

Review of High School Graduation Requirements and Alternative Credits toward Graduation

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Teaching and Learning, Educational Services

Presentation Goals

- Review AUSD High School Graduation Requirements
- Review AUSD Board Policies and Administrative Regulations relevant to alternative means of completing high school graduation requirements

NOTE:

District staff are currently working with site staff across a number of the identified policy areas to clarify, revise, align, develop, communicate, and implement policies/practices consistent with Board Policy, Education Code, and our district's guiding principles.

Current AUSD High School Graduation Requirements

- **Students are required to meet the following general requirements to earn an AUSD high school diploma:**
 - Accumulation of a minimum of 230 credits
 - Attain a cumulative grade point average of not less than 1.75
 - Complete twenty (20) hours of community service work during the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades

Current AUSD High School Graduation Requirements

Academic Requirements

- English 40 credits (four years)
- Social Science 30 credits (three years)
- Mathematics 20 credits (two years)
- Science 20 credits (two years)
- World Language/VAPA/CTE 20 credits (two years)
- Physical Education 20 credits (two years)
- Current Life Issues 5 credits (one semester)
- Remaining credits are to come from elective courses

Comparable High School Credit Requirements

Alameda County peers require a similar number of credits for graduation

District	Required Units/Credits			Other
	Total	Science	Math	
Albany USD	220	20	20	
Berkeley USD	220	20	20	
Castro Valley USD	230	20	20	+16 hours community service
Dublin USD	230	30	30	
Fremont USD	230	20	30	+40 hours community service
Hayward USD	220	30	30	
New Haven USD	220	20	20	
Newark USD	230	20	20	
Oakland USD	230	30	30	+Senior Project/Exhibition
Piedmont USD	225	20	20	
Pleasanton USD	230	20	20	
Livermore JUSD	240	20	20	
San Leandro USD	220	20	20	
San Lorenzo USD	220	30	30	

Types of Diplomas

AUSD currently offers three types of diplomas:

- **High School Diploma of Graduation:**

Students meet all AUSD high school graduation requirements

- **High School Certificate of Completion:**

Any Student with Disabilities who completes a course of study as prescribed in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) but whose IEP team determines they are unable to meet AUSD graduation requirements because of their disability

- **Adult School Diploma of Graduation:**

Students over 18 who have met adult school graduation requirements

BP/AR 6146.11 (Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)

- In order to meet **individual student needs** and encourage all students to complete their high school education, the Board of Education desires to provide **flexibility in the completion** of prescribed courses in accordance with law.
- With the active involvement of parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, and students, the Board shall adopt **alternative means** for students to complete the prescribed course of study required for high school graduation. These alternative means shall be made available to students, parents/guardians, and the public. (Education Code [51225.3](#))

BP/AR 6146.11 (Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)

- Practical demonstration of skills and competencies
- Supervised work experience or other outside school experience
- Career technical education classes offered in high school
- Independent study
- Credit earned at a postsecondary institution
- For credit toward the district's foreign language requirement, foreign language studies successfully completed in a private school
 - Currently AUSD has one articulated agreement with a private foreign language school

BP/AR 6146.3 (Reciprocity of Academic Credit)

Transfers from Accredited Schools

- Students transferring into the district from an accredited school shall receive full academic credit for previously completed courses when the sending district verifies that the student has satisfactorily completed those courses.

Transfers from Non-Accredited Schools

- When a student transfers from any non-accredited private, public, alternative, home, or charter school, academic credit shall be subject to approval by the principal or designee at the enrolling school. Credits transferred from these schools shall be fully accepted when there is evidence that the course work completed is equivalent to similar courses offered in this district.

BP/AR 6155 (Challenging Courses by Examination)

- The Board of Education recognizes that there is a need to allow high school students to **challenge** a given course by examination for grade and credit **in order to accelerate progress towards graduation** and to **achieve more flexibility in the selection of electives**. This opportunity will permit a student to enroll in courses best suited to his/her educational objectives.
- The examination shall be comprehensive and cover all course objectives. Successful completion of the examination shall be at a level which indicates mastery of the content and/or reasonable chance for success in the next higher course.

BP/AR 6155 (Challenging Courses by Examination)

The challenge examination may be offered when the course is part of a **sequence of courses** normally taken in specific order or when the course is normally **required for entry into another course**.

- During their enrollment in high school, students may challenge **no more than four courses** which meet graduation requirements. While successful challenge will exempt a student from those specific courses required for graduation, the student is **still responsible for the total units** required for graduation.
- A student may challenge a particular course only **once**.
- A student may challenge only **one course per semester**. This may be a course in which the student is enrolled or any other approved course offering.
- A student may **not** attempt credit for a course **below his/her ability** or grade placement.

BP/AR 6158 (Independent Study)

The Board of Education authorizes independent study as an **optional alternative instructional strategy** for **eligible** students whose needs may be best met through study outside of the regular classroom setting. Independent study shall offer a means of individualizing the educational plan and enabling students to reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements.

