

**IHF-R Graduation Requirements**

12/14/16

The District complies with all State Board Rules and policies regarding graduation requirements, credit transfers, and awarding of credits to students.

**RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:**

The Cobb County School District (District) shall provide secondary school teaching, learning, and support services that reflect the high school graduation and state assessment requirements and assist all students in developing their unique potential to function in society.

Requirements for regular high school graduation from the District shall meet or exceed all rules and standards as set forth by the State Board of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS/AdvancED).

**RULE:****A. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND DELIVERY SERVICES:**

The District shall provide instructional support and delivery services. These services shall include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Beginning in sixth grade, students will be provided a continuous advisement component to:
  - a. Familiarize students with graduation requirements;
  - b. Help students identify the likely impact of individual career objectives on the program of study they plan to follow, including career pathways; and
  - c. Provide annual advisement updates to report progress and offer alternatives in meeting graduation requirements and career objectives.
2. Record keeping and reporting services that document students' progress toward graduation and include information for the school, parents/guardians and students.
3. Diagnostic and continuous evaluation services that measure individual student progress in meeting competency expectations for graduation.
4. Instructional programs, resources and remedial opportunities to assist each student in meeting graduation requirements.
5. Appropriate curriculum and assessment procedures for students who have been identified as having disabilities that prevent them from meeting the prescribed competency performance requirements.

**B. APPLICATION:**

This Rule is effective for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time in 2008-2009 and subsequent years. For prior years, refer to the following Forms:

1. Form IHF-3 (Graduation Requirements: Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade Prior to the 1993-1994 School Year).
2. Form IHF-4 (Graduation Requirements: Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade in the 1993-1994 & 1994-1995 School Years).
3. Form IHF-5 (Graduation Requirements: Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade in the 1995-1996, 1996-1997 & 1997-1998 School Years).
4. Form IHF-6 (Graduation Requirements: Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade in the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 & 2001-2002 School Years).
5. Form IHF-7 (Graduation Requirements: Students Enrolling in Ninth Grade in 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, & 2007-2008 School Years).

## C. DEFINITIONS:

### 1. **Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Pathways:**

Three elective units in a coherent sequence that includes rigorous content aligned with industry-related standards leading to college and work readiness in a focused area of student interest.

### 2. **Core Courses:**

Courses identified as "c" or "r" in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses for the specified program of study.

### 3. **Elective Courses:**

Any courses identified as "e" in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses that a student may select beyond the core requirements to fulfill the unit requirements for graduation.

### 4. **Required Courses:**

Specific courses identified as "r" in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses that each student in a program of study shall pass to graduate from high school.

### 5. **Secondary School Credential:**

A document awarded to students at the completion of the high school experience:

#### a. **High School Diploma:**

The document awarded to students certifying that they have satisfied attendance and unit requirements.

#### b. **High School Certificate:**

The document awarded to students who have earned 23 units but do not complete all of the criteria for a diploma.

#### c. **Life Skills Concentration Diploma:**

The document awarded to students with disabilities served in or under the following special education programs who have not met the state assessment requirements referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 "Testing Programs-Student Assessment" or who have not completed all of the requirements for a high school diploma but who have nevertheless completed their Individualized Education Programs (IEP):

(1) Severe/Profound Intellectual Disabilities (SID/PID)

(2) Moderate Intellectual Disabilities (MOID)

#### d. **Employment Preparatory Concentration Diploma:**

The document awarded to students with disabilities served in special education programs who have not met the state assessment requirements referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 "Testing Programs-Student Assessment" or who have not completed all of the requirements for a high school diploma but who have nevertheless completed their Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

### 6. **Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA)** -- an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. The GAA is a portfolio assessment designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) whose IEP team has determined they are unable to reasonably participate in the regular assessment program. The purpose of the GAA is to ensure all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, are provided access to the state curriculum and given the opportunity to demonstrate progress toward achievement of the state standards.

### 7. **Significant Cognitive Disabilities:**

Students with significant intellectual disabilities or intellectual disabilities concurrent with motor, sensory or emotional/behavioral disabilities who require substantial adaptations and support to access the general curriculum and require additional instruction focused on relevant life skills and participate in the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA).

