
Mathematics	4.00	4.00
Science	4.00	4.00
Social Studies	4.00	4.00
Arts	1.00	1.00
Health	.50	.50
Physical Education	1.00	1.00
Personal Finance	N/A	.50
Electives	14.5	16
Total Credit Requirements	33	35

Bemidji Alternative Programs:

A. Students beginning 8th must successfully complete, as determined by the Bemidji School District, the following high school level credits for graduation:

- Four credits of language arts sufficient to satisfy all academic standards in English language arts;
- Three credits of mathematics sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in mathematics
- An algebra I credit by the end of 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th grade standards in mathematics.
- Three credits of science, including one credit to satisfy all the earth and space science standards for grades 9 through 12, one credit to satisfy all the life science standards for grades 9 through 12, and one credit to satisfy all the chemistry or physics standards for grades 9 through 12;
- Three and one-half credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States history, geography, government and citizenship in either grade 11 or 12 for students beginning in grade 9 in the 2025-2026 school year and later or an advanced placement or other rigorous course on government and citizenship under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.21, subdivision 1a, and a combination of other

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credits 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;

6. One credit in the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the state or local academic standards in the arts; and
 7. A minimum of seven elective credits.
 8. Students who begin grade 9 in the 2025-2026 school year and later must successfully complete a course for credit in personal finance in grade 10, 11, or 12. A teacher of a personal finance course that satisfies the graduation requirement must have a field license or out-of-field permission in agricultural education, business, family and consumer science, social studies, or math.
- B. Credit equivalencies
- a. 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 VI.A.5., above, if the credit is sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in economics.
 - b. An agriculture science or career and technical education credit may fulfill the elective science credit required under VI.A.4., 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 VI.A.4. 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 VI.A.4., above
 - c. A career and technical education credit may fulfill a mathematics or arts credit requirement under VI.A.2. or VI.A.6., above.
 - d. A computer science credit may fulfill a mathematics credit requirement under VI.A.2., above, if the credit meets state academic standards in mathematics.
 - e. A Project Lead the Way credit may fulfill a science or mathematics credit requirement under VI.A.2. or VI.A.4., above, if the credit meets the state academic standards in science or mathematics.
 - f. 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.

Subject	Bemidji Alternative Programs Diploma Requirements 2027 & 2028	Bemidji Alternative Programs Diploma Requirements 2029 and beyond
Language Arts	4.00	4.00
Mathematics	3.00	3.00

Science	3.00	3.00
Social Studies	3.50	3.50
Arts	1.00	1.00
Health	.50	.50
Physical Education	.50	.50
Personal Finance	N/A	0.5
Electives	7.00	7.00
Total Credit Requirements	22.50	23

VII. GRADUATION STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

A. All students must demonstrate their understanding of the following academic standards:

1. School District Standards, Health (K-12);
2. School District Standards, Career and Technical Education (K-12); and
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; and
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 are inappropriate. An IEP team that makes this determination must establish alternative standards.

VIII. EARLY GRADUATION

Students may be considered for early graduation, as provided for within Minn. Stat. § 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. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FOR VETERANS

A. Diploma

The school district must, upon a request under Paragraph B. below issue a high school diploma to a veteran as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 197.447 who was unable to complete their high school education for reasons related or unrelated to their military service, and who served:

1. during the Korean Conflict; or
2. during the Vietnam War.

B. Request

A veteran may request a diploma on their own behalf, or a family member may make a posthumous request on behalf of a deceased veteran or service member. The high school diploma is awarded based on the veteran's knowledge and experience gained while in service, or the veteran's other relevant lived experience. The school district may require the veteran or veteran's requestor to provide evidence that the veteran was a Minnesota public school student or is a current Minnesota resident.

C. No Report Required

The school district is not required to report on diplomas issued under Minnesota Statutes, section 127A.135.

D. Assistance

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and county veteran service officers may provide assistance to districts fulfilling diploma requests, including but not limited to verification of discharge paperwork.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. § 120B.018 (Definitions)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations and Graduation Requirements for Minnesota’s Students)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.021 (Required Academic Standards)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.023 (Benchmarks)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.024 (Credits)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.07 (Early Graduation)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement Goals; Striving for Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.125 (Planning for Students’ Successful Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment; Personal Learning Plans)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.13 (Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programs)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.251 (Ethnic Studies Requirements)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 (General Requirements; Statewide Assessments)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.303 (Assessment Graduation Requirements)*
- Minn. Stat. § 120B.307 (College and Career Readiness)*
- Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 (Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act)*
- Minn. Stat. § 124D.091 (Concurrent Enrollment Program Aid)*
- Minn. Stat. § 124F.08 (Education and Employment Transitions Partnerships)*
- Minn. Stat. § 127A.135 (High School Diploma for Veterans)*
- Minn. Rules Part 3501.0660 (Academic Standards for Kindergarten through Grade 12)*
- Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0750 (Academic Standards for Mathematics)*
- Minn. Rules Part 3501.0820 (Academic Arts Standards for Kindergarten through Grade 12)*
- Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0960 (Academic Standards in Science)*
- Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1200-1210 (Academic Standards for English Language Development)*
- Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1350 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)*
- Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1400-3501.1410 (Academic Standards for Physical Education)*
- 20 U.S.C. § 6301, et seq. (Every Student Succeeds Act)*

Cross References:

- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)*
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 601 (School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals)*
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)*
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)*
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (School District System Accountability)*