AUSD's Independent Study program is currently managed by the Island High Principal, and students enroll on an individual basis after consultation with the 'home' school counselor and administrator.

BP/AR 6142.7 (Physical Education and Activity)

High school students are required to take two years of Physical Education unless exempted per Board Policy. They must take 9th grade PE, and it is recommended they take 10th grade PE.

However, the second year may be taken in 11th or 12th grade if necessary. Students may be exempted from a second year of PE pursuant to Board Policy.

BP/AR 6142.7 (Physical Education and Activity)

Permanent Exemptions

The Superintendent or designee may grant a student an exemption from a second year of physical education under the following special circumstances:

1. The student meets BOTH of the following criteria:
 - a) Is in high school and is engaged in a regular school-sponsored interscholastic athletic program carried on wholly or partially after regular school hours. (Education Code [51242](#))
 - b) Satisfactorily meets at least five of the six standards of the physical fitness test administered in grade 9 pursuant to section 60800. (Education Code [51241](#)(b)(1))

The Board of Education shall grant a permanent exemption from one or two years of physical education for any pupil who is 16 years or older, has been enrolled in grade 10 for one academic year or longer (Education Code [51241](#) (c)(1)), AND, in the board's determination, requires an exemption to meet state or federal legal requirements.

BP/AR 6172.1 (Concurrent Enrollment in College Classes)

- The Board of Education desires to **provide opportunities** for eligible district students to enroll concurrently in courses offered at postsecondary institutions in order to foster individual student **achievement**, increase **opportunities** for students to complete college preparatory course requirements or career technical education preparation, and prepare students for a **smooth transition** into college by providing **exposure** to the collegiate environment.
- When it is determined that the postsecondary course in which the student intends to enroll is substantially equivalent to a course provided by the district, the student **may receive** credit toward high school graduation requirements in addition to credit received from the college.

Early Graduation

- When the full range of alternative credits toward graduation are provided to students, it is anticipated that more students may petition for early graduation.
- Early graduation petitions have occurred in recent years, though they are limited to 1-2 per year, if any.
- Staff are currently developing draft Standard Operating Protocols to ensure that any future Early Graduation petitions are processed in a consistent manner and not on a subjective, case-by-case basis.

Early Graduation

Potential Implications and Considerations regarding Early Graduation:

- Signed agreement with student and family to ensure all parties understand consequences of shortfall in plan
- Shifts in section enrollment at end of semester/year
- Clear policies for access/eligibility regarding senior activities
- Clear timeline for petition to ensure that adequate plans can be made by both student/family and school

Articulation of Other Credits

Staff are currently evaluating a range of non-accredited programs that have been presented by students/families for proposed credit articulation. A representative example is the Academic Talent Development Program (ATDP) affiliated with UC Berkeley.

Some key considerations in this evaluation process:

- Ability to establish and maintain consistent and validated articulation list for any program considered
- Equivalence of academic experience
- Ability to verify quality and/or validate mastery
- Equity of access to outside programs that may supplement/supplant aspects of current AUSD program

On-line coursework (including credit recovery)

AUSD currently provides access to two key forms of on-line coursework for eligible groups of students at no cost to families:

1. Cyberhigh online coursework (Credit Recovery)
2. Acellus online coursework (as specified in IEPs for students with disabilities)

Neither form of online coursework is inherently limited to a specific group of students.

Additionally, families/students have routinely utilized other forms of online coursework for proposed articulation. The most common example is coursework from Brigham Young University (BYU) Online. These outside family/student selected course options are not funded by the district/school.

Concurrent/Dual Enrollment

Students have access to a range of concurrent/dual enrollment through established AUSD programs:

- Alameda Science and Technology Institute (ASTI) Early College High School
- Encinal Genomics Program (partnership with Merritt College)
- CTE Pathway articulated coursework including Broadcast Journalism (Radio) and Digital Filmmaking (TV/Media)
- Island High School concurrent enrollment
- Coursework proposed by individual students and approved by the principal/designee

'Fifth Year' Enrollment

When deemed appropriate, students may be offered a 'fifth year' of enrollment to complete their coursework at their current campus (as an alternative to enrollment at the continuation high school or through a competency exam).

Potential reasons for 'fifth year' offering:

- Student enrolls in school as a newcomer
- Student has experienced an unexpected gap in their schooling

NOTE: Specific education code exists to ensure that foster students, homeless students, and students from military families who transfer/enter into high school after 10th grade are eligible to graduate after meeting state minimum requirements.

Summary

- Current AUSD graduation requirements are generally similar to peer districts in Alameda County.
- Current AUSD Board Policy/Administrative Regulation provides students with a range of options toward completion of their high school graduation requirements.
- We need to clarify, revise, align, develop, communicate, and implement policies/practices that are consistent with AUSD BP/AR and Education Code.
- Staff are currently engaged in this work.

Questions?