### 8. **Unit:**

One unit credit awarded for a minimum of 150 clock hours of instruction or 135 hours of instruction in an approved block schedule.

### 9. **Unit, Summer School:**

One unit of credit awarded for minimum of 120 clock hours of instruction.

**D. GENERAL PROVISIONS:**

The District has based local graduation requirements on Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.48 and requires the following:

**1. Attendance:**

- a. Attendance is required for high school students in accordance with State law and State Board of Education Policies, Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10.
- b. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of two and a half units of credit each semester as they progress toward high school graduation. For exceptions to this Rule, see Administrative Rule IED-R (Scheduling for Instruction).

**2. Units of Credit:**

- a. All District high schools shall make available to all students the required programs of study.
- b. A course shall count only once for satisfying any unit of credit requirement for graduation.

**AREAS OF STUDY**

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>UNITS REQUIRED</b>
English/Language Arts*	4
Mathematics*	4
Science*	4 The 4 <sup>th</sup> science unit <b>may</b> be used to meet both the science and an elective requirement, but shall count as only one unit unless otherwise specified.
Social Studies*	3
CTAE and/or Foreign Language and/or Fine Arts	3
Health and Physical Education*	1
Electives	4
<b>TOTAL UNITS (MINIMUM)</b>	<b>23</b>

**\*Required Courses and/or Core Courses**

**c. Course Credit:**

Credit may be earned in the following ways:

**(1) Regular School Program:**

- (a) Unit credit shall be awarded only for courses, grades 9-12, as approved by the Georgia Board of Education. Unit credit may be awarded for courses offered in the middle grades that meet 9-12 Georgia standards.
- (b) **Special Education Students:**  
The individualized Education Program (IEP) shall specify whether core courses taken as part of an IEP shall receive core unit credit.
- (c) Completion of diploma requirements does not necessarily qualify students for the Hope Scholarship Program.

**(2) Dual Enrollment:**

See Administrative Rule IDCH-R (Dual/Joint Enrollment Programs).

**(3) Work Experience:**

Work Experience credit is awarded during the school year only for on-the-job experience phase of the Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Work Based Learning programs:

**(a) Traditional Schedule:**

Students may earn from .5 up to a maximum of 1.5 units per semester, depending upon his/her individual schedule, grade level, graduation status, and job placement.

- (b) **Block Schedule:**  
Students may earn a maximum of two units per semester, depending upon his/her individual schedule, grade level, graduation status, and job placement.
- (4) **Non-Traditional Course Delivery:**
- (a) **Definition:**  
Non-Traditional course delivery is course delivery that is outside of the traditional programs as outlined in numbers 1-3 above. This includes online courses, correspondence courses and private school courses taken while concurrently enrolled in Cobb County during the school year and summer.
- (b) **Requirements:**
- 1) Students may earn credit toward graduation through non-traditional delivery provided the courses meet District curriculum and assessment requirements, and the course provider is accredited by a regional accreditation institution.
  - 2) Students seeking a diploma from the Cobb County School District must meet the enrollment requirements of Administrative Rule IED-R (Scheduling for Instruction).
  - 3) **Hardship Cases:**  
The Superintendent or designee shall exercise discretion in approving credit for courses delivered through non-traditional methods or waiving provisions stated above for hardship cases on an individual basis.
  - 4) Credit for courses delivered through non-traditional methods may be applied toward the graduation requirements for all diplomas. Options include:
    - a) **Cobb Virtual Academy/Georgia Virtual:**
      - i. **Cobb Virtual Academy** provides year-round online courses for initial credit and credit recovery to high school students enrolled in the District. Online course offerings and enrollment information may be found on the **Cobb Virtual Academy** website at [www.cobbvirtualacademy.org](http://www.cobbvirtualacademy.org)
      - ii. The Georgia Virtual School provides year-round online courses for initial credit and credit recovery to high school students in those courses not offered by **Cobb Virtual Academy** online course offerings and enrollment information may be found on the Georgia Virtual School website at [www.gavirtualschool.org](http://www.gavirtualschool.org)
    - b) **Credit Recovery:**  
The District provides course credit recovery opportunities for students who have previously failed a course through online curriculum delivery systems.
- (c) **Correspondence Courses, Online Courses and Private School Courses (Other than Nova Net, Cobb Virtual Academy, Georgia Virtual School and other State Credit Recovery programs, or courses receiving prior District approval):**  
Credit will be given for correspondence, online, and private school courses taken while concurrently enrolled in the District (including summer term) for elective credit when the student complies with the following provisions:
- 1) Before the student enrolls in the course, the course is approved using Form IHF-1 (Request for Approval to Take Non-Traditional Courses).
  - 2) While the student is enrolled in a District school, completion of one credit as recorded on an official transcript will be required before the school officials authorize enrollment in another non-traditional course.
  - 3) The course provider is accredited by a regional accreditation institution.
  - 4) The course includes a final evaluation component, and the course provider provides evidence that the administration of the final examination has been appropriately proctored.
  - 5) If a course is approved for a graduating senior, the school must receive the transcript no later than the last day of senior classes.
- (5) **Subject Area Competency Testing:**  
In accordance with State Board Rule 160-5-1-.15, students who successfully demonstrate subject area competency through a state-adopted or state-approved assessment instrument may earn up to three units of credit toward graduation.

- (6) **High School Courses Taken in Middle School:**
  - (a) Upon completion of high school courses taken at the middle school level the final grade will be recorded on the high school transcript.
  - (b) High school credit earned in middle school will count toward graduation but grades for these courses will not be calculated into the student's high school Grade Point Average (GPA).
- (7) **Night School:**

The District offers tuition-based course opportunities for high school juniors and seniors after the regular school day.
- (8) **Summer School:**

The District offers tuition-based course opportunities for all high school students during the summer recess. Course delivery may be traditional classroom, Cobb Virtual Academy or NovaNet.

**E. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Ninth Grade Class of 2008-2009 and Subsequent Years):**

Courses listed below in the program meet the entrance requirements for public post-secondary institutions in Georgia. Students who are planning to attend a school other than a Georgia public institution should check the specific requirements of the school they wish to attend. In order to receive a diploma, students must also pass the requirements as referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07.

- 1. **General Provisions:** Any courses identified as "e" in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses that a student may select beyond the core requirements to fulfill the unit requirements for graduation.
  - a. Courses that earn unit credit are listed in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses.
  - b. Students may select courses listed in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses within the following guidelines:
    - (1) **Required Courses:**

Any course identified as "r" is required and must be successfully completed. Another course cannot be substituted for them unless otherwise specified in the Georgia Board of Education's list of state-funded courses.
    - (2) **Core Courses:**

Any course identified as "c" is a core course and may be selected to count as one of the core unit requirements.
    - (3) **Elective Courses:**

A course identified as "e" is an elective course that may be selected beyond the core requirements to fulfill the unit requirements.
- 2. **English/Language Arts:**

Four units of credit in English language arts shall be required of all students. A full unit of credit in Ninth-Grade Literature and Composition and a full unit of credit in American Literature/Composition shall be required. All courses that may satisfy the remaining units of credit are identified with a "c."
- 3. **Mathematics:**
  - a. For entering classes in years 2011-2012 and beyond:
 

Four units of core credit in mathematics shall be required of all students, including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or its equivalent. Additional core courses needed to complete four credits in mathematics must be chosen from the list of GSE/AP/IB/dual enrollment designated courses.

    - (1) **Students with disabilities:**
      - (a) The mathematics requirements above apply to each student with a disability, consistent with his or her Individualized Education Program. Students with Disabilities who earn credit in Foundations of Algebra, Algebra I Geometry, Algebra II (4 credits), or in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and two support courses (3 core and 2 electives), may upon determination through the Individualized Education Program Team meet mathematics diploma requirements. Successful completion of 3 core units of mathematics may not meet the mathematics admission requirements for entrance into a University System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution without additional coursework.

- (b) Students with Disabilities, who were identified prior to high school enrollment and have a disability affecting mathematics achievement, may follow an alternate course sequence. The alternate course sequence will be based on the High School Mathematics Decision Rubric, as outlined by the Georgia Department of Education.

4. **Science:**

- a. Four units of credit in science shall be required of all students, including:
  - (1) One unit of Biology;
  - (2) One unit of either Physical Science or Physics;
  - (3) One unit of either Chemistry, Earth Systems, Environmental Science or an AP/IB course; and
  - (4) One additional science unit.
- b. The fourth science unit may be used to meet both the science and an elective requirement but shall count as only one unit unless otherwise specified.
- c. Any AP/IB science course may be substituted for the appropriate courses listed above.

5. **Social Studies:**

A total of three units of credit shall be required in social studies:

- a. One unit in United States History;
- b. One unit in World History;
- c. One-half unit of American Government/Civics shall be required; and
- d. One-half unit of Economics shall be required.

6. **CTAE/Modern Language/Latin/Fine Arts:**

A total of three units of credit shall be required from the following areas: CTAE and/or Modern Language/Latin and/or Fine Arts. Students are encouraged to select courses in a focused area of interest.

a. **Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Pathways:**

- (1) Students may earn three units of credit in a coherent sequence of CTAE courses through a self-selected pathway leading to college readiness and a career readiness certificate endorsed by related industries.
- (2) Students are encouraged to complete a pathway when selecting electives.

b. **Modern Language/Latin:**

- (1) All students are encouraged to earn two units of credit in the same modern language/Latin.
- (2) Students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution must take two units of the same modern language/Latin.
- (3) Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) institutions (Technical College System of Georgia) do not require modern language/Latin for admissions.
  - (a) Students whose native language is not English may be considered to have met the foreign language expectation by exercising the credit in lieu of enrollment option if they are proficient in their native language. A formal examination is not necessary if other evidence of proficiency is available.
  - (b) American Sign Language may be taken to fulfill the modern language requirements.

c. **Fine Arts:**

Electives may be selected from courses in fine arts.

7. **Health and Physical Education:**

- a. One unit of credit in health and physical education is required. Students shall combine one-half or one-third units of credit of Health (17.011), Health and Personal Fitness (36.051), or Advanced Personal Fitness (36.061) to satisfy this requirement.
- b. Three (3) units of credit in JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) may be used to satisfy this requirement, beginning with students who enter as 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2017-2018 school year.

**F. REQUIRED PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT:**

- 1. A unit of credit for graduation shall be awarded to students only for successful completion of state-approved courses of study based on a minimum of:
  - a. 150 clock-hours of instruction provided during the regular school year;

- b. 135 clock-hours of instruction in an approved block schedule during the regular school year; or
  - c. A minimum of 120 clock-hours of instruction in summer school.
2. Units of credit for graduation shall be awarded to high school students participating in any dual enrollment program using the ratio referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.34 "Postsecondary Options."
  3. Credit awarded for learning which has occurred outside the 9-12 classroom (for example, home schooling) shall be awarded based on proficiency tests. Equivalency credit shall be shown on the transcript.
  4. Refer to Administrative Rule IHE-R (Promotion and Retention) for requirements to advance with the student's entering class.

**G. STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES:**

Students with significant cognitive disabilities may graduate and receive a regular high school diploma when the student's IEP team determines that the student has:

1. Completed an integrated curriculum based on the GPS that includes instruction in Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies as well as career preparation, self-determination, independent living and personal care to equal a minimum of 23 units of instruction, and
2. Participated in the GAA during middle school and high school, and
3. Reached the 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday OR has transitioned to an employment/education/training setting in which the supports needed are provided by an entity other than the local school system.

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Reclassified an Administrative Rule: 9/1/04

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Legal Reference

O.C.G.A. 20-2-69	Requirements and procedures for issuing and awarding high school diplomas to honorably discharged World War II veterans
O.C.G.A. 20-2-70	Requirements and procedures for issuing and awarding high school diplomas to honorably discharged Korean Conflict and Vietnam Conflict veterans
O.C.G.A. 20-2-142	Prescribed courses; development/dissemination of instructional materials on effects of alcohol
O.C.G.A. 20-2-150	Eligibility for enrollment
O.C.G.A. 20-2-154	Remedial education program
Rule 160-4-2-.48	High School Graduation Requirements For Students Enrolling In Ninth Grade For The First Time In The 2008-2009 School
Rule 160-4-3-.14	Work-Based Learning Programs
Rule 160-4-8-.09	Student Advisement