

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Superintendent, 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.

- I. The student must successfully complete a total of **24** credits of which 14 ½ (fourteen and one-half) credits are specified by Maine law and the Biddeford School Committee. They are:
 1. English/language arts – 5 credits;
 2. Mathematics – 2 credits;
 3. Social Sciences – 3 credits, including one credit of U.S. History, one credit of Introduction to Social Sciences and one Social Science elective; and completion of a Maine history study if not completed in middle school (Note: This is permissible under State law);
 4. Science- 2 credits, including at least one credit of laboratory study;
 5. Fine arts – 1 credit, which may include art, music, forensics, drama or computer graphics (Note: Forensics is part of the state law);
 6. Health – ½ credit; and
 7. Physical education – 1 credit.
- II. In addition, the School Committee requires that all students participate in at least one non-academic, extracurricular activity such as a school club, sports, school aide positions or community service. Students must clear their activity through their guidance counselor/activities director.
- III. 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.
- IV. A student who is deficient in these requirements may meet these requirements through a post-secondary course, a State-approved adult education course, a State-approved summer school program, or a distance learning or correspondence course approved by the school principal in advance of registration. The student may participate in the next regular graduation ceremony following successful completion of the requirements.
- V. A student who leaves Biddeford 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.

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- VI. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF STANDARDS-BASED DIPLOMAS
- A. Transfer Students: For students who transfer to Biddeford High School from another state or from an educational program that is not required to meet the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the Biddeford High School principal, along with a team of teachers, shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards achieving the standards in a manner consistent with the school unit's Local Assessment System and applicable School Committee policies.
- B. 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 Individual Education Plans (IEP), will be awarded diplomas.
- C. Early Awarding of Diplomas: A student who has met the State's and the School Committee's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma.
- D. 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 Individual Education Plan.
- E. Participation in Graduation Ceremony: A student must complete all requirements for a high school diploma in order to participate in graduation exercises.
- F. **Credit Recovery**: *All courses completed with the assistance of credit recovery programs may be applied towards credit completion and graduation.*

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA § 4722
CH. 127. § 7 (Maine Dept. of Ed. Rules)

Cross Reference: ILA – Testing/Assessment

Adopted: May 9, 1995

Revised: March 25, 1997; April 27, 1999, March 9, 2004, March 13, 2007, January 25, 2011