

**M O T I O N**

I move that the Board of Education approve the proposed changes to Policy IKF – Graduation Requirements. I further move that the Superintendent be directed to appoint appropriate staff members to notify principals and school communities of these changes.

## Policy IKF- Graduation Requirements

*The high school diploma awarded by Denver Public Schools represents a high standard of quality in curriculum content, instruction, and student learning, and should be maintained as a document that reflects substantial effort by the student and the school district in preparation for the world of work or higher education.*

In the high schools, individual programs are established for students. It shall be the joint responsibility of each school, student, and parent to give careful attention to the educational and career goals of the student.

Study course requirements stated are definitive. An individual school may not impose course requirements beyond those stated as a condition of graduation from high school. It should be noted, however, that successful completion of the International Baccalaureate Program fulfills the graduation requirements for a Denver Public Schools diploma.

The principal may waive a given requirement if, in the principal's judgment, it is determined to be in the best educational interest of the student.

A high school diploma from Denver Public Schools certifies that a student has fulfilled all graduation requirements in one of five course areas:

- General Course of Study
- Achieving Personal Excellence (APEX) Course of Study
- Combined General and IEP
- Work Experience and Study
- Individualized Education Program.

The Combined General and IEP, Work Experience and Study and the Individualized Education Program options are available only to students with identified special education needs or to students whose transcripts reflect one or more core academic or elective course credits as special education. A student's course of study is not reflected in a differentiated diploma, but rather in the student's transcript. Every student diploma will state, "This diploma is reflective of the student's course of study as recorded on an official transcript."

## General or the Combine General and IEP Course of Study Requirements

Two hundred and twenty semester hours (22 units) shall be required in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 for students to graduate from high school and receive a high school diploma. Transcripts shall reflect differences in program content. The content area requirements are as listed below.

### 1. Language Arts

A minimum of forty semester hours (4 units) shall be earned including ten semester hours (1 unit) of Introduction to Literature and Composition 1 & 2, and 10 semester hours (1 unit) of American Literature 1 & 2.

### 2. Social Studies

Twenty-five semester hours (2.5 units) shall be earned: Ten semester hours (1 unit) in American History, five semester hours (.5 units) in American Government, and five semester hours (5 units) of Geography are required.

### 3. Science

Thirty semester hours ( 3 units) shall be earned including 10 semester hours (1 unit) of Biology 1 & 2, which must include study of the nature of alcohol and narcotics, their effects upon the human system, and environmental concerns.

### 4. Mathematics

Thirty semester hours ( 3 units) shall be earned. Ten hours (1 unit) of algebra or its integrated equivalent and ten hours (1 unit) of geometry or its integrated equivalent are required. Except that the high school algebra requirement will be waived for a student who successfully completes one

year of algebra in middle school. Such students will only be required to complete twenty semester hours (2 units) of mathematics in high school, including ten semester hours (1 unit) of geometry. In no case, will students receive high school credit for courses completed in middle school.

### 5. Physical Education/Dance, Citywide Marching Band, ROTC, or DPL Athletics

Ten semester hours (1 unit) shall be earned or exempted for athletic participation.

Athletic sports that are sanctioned by the Denver Public Schools' Board of Education and meet the criteria below may exempt a student from the physical education graduation requirement. No grade or credit will be given for athletic participation and such exemptions will not reduce the total number of hours required to earn a diploma. Both semesters of the physical education requirement may be exempted by athletic participation.

Criteria governing physical education exemptions:

- a. The student must maintain academic eligibility for the entire season.
- b. One full sport season is required to exempt a student from five semester hours (5 units) of P.E. requirement,
- c. A student must be a high school freshman, sophomore, or junior to qualify for the exemption. Seniors who have not yet met the physical education requirement are not allowed to take this exemption and must enroll in a physical education course.

#### 6. Electives

Eighty-five semester hours ( 8.5 units) shall be earned.

#### 7. Community-Based Experience

Within the 220 semester hours (22 units) required for a diploma, a minimum of 190 semester hours (19 units) shall be earned in classroom-based instruction. Students may, therefore, earn and apply a maximum of thirty semester hours (3 units) of community-based experience toward graduation requirements. These experiences may include, but are not limited to, field or service experiences, work experiences, and internships.

At least four years (eight semesters) of attendance is required for students to complete grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 except that:

\* students with a 3.0 GPA who have completed all core curriculum/elective

requirements and 220 credit hours (22 units) may graduate in seven semesters

\* students with a 3.5 GPA who have completed all core curriculum/elective

requirements and 220 credit hours (22 units) may graduate in six semesters.

### Achieving Personal Excellence (APEX) Requirements

Students will be awarded an APEX diploma if they meet all of the requirements in one through five in the general course of study, earn 35 hours of elective credit, and meet the requirements to earn an Associate of Arts (A.A.), Associate of Science (A.S.), or Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) Degree from a community college.

### Work Experience and Study Requirements

Two hundred and twenty semester hours (22 units) will be required in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, and/or through the first semester after the student's twenty-first (21st) birthday, from courses approved by the school principal and determined by the staffing team. Transcripts will reflect differences in program content. The content areas and work study requirements are as listed below:

#### 1. Language Arts

A minimum of thirty semester hours (3 units) shall be earned.

#### 2. Social Studies

Twenty semester hours (2 units) shall be earned. Ten semester hours (1 unit) in vocations and/or transition classes are required.

#### 3. Science

Ten semester hours (1 unit) shall be earned.

#### 4. Mathematics

Twenty semester hours (2 units) shall be earned.

#### 5. Physical Education/Dance, Citywide Marching Band, or ROTC

Ten semester hours ( 1 unit) shall be earned; unless otherwise specified by the IEP.

#### 6. Electives

Seventy semester hours (7 units) shall be earned and may include additional hours of work experience.

#### 7. Work Experience and Study

Sixty semester hours (6 units) of work experience(s) earned in special education coordinated work experience.

#### Individualized Education Program (IEP) Requirements:

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) will constitute the course of study or substitute for the curriculum/content standard approved by the Board of Education. In making determinations for earning a diploma, assessment instruments will be selected and administered so as to best ensure that when an assessment is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills.

1. Students with severe and profound disabling conditions that interfere with their ability to meet the requirements for either of the above courses of study and have satisfied the requirements of an Individualized Education Program shall graduate with a high school diploma.

2. Students must attend school regularly in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, and/or through the first semester after the student's twenty first (21st) birthday, as determined by the IEP.

#### Transfer Students

A transfer student from outside the Denver Public Schools must meet the requirements to receive a diploma from the Denver Public Schools. All graduation requirements must be met prior to graduation, including attendance in the Denver Public Schools for at least two semesters, with a minimum of 50 semester hours (5 units) of credit earned.

#### Certificate of Attendance

Students who attend school regularly but do not meet the course of study requirements in any of the three course of study areas may be awarded a Certificate of Attendance

CROSS REF. IHADA, Post Secondary Options/Concurrent Enrollment  
IHDB, Adult High School/GED Programs  
IKE, Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration of Students

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