

# Graduation Credit Requirements

| Discipline  | Minimum High School Program   | Recommended High School Program   | Distinguished Achievement Program*   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS</b> ♦  | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English I, II, III</b></li> <li>• The fourth credit may be selected from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English IV</li> <li>• Literary Genres</li> <li>• Practical Writing Skills</li> <li>• Journalism</li> <li>• Research/Technical Writing</li> <li>• Creative/Imaginative Writing</li> <li>• Business English (CTE)</li> <li>• Approved AP English courses</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>English I and II for Speakers of Other Languages</b> may be substituted for English I and II for students with limited English proficiency who are at the beginning or intermediate levels of English language proficiency.</p>   | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English I, II, III and IV</b></li> <li>• <b>English I and II for Speakers of Other Languages</b> may be substituted for English I and II for students with limited English proficiency who are at the beginning or intermediate levels of English language proficiency.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English I, II, III and IV</b></li> <li>• <b>English I and II for Speakers of Other Languages</b> may be substituted for English I and II for students with limited English proficiency who are at the beginning or intermediate levels of English language proficiency.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>MATHEMATICS</b> ♦  | <p><b>Three credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Algebra I</b></li> <li>• <b>Geometry</b></li> <li>• The third credit may be selected from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algebra II</li> <li>• Precalculus</li> <li>• AP Statistics</li> <li>• Mathematical Models with Applications</li> <li>• Independent Study in Mathematics</li> <li>• Advanced Quantitative Reasoning (AQR)</li> <li>• IB Mathematical Studies Standard Level</li> <li>• IB Mathematics Standard Level</li> <li>• IB Mathematics Higher Level</li> <li>• IB Further Mathematics Standard Level</li> <li>• Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (CTE)</li> <li>• Engineering Mathematics (CTE)</li> <li>• Statistics and Risk Management (CTE)</li> <li>• AP Calculus AB</li> <li>• AP Calculus BC</li> <li>• AP Computer Science</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Algebra I</b></li> <li>• <b>Geometry</b></li> <li>• <b>Algebra II</b></li> <li>• The additional credit may be selected from either of the following and must be completed <i>prior</i> to Algebra II. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematical Models with Applications</li> <li>• Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (CTE)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The fourth credit may be selected from the following after completion of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precalculus</li> <li>• AP Statistics</li> <li>• AP Computer Science</li> <li>• Advanced Quantitative Reasoning (AQR)</li> <li>• IB Mathematical Studies Standard Level</li> <li>• IB Mathematics Standard Level</li> <li>• IB Mathematics Higher Level</li> <li>• IB Further Mathematics Standard Level</li> <li>• Engineering Mathematics (CTE)</li> <li>• Statistics and Risk Management (CTE)</li> <li>• AP Calculus AB</li> <li>• AP Calculus BC</li> <li>• Independent Study in Mathematics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Algebra I</b></li> <li>• <b>Geometry</b></li> <li>• <b>Algebra II</b></li> <li>• The additional credit may be selected from any of the following after successful completion of Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precalculus</li> <li>• AP Statistics</li> <li>• AP Calculus AB</li> <li>• AP Calculus BC</li> <li>• AP Computer Science</li> <li>• Independent Study in Mathematics</li> <li>• Advanced Quantitative Reasoning (AQR)</li> <li>• IB Mathematical Studies Standard Level</li> <li>• IB Mathematics Standard Level</li> <li>• IB Mathematics Higher Level</li> <li>• IB Further Mathematics Standard Level</li> <li>• Engineering Mathematics (CTE)</li> <li>• Statistics and Risk Management (CTE)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| <b>SCIENCE</b> ♦  | <p><b>Two credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Biology</b></li> <li>• <b>Integrated Physics &amp; Chemistry</b></li> </ul> <p>May substitute Chemistry or Physics for IPC but must use the other as academic elective credit.</p>  | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Biology, AP Biology, or IB Biology</b></li> <li>• <b>Chemistry, AP Chemistry, or IB Chemistry</b></li> <li>• <b>Physics, Principles of Technology, AP or IB Physics</b></li> <li>• The additional credit may be IPC and must be successfully completed <i>prior</i> to chemistry and physics.</li> <li>• The fourth credit may be selected from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatic Science</li> <li>• Astronomy</li> <li>• AP Biology</li> <li>• AP Chemistry</li> <li>• AP Environmental Science</li> <li>• IB Biology</li> <li>• IB Physics</li> <li>• Scientific Research and Design (CTE)</li> <li>• Anatomy and Physiology (CTE)</li> <li>• Engineering Design and Problem Solving (CTE)</li> <li>• Medical Microbiology (CTE)</li> <li>• Pathophysiology (CTE)</li> <li>• Advanced Animal Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Advanced Biotechnology (CTE)</li> <li>• Advanced Plant and Soil Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Food Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Forensic Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Earth and Space Science</li> <li>• Environmental Systems</li> <li>• AP Physics B</li> <li>• AP Physics C</li> <li>• IB Chemistry</li> <li>• IB Environmental Systems</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><b>Four credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Biology, AP Biology, or IB Biology</b></li> <li>• <b>Chemistry, AP Chemistry, or IB Chemistry</b></li> <li>• <b>Physics, AP or IB Physics</b></li> <li>• After successful completion of a biology, a chemistry, and a physics course, the fourth credit may be selected from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatic Science</li> <li>• Astronomy</li> <li>• AP Biology</li> <li>• AP Chemistry</li> <li>• AP Environmental Science</li> <li>• IB Biology</li> <li>• IB Physics</li> <li>• Scientific Research and Design (CTE)</li> <li>• Anatomy and Physiology (CTE)</li> <li>• Engineering Design and Problem Solving (CTE)</li> <li>• Medical Microbiology (CTE)</li> <li>• Pathophysiology (CTE)</li> <li>• Advanced Animal Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Advanced Biotechnology (CTE)</li> <li>• Advanced Plant and Soil Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Food Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Forensic Science (CTE)</li> <li>• Earth and Space Science</li> <li>• Environmental Systems</li> <li>• AP Physics B</li> <li>• AP Physics C</li> <li>• IB Chemistry</li> <li>• IB Environmental Systems</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b> ♦   | <p><b>Two and one-half credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>U.S. History Studies Since 1877</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>U.S. Government</b> (one-half credit)</li> <li>• The final credit may be selected from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World History Studies (one credit)</li> <li>• World Geography Studies (one credit)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <p><b>Three &amp; one-half credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>World History Studies</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>World Geography Studies</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>U.S. History Studies Since 1877</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>U.S. Government</b> (one-half credit)</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Three &amp; one-half credits</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>World History Studies</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>World Geography Studies</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>U.S. History Studies Since 1877</b> (one credit)</li> <li>• <b>U.S. Government</b> (one-half credit)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>ECONOMICS WITH EMPHASIS ON THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND ITS BENEFITS</b> ♦ | <b>One-half credit</b>  | <b>One-half credit</b>  | <b>One-half credit</b>   |
| <b>ACADEMIC ELECTIVE</b>  | <p><b>One credit</b> from any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>World History Studies</b></li> <li>• <b>World Geography Studies</b></li> </ul> <p>• Any science course approved by SBOE (if substituting Chemistry or Physics for IPC, must use other as academic elective credit here.)</p>  | <b>None</b>   | <b>None</b>  |
| <b>LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH</b> ♦   | <b>None</b>   | <b>Two credits:</b> The credits must consist of any two levels in the same language.  | <b>Three credits:</b> The credits must consist of any three levels in the same language.   |
| <b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>   | <p><b>One credit:</b> applies to all 3 programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The required credit may be from any combination of the following one-half to one credit courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Personal Fitness</li> <li>• Aerobic Activities</li> <li>• Adventure/Outdoor Education</li> <li>• Team or Individual Sports</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In accordance with local district policy, credit for any of the courses listed above may be earned through participation in the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athletics</li> <li>• JROTC</li> <li>• Appropriate private or commercially-sponsored physical activity programs conducted on or off campus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In accordance with local district policy, up to one credit for any one of the courses listed above may be earned through participation in any of the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drill Team</li> <li>• Marching Band</li> <li>• Cheerleading</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All allowed substitution activities must include at least 100 minutes per five-day school week of moderate to vigorous physical activity.</li> <li>• Credit may not be earned for any TEKS-based course more than once. No more than four credits may be earned through any combination of substitutions.</li> </ul> |   |  |
| <b>HEALTH</b>   | <b>None</b>   | <b>None</b>   | <b>None</b>  |
| <b>SPEECH</b>   | <p><b>One-half credit</b> from either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Applications or</li> <li>• Professional Communications (CTE)</li> </ul>   | <p><b>One-half credit</b> from either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Applications or</li> <li>• Professional Communications (CTE)</li> </ul>   | <p><b>One-half credit</b> from either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Applications or</li> <li>• Professional Communications (CTE)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS</b> ♦  | <b>None</b>   | <b>None</b>   | <b>None</b>  |
| <b>FINE ARTS</b> ♦  | <p><b>One credit</b> from any of the following: (for students entering grade 9 in 2010 or later)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Dance, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Music, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Theatre, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Principles and Elements of Floral Design (CTE)</li> </ul> <p><b>None</b> for students entering grade 9 before 2010-11</p>   | <p><b>One credit</b> from any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Dance, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Music, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Theatre, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Principles and Elements of Floral Design (CTE)</li> </ul>  | <p><b>One credit</b> from any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Dance, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Music, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Theatre, Level I, II, III, or IV</li> <li>• Principles and Elements of Floral Design (CTE)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>ELECTIVE COURSES</b> ♦   | <p><b>Six and one-half credits</b> from any of the following: (for students entering grade 9 in 2010-11 or later)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills)</li> <li>• State-approved innovative courses</li> <li>• JROTC (one to four credits)</li> <li>• Driver Education (one-half credit)</li> </ul> <p><b>Seven and one-half credits</b> (for students who entered grade 9 prior to 2010)</p>   | <p><b>Five and one-half credits:</b> from any of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills)</li> <li>• State-approved innovative courses</li> <li>• JROTC (one to four credits)</li> <li>• Driver Education (one-half credit)</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Four and one-half credits:</b> from any of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills)</li> <li>• State-approved innovative courses</li> <li>• JROTC (one to four credits)</li> <li>• Driver Education (one-half credit)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Total Credits</b>  | <b>22</b>   | <b>26</b>   | <b>26</b>  |

♦ College Board Advanced Placement, college-level concurrent/dual enrollment, and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate areas.

\* Distinguished Achievement Program requirements also include student achievement of four advanced measures.

**Be sure to check with your local district, which may have additional graduation requirements. For all state requirements, visit [www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation.aspx](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation.aspx).**

# Reach your goal

**Plan your Graduation**

**Advanced Placement**  
 Prerequisites  
 Recommended Program  
 College Credits  
 High School Graduate

**Senior Requirements**  
 Social Studies  
 Economics  
 Sophomore

**Science**  
 Languages other than English  
 Mathematics  
 Freshman Physical  
 English Language Arts Applications

**Dual Credit**

**Extracurricular**

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

|                   | Distinguished Achievement*  | Recommended Program* | Minimum Graduation**  |
|-------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| Number of Credits | 26  | 26                   | 22  |
|                   | including four credits each in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies |                      |   |
| Approval          | None  |                      | Needed from both:<br>1) parent(s) or guardian<br>2) school official |

- Students must pass their classes, as well as state exit-level tests, in order to receive a diploma and graduate from a Texas public high school.
- Students who graduate by spring of 2014 must pass the exit-level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test to meet this requirement.
- Students who begin the 9th grade in 2011-12 will take a new state test, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). To be eligible to graduate, they will have to pass a series of End-of-Course tests in English, mathematics, science and social studies.

For complete information on all state graduation plans, go to:  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation.aspx>

**Be sure to check with your local district, which may have additional graduation requirements.**

\* beginning with the incoming freshman class of 2007-08  
 \*\* 1) must be 16 years old; 2) two credits completed in each of the foundation curriculum (English, math, science, social studies) for graduation; or 3) failed to be promoted to the 10th grade one or more times as determined by the school district.

## Why Go to College?

As you make your plans for the future, continuing your education with either technical training or a two-year or four-year college degree is recommended.

### Consider These Facts:

About two-thirds of the new jobs created by 2010 require some training beyond high school, such as technical training or an associate's or bachelor's degree.

Dropping out of high school or failing to earn a college degree severely limits a student's employment options and earning potential.

A college graduate makes twice as much as a student who has only a high school diploma.

Adults who stay in school longer are more likely to have good health, volunteer in their communities, and exercise their right to vote.

### Earnings\* over lifetime

Professional degree.....\$4.4 million  
 Master's degree.....\$2.5 million  
 Bachelor's degree.....\$2.1 million  
 Associate's degree.....\$1.6 million  
 High School diploma.....\$1.2 million

\*Source: US Census Bureau

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## Did You Know That...

- the highest ranking graduate at each Texas public high school receives a certificate from the Texas Education Agency that can be used as a scholarship to cover tuition costs at any Texas public college or university?
- students who complete the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement Program and are ranked in the top 10 percent of their graduating class at an accredited public or private Texas high school are eligible for automatic admission to most Texas public universities?
- students can earn college credit while still in high school by taking Advanced Placement courses and passing the Advanced Placement tests or by enrolling in and passing dual credit courses?
- a college graduate will have average lifetime earnings twice that of a high school graduate?
- there is one college application called ApplyTexas that is accepted at many universities and community colleges in the state?

## graduation checklist

- ➡ **Take** the most challenging courses possible, such as Advanced Placement or dual credit courses.
- ➡ **Track** your high school credits to be sure you will meet all local and state requirements by the end of your senior year.
- ➡ **Keep** a list of the awards and honors you receive as well as your extracurricular activities for admission and scholarship applications.
- ➡ **Research** the universities or colleges you are interested in attending during your sophomore year. Check admission requirements and application timelines/deadlines.
- ➡ **Explore** your interests and take advantage of Career Day opportunities.
- ➡ **Attend** college fairs hosted by your high school and community groups. Be sure to talk with school representatives about what types of financial aid may be available.
- ➡ **Take** the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) in your sophomore year for practice if possible, but in your junior year, take the PSAT for eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Students who take the PSAT tend to score higher on the SAT than those who do not.
- ➡ **Sign up** and take the ACT and/or SAT test, preferably in your junior year but no later than the fall of your senior year.
- ➡ **Check** with your counselor's office to learn about available scholarships. Be sure to begin applying early and for as many scholarships as possible. Do not limit yourself just to local scholarships.