

1 Great Falls School District

2
3 **INSTRUCTION**

2410R

4
5 Publication of Graduation Requirements

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7 Prior to registering in high school, each student will be provided with a copy of the current
8 graduation requirements. Graduation requirements shall also be included in the student
9 handbook.

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11 High School Graduation Requirements

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13 Minimum requirements for graduation from Great Falls Public Schools shall be twenty-three
14 (23) credits:

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- 16 • Four (4) credits of English – In addition to the previously Board adopted communication
17 arts curriculum, students must demonstrate proficiency in Public
18 Speaking/Communication Skills and Writing each year to earn credit.
 - 19 • Three (3) credits of Social Studies. Two- and one-half credits (2.5) shall be from the
20 required District curriculum and one-half credit (.5) may be an elective Social Studies
21 course.
 - 22 • Three (3) credits of Mathematics, which shall include Algebra 1.
 - 23 • Three (3) credits of Science, which shall include the following:
24 ○ One (1) credit in Foundation of Science or of an additional science elective upon
25 Demonstration of Equivalent Proficiency in Foundation of Science.
26 ○ One (1) credit in Biology
27 ○ One (1) credit in Science Elective
 - 28 • Two (2) credits of Health Enhancement (Health and Physical Education) – (can be taken
29 grades 9-10-11-12). One- and one-half credits (1.5) shall be from the required District
30 curriculum and one-half credit (.5) may be an elective Health Enhancement course.
 - 31 • One (1) credit of Career and Vocational/Technical Education (CTE), which shall include
32 (Agriculture, Business, Family and Consumer Science, Industrial Technology, and
33 medical/Health Occupations.) Courses in Media Production, Graphic Arts/Publications,
34 Stagecraft, and Video Productions may qualify for CTE credit dependent on the state
35 teacher licensure requirements.
36 ○ *Students who elect the Concentration Diploma or Honors Diploma option may
37 substitute one half credit of Financial Tech Skills for this requirement.
 - 38 • One (1) credit of Fine Arts (Art, Drama, Music).
 - 39 • One-half (.5) credit Financial Tech Skills.
 - 40 • A minimum of five and one half (5.5) credits of General Electives.
 - 41 • Special education students who have successfully completed their IEP leading to
42 completion of high school will be awarded a diploma.
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1 Differentiated Diplomas

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3 Students may choose to pursue one (1) of three (3) diploma options. All of which meet the
4 Montana Board of Public Education minimum requirements for graduation from an accredited
5 High School program (10.55.905, ARM) and all of the minimum requirements for graduation
6 from Great Falls Public Schools. Students shall work with their high school guidance counselors,
7 teachers and parents to determine which option best meets their individual needs.

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9 Comprehensive Diploma

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Subject Area	Comprehensive Diploma
Credits Needed	23
English	4
Math	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Fine Arts	1
CTE	1
Health/PE	2
Financial Tech Skills	.5
General Electives	5.5

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12 Concentration Diploma

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Subject Area	Concentration Diploma
Credits Needed	23
English	4
Math	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Fine Arts	1
CTE	.5-1
Health/PE	2
Financial Tech Skills	.5
General Electives	5.5-6.0

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15 Students choosing this diploma option must take three (3) or more elective credits in a specific
16 area of concentration from the following concentrations:

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- Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) – includes health sciences
 - Career Pathways Concentration (Industrial Technology, Business, Family Consumer Science)
 - Fine Arts/Humanities
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1 Honors Diploma

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Subject Area	Honors Diploma
Credits Needed	26
English	4
Math	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Fine Arts	1
CTE	.5-1
Health/PE	2
Financial Tech Skills	.5
General Electives	8.0-8.5

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4 Honors diploma candidates must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3, six (6) or more
5 credits in any combination of honors, AP, or early college level courses.

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7 Alternative Programs

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9 A student may be given credit for a course satisfactorily completed in a period of time shorter or
10 longer than normally required and, provided that the course meets the District's curriculum and
11 assessment requirements, which are aligned with the content standards stated in the education
12 program. Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for planned learning
13 experiences from accredited programs, such as summer school, university courses, and
14 correspondence courses, extension, and distance learning courses, adult education, summer
15 school, work study, work-based learning partnerships, and other experiential learning
16 opportunities, custom-designed courses, and challenges to current courses. The District shall
17 accept units of credit taken with the approval of the District and which appear on the student's
18 official school transcript. Credit for work experience may be offered when the work program is
19 part of and supervised by the school.

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21 Dual Credit

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23 Dual credit allows high school students to simultaneously earn credit toward both a high school
24 diploma and college coursework that can lead to a postsecondary degree or certificate, or toward
25 transfer to another college. The primary purpose of offering dual credit courses is to deliver high
26 quality, introductory, college level courses to high-performing high school students. Students
27 interested in dual credit opportunities must meet with a guidance counselor to determine
28 available options.

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30 Students should be aware of Montana High School Association on-campus attendance eligibility
31 requirements for activity participation.

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Audit Courses

Courses may be audited for no credit by junior or senior students if the course is not specifically requested for graduation. Advanced Placement course may not be taken for audit. Preference in the course will be given to students taking the course for the first time for credit.

Grade Averaging (Re-taking a Course)

All courses attempted will be recorded on the transcript, with documentation of the student's performance. The overall grade-point average will be calculated using all grades recorded for all courses attempted, and that grade-point average will be used for purposes of student ranking without regard to whether any courses were repeated. Preference for enrollment in all courses will be given in the following order, based on space available: students taking the course for the first time; students repeating the course after previously failing to receive credit for the course; and students repeating the course after previously receiving credit for the course, with students who have lower grades having preference. Exceptions may be made to the preference order upon recommendation of the student's counselor and approval by the High School administration. The transcript may note a course that has been repeated in some manner, i.e., an asterisk, and include a statement explaining the grade-point average calculation method.

Class Rank (Grade-point Average)

Class Rank is compiled from semester grades. Courses not eligible for GPA are designated with an asterisk on the report card.

Honor Roll

A student must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 to be placed on the regular honor roll. Specific information regarding honors at graduation are included in the student handbook.

Early Graduation

In accordance with provisions of § 20-9-313, MCA, the ANB of a school may be increased when a high school district provides early graduation for a student who completes graduation requirements in less than eight semesters or the equivalent amount of secondary school enrollment. The increase must be established by the Trustees as though the student had attended to the end of the school fiscal year and must be approved, disapproved, or adjusted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Any student seeking to graduate early must submit an application to the Principal at least two (2) semesters prior to the proposed graduation date. Applications must be in writing and co-signed by parents or legal guardians if the student is a minor.

1 Post-Graduated

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3 The Board may admit an individual who has graduation from high school but is not yet 19 years
4 of age even though no special circumstances exist for waiver of the age requirements outlined in
5 Policy 3310. The Board authorizes the Superintendent or designee to notify parents and students
6 of this opportunity to enroll after earning a diploma or purposes post-secondary or career
7 preparations. Any student enrolled under this provision shall be included in the District’s ANB
8 calculation.

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10 Waiver of Requirement

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12 The Superintendent will establish procedures to review all petitions for waiver or academic
13 variances to the graduation requirements. The Board or designee may waive specific course
14 requirements based on individual student needs and performance levels. Waiver requests shall
15 also be considered with respect to age, maturity, interest, and aspirations of the students and shall
16 be in consultation with the parents or guardians.

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18 Educational Disruption

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20 If a student who has experienced an educational disruption meets the minimum high school
21 credit requirement for graduation as established by administrative rules of the Board or Public
22 Education but will not meet a higher credit requirement established by the Board of Trustees, the
23 District shall award the student a comprehensive diploma.

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25 For the purpose of this policy, “educational disruption” means a disruption experienced during
26 grades nine through twelve caused by homelessness, involvement in the child welfare system or
27 juvenile justice system, a medical or mental health crisis, or another event considered a
28 qualifying educational disruption by the District.

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30 Cross References:

31 Policy 1005FE Proficiency Based Learning
32 Policy 2333 Participation in Commencement Exercises
33 Policy 2600 Work Based Learning
34 Policy 3125 Homeless Students
35 Policy 3310 Student Discipline

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37 Legal References:

38 § 10-1-1402, MCA Montana Youth Challenge
39 § 20-9-313, MCA Circumstances Under Which Regular Average Number Belonging May Be
40 Increased
41 10.55.905, ARM Graduation Requirements
42 10.55.906, ARM High School Credit
43 Chapter 80 – 2021 General Legislative Session
44 HB 246 – 2021 General Legislative Session

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1 Policy History:

- 2 Adopted on: July 1, 2000
- 3 Revised on: September 9, 2002
- 4 Revised on: February 24, 2003
- 5 Revised on: April 24, 2006
- 6 Revised on: January 12, 2015
- 7 Revised on: November 27, 2017
- 8 Revised on: June 28, 2021