



Denver Public Schools

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The high school diploma awarded by the 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.

General or the Combined General Course of Study Requirements

Two hundred forty semester hours (24 units) shall be required for students to graduate from high school and receive a high school diploma. Transcripts shall reflect differences in program content. For the Combined General diploma up to 140 semester hours may be earned in Special Education course in any subject area. The content area requirements are as listed below:

<i>General Course of Study Diploma Requirements</i>		
Course	<i>Semester</i> Credits	<i>Carnegie</i> Units
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 ten semester hours (1 unit) of American Literature 1 & 2. Ten semester hours (1 unit) World Literature, or upper division writing course. Ten semester hours (1 unit) other Language Arts.	40	4.0
2. Mathematics – Forty semester hours (4 units) shall be earned. Ten semester hours (1 unit) of algebra or its integrated equivalent, ten semester hours (1 unit) of geometry or its integrated equivalent are required, ten semesters hours (1 unit) of Algebra 2 or integrated equivalent, and ten semester hours (1 unit) of a higher level than algebra.	40	4.0
3. Science – Thirty semester hours (3 units) shall be earned: Students will be required to complete 30 semester hours (3 units) of science credit, 20 semester hours (2 units) must come from Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry or Physics.	30	3.0
4. Social Studies – Thirty semester hours (3 units) shall be earned. Ten semester hours (1 unit) of U.S. History, five semester hours (.5 unit) in Civics and fifteen semester hours (1.5 units) of other social studies.	30	3.0
5. Physical Education/Dance, Citywide Marching Band, ROTC, or DPS Athletics – Ten semester hours (1 unit) shall be earned or exempted for athletic participation.	10	1.0
Electives – Ninety semester hours (9 units) shall be earned Academic Electives – Forty semester hours (4 units) 10 semester hours (1 unit) of Fine Arts which include art, dance, drama, and music, or Career & Technical Education. Ten semester hours (1 unit) academic elective, which include English/Social Studies electives, World Languages, AVID, Gear-Up, and AP/IB courses. Other Electives – Within the 240 semester hours (24 units) required for graduation, 50 semester hours (5 units) are available for electives. An extensive elective program is offered in the core curriculum subjects. In addition, students may choose electives in art, business/marketing, consumer and family studies, foreign language, industrial technology, music, physical education/dance, or special offerings. Community-based experience – Within the 240 semester hours (24 units) required for a diploma, a minimum of 220 semester hours (22 units) shall be earned in classroom-based instruction. Students may, therefore, earn and apply a maximum of twenty semester hours (2 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.	90	9.0
Total	240	24.0

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Class of 2011 & 2012

General Information

High School credits may not be earned in middle school. Example: A student who completes Algebra 1 in middle school, still must take 4 years of math in high school.

Exemptions

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:

- The student must maintain academic eligibility for the entire season.
- One full sport season is required to exempt a student from five semester hours (5 units) of PE requirement.
- 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.

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

- The General Course of Study
- Designated Course of Study*
- Combined General*
- Work Experience and Study*
- ASCENT Diploma (Accelerating Students Through Concurrent Enrollment)

Additional Information Regarding Requirements

Students who are unsatisfactory or partially proficient in math and Literacy CSAP will be double blocked during their 9th grade year, and in some cases their 10th grade year. This additional blocked class counts as an academic elective credit.

A student may register for 70 credit hours, (35 credits per semester) during the regular school year. The limit may be increased to 80 credits, (5 additional credits per semester) with special permission from the principal.

- The maximum number of credits a student may earn in summer school is 10 semester hours.

Graduation Exercises

To participate in commencement exercises with their class, students must complete the equivalent of 240 semester hours and also complete all required classes by the end of their senior year.

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.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian

The average of all eight semesters are used to determine each school's valedictorian/salutatorian. Students must be enrolled in their school of attendance for a minimum of three (3) years and achieve the highest grade point average in their graduating class in order to qualify and be the class valedictorian/salutatorian.

Grade Level Classification of Students	
60 semester hours	Sophomore
120 semester hours	Junior
170 semester hours	Senior
240 semester hours	Award Diploma



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HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Work Experience and Study

The high school diploma awarded by the 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 students and the school district in preparation for the world of work or higher education.

Work Experience and Study Requirements

Two hundred forty semester hours (24 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 area and work study requirements are as listed below:

Work Experience & Study Diploma Requirements	Semester Hours Required	Carnegie Units Required
<i>Course</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Units</i>
WORK EXPERIENCE AND STUDY REQUIREMENTS (WES)		
Language Arts – A minimum of forty semester hours (4 units) shall be earned.	30	3.0
Social Studies – Twenty semester hours (2 units) shall be earned. Ten semester hours (1 unit) in vocations and/or transition classes are required.	20	2.0
Science – Ten semester hours (1 unit) shall be earned.	10	1.0
Mathematics – Twenty semester hours (2 units) shall be earned.	20	2.0
Physical Education/Dance, Citywide Marching Band, or ROTC – Ten semester hours (1 unit) shall be earned; unless otherwise specified by the IEP.	10	1.0
Fine Arts: Music, Art, Drama or CTE – Ten hours (1 unit) of Fine Arts which include art, dance, drama, and music.	10	1.0
Academic Elective – Ten semester hours (1 unit) academic elective, which include English/Social Studies Electives, Career & Technical Education courses, AVID, Gear-Up, and AP/IB courses.	10	1.0
Vocations – Ten hours (1 unit) of vocations required.	10	1.0
Other electives: Within the 240 semester hours (24 units) required for graduation, 60 semester hours (8 units) are available for electives. An extensive elective program is offered in the core curriculum subjects. In addition, students may choose electives in art, business/marketing, consumer and family studies, foreign language, industrial technology, music, physical education/dance, or special offerings in special education coordinated work experience.	60	6.0
Work-based experience – Within the 240 semester hours (24 units) required for a diploma, a minimum of 60 semester hours (6 units) shall be earned in Work Based Experience (WES Program)	60	6.0
<u>DESIGNATED COURSE OF STUDY REQUIREMENTS</u>		
These requirements 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 for either 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 (21 st) birthday, as determined by the IEP.		
TOTAL	240	24.0

*The Combined General, Designated Course of Study, and Work Experience & Study 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.”

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 240 semester hours (24 units) may graduate in seven semesters.
- Students with a 3.5 GPA who have completed all core curriculum/elective requirements and 240 semester hours (24 units) may graduate in six semesters.

Students with Disabilities

The following Course of Study areas may be used to earn a Denver Public Schools diploma:

- Students with disabilities who meet the requirements of a *General Course of Study* shall receive a *Denver Public Schools Diploma*.
- Students with disabilities who meet the requirements of the *Combined General Course of Study* shall receive a *Denver Public Schools Diploma*.
- Students with disabilities who meet the requirements of a *Work Experience and Study Program* shall receive a *Denver Public Schools Diploma*.
- 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 requirement of a Designated Course of Study shall receive a *Denver Public Schools Diploma*.

Contact your child's counselor or special education teacher for definitive Course of Study requirements.

The course of study completed by the student will be reflected on the student's official transcript.

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.

General Information

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. **Declared Area of Focus:** Every student, during the first semester of his/her Junior year, will declare an "area of focus." The student will need to engage in at least 1.0 unit of study, beyond the graduation requirement, of a particular content area (but not necessarily beyond the required of 240 semester hours), and develop a portfolio of his/her learning that demonstrates both the depth and academic understanding and communicates his/her intended application of this understanding in life beyond high school.

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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 PE 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.