

The board recognizes the importance of setting rigorous graduation requirements to help ensure that students are receiving an education that will prepare them to be productive members of society.

In order to graduate from high school, students must meet the following requirements:

1. successful completion of all course unit requirements mandated by the State Board of Education (see Section A);
2. successful completion of all other requirements mandated by the board, as provided in this policy.

The principal shall ensure that students and parents are aware of all graduation requirements. Guidance program staff shall assist students in selecting their high school courses to ensure that students are taking all of the required units and selecting electives consistent with their post-graduation plans. For students who have transferred to the school system during high school or who, for other reasons, have completed course work outside of the school system, the principal shall determine what course work will be applied as credit toward graduation. The principal shall consider the requirements of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (G.S. 115C-407.5) and the requirements of subsection C.3 of this policy in determining the graduation requirements for children of military families.

A. COURSE UNITS REQUIRED

Students must fulfill the requirements of the Future-Ready Core Course of Study, unless they are approved for the Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study. Course unit requirements for the Future-Ready Core Course of Study differ depending on the year a student enters ninth grade for the first time. Students entering ninth grade for the first time in the 2011-2012 school year, must fulfill the requirements of the Future Ready Core Course of Study. Students entering as a 9th grader in 2012-2013 and beyond must fulfill the requirements of the new Future Ready Core Course of Study including endorsements.

The Buncombe County Board of Education has established 28 (twenty-eight) credits as the cumulative number required for graduation. Credits which count toward graduation from high school may begin accumulating in middle school when courses meet specific criteria. High school level equivalent courses taken prior to the ninth grade will be counted in the cumulative number of units required for graduation but will not be part of the student's GPA calculation. A student must meet the requirements for graduation depending upon their first year of entry into the ninth grade. All students are required to have a four-year plan. Students may receive more than 10 units of credit during one school year with the principal's prior approval. The principal of the receiving school will develop procedures for evaluating the academic record of transfer students and awarding credit.

Future Ready Core - High School Graduation Requirements

for Ninth Graders Entering in 2012-13 and Later

Content Area	
English <i>(North Carolina State Requirement)</i>	4 Credits required English I, II, III, IV
Mathematics <i>(North Carolina State Requirement)</i>	4 Credits required Mathematics I, II, III plus 4th Math Course aligned with the student's post high school plans
Science <i>(North Carolina State Requirement)</i>	3 Credits required A physical science course, Biology, Earth/Environmental Science
Social Studies <i>(North Carolina State Requirement)</i>	4 Credits required World History American History I: Founding Principles American History II American History: The Founding Principles, Civics and Economics <i>**A student who takes AP US History instead of American History I: Founding Principles and American History II must take the honors research course that is connected to the AP course to satisfy the graduation requirement</i>
Health & Physical Education <i>(North Carolina State Requirement)</i>	1 Credit required 9th Grade Health and PE and Compression Only CPR <i>(This is usually completed in middle school but if not please see your counselor for more information)</i>
Electives <i>(North Carolina State Requirement)</i>	12 Credits required 2 elective credits in any combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career and Technical Education (CTE) • Arts Education • World Languages <p>Students are expected to complete an elective credit concentration from one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career and Technical Education (CTE) • JROTC • Arts Education (e.g. Dance, Music, Theater Arts, Visual Arts) • Social Studies • Science • Mathematics • English • World Languages • Health/ Physical Education <p>Students are expected to complete 6 additional electives that meet college admissions requirements and/or that are of interest to the student.</p>
World Languages	Not required for high school graduation. <i>A two-credit world language minimum is required for admission to the UNC system and many other universities.</i>
Graduation Project	Successfully complete the BCS Graduation Project
Total	28 Credits

For students who entered before 2012-2013, please see you counselor for your requirements.

ENDORSEMENTS**NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENTS***(excerpt from <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/scholars>)*

Students in North Carolina public schools may receive one or more endorsements on their high school diploma. These endorsements indicate that students have completed specific course concentrations preparing them to be ready for college or careers. The five endorsements are:

- Career Endorsement indicating completion of a rigorous course of study that includes a Career Technical Education concentration;
- College Endorsement indicating readiness for entry into community colleges;
- College/UNC Endorsement indicating readiness for entry into a four-year university in the University of North Carolina system;
- NC Academic Scholars Endorsement indicating that students have completed a balanced and academically rigorous high school program preparing them for post-secondary education;
- Global Languages Endorsement indicating proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English.

Individual students may qualify for and earn more than one endorsement.

Future-Ready Occupational: Course of Study Requirements***A four-year course of study determined by the student's IEP team.*

Content Area	
English	4 Credits required English I, II, III, IV
Math	3 Credits required Introduction to Mathematics Math I Financial Management
Science	2 Credits required Applied Science Biology
Social Studies/History	2 Credits required American History: The Founding Principles, Civics and Economics and either American History I or American History II
Physical Education	1 Credit required Health/Physical Education
Career and Technical Education	4 CTE credits to be selected from general registration courses available at student's school
	6 Credits Occupational Preparation required OCS Preparation I, II, III, IV (Levels II and III are two credits each) This also includes: <i>For students entering 9th grade in 2013-14 or earlier, completion of 300 hours of school-based training, 240 hours of community-based training, and 360 hours of paid employment.</i> <i>For students entering 9th grade in 2014-15 or later, completion of 150 hours of school-based training, 225 hours of community-based training, and 225 hours of paid employment.</i>

6 Electives	6 Elective credits/completion of IEP Objectives/Career Portfolio required
Total	28 Credits

B. HIGH SCHOOL END-OF-COURSE TESTING

Students must take all end-of-course (EOC) tests required by the State Board of Education.

The EOC/North Carolina Final Exam (NCFE) results will count as 25 percent of a student's final grade in each high school course for which an EOC/NCFE test is available, except that this requirement does not apply to students following the Occupational Course of Study where the exam will count as ten percent of the student's final grade.

C. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The board adopts the following policies with regard to graduation.

1. Honor Graduates

Honor graduates may be designated by principals on the basis of criteria established by the superintendent (Please refer to 3400R). A student who completes the requirements of the North Carolina Academic Scholars Program will receive recognition, including a seal affixed to his or her diploma. Recognition of honor graduates may be included in graduation programs.

2. Students with Disabilities

Graduation requirements must be applied to students with disabilities to the extent required by state and federal law and State Board policy.

3. Children of Military Families

In order to facilitate the on-time graduation of children of military families, the board adopts the following policy provisions for students to whom the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children applies.

a) Waiver Requirements

Specific course work required for graduation will be waived if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another school system. If a waiver is not granted, school administrators shall provide the student with reasonable justification for the denial. If a waiver is not granted to a student who would qualify to graduate from the sending school, the superintendent or designee shall provide the student with an alternative

means of acquiring the required course work so that the student may graduate on time.

b) Testing Requirements for Graduation

The superintendent shall accept the following in lieu of any local testing requirements for graduation: (1) the end-of-course exams required for graduation from the sending state; (2) national norm-referenced achievement tests; or (3) alternative testing. If these alternatives are not feasible for a student who has transferred in his or her senior year, subsection c below will apply.

c) Transfers During Senior Year

If a child of a military family who has transferred at the beginning of or during his or her senior year is ineligible to graduate from the school system after all of the alternatives listed above have been considered and the student meets the graduation requirements at his or her sending school, then school officials from the school system shall collaborate with the sending school system to ensure that the student will receive a diploma from the sending Board of Education.

4. Early admission to college

Early admission to college requires that a plan be reviewed and approved by the principal prior to any arrangements with a college or university. An Early Admission to College Contract must be signed by the student; parent or legal guardian; and principal. A copy of the signed contract will be retained at the school.

Upon completion of the third year, a Buncombe County high school student who has been accepted by an accredited college (state or regional association) for study during what would have been the fourth year may, upon satisfactory completion of the first year of college, have his college credit equated with high school graduation requirements by and subject to the approval of the principal of his former high school for the purpose of obtaining a high school diploma.

Principals must advise the student that upon completion of the program, he will be allowed to participate in the high school graduation exercise; however, recognition for honors, class ranking, participation in senior activities, and all other rights and privileges will not be afforded.

Prior to graduation, all credit earned at the college or university must be reported to the high school by the college or university.

5. Early Graduation

Graduation prior to that of one's class may be permitted on the basis of criteria approved by the board upon recommendation by the superintendent.

6. Mid-year completion

Under certain circumstances, a Buncombe County high school student during the senior year of enrollment may qualify for consideration as a mid-year completer. In order to qualify, the student must have met all credits required for graduation, as outlined within Policy #3460.

A Mid-Year Completion Statement of Intent must be signed by the student; parent or legal guardian; and principal.

Students meeting the requirements of the mid-year completion will be allowed to participate in a system-wide high school graduation exercise held at mid-year. As graduates of the Buncombe County School System, mid-year completers forfeit senior student privileges relevant to second semester school sponsored activities.

Buncombe County School System is under no obligation to reschedule students beyond the initial computer placement to accommodate a request for mid-year completion.

7. Graduation Certificates

Graduation certificates will be awarded to eligible students in accordance with the standards set forth in State Board policy.

8. State Graduation Credit Requirements

Students enter 9th grade
2009-2012= 21 Credits
2012-Current Year = 22 Credits

The principal may exempt a student from local graduation requirements as long as the student has met all state graduation requirements. The recommendation must follow the procedures established by the Minimum Credit High School Diploma Program.

9. Alternative School Requirements

The Buncombe County Board of Education has adopted the state minimum requirements as the cumulative number required for graduation for Community High School, Buncombe County Middle College or other approved alternative programs. In addition, students must meet local and state graduation requirements.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -81, -174.11, -276, -288, -407.5; State Board of Education Policies GCS-C-003, GCS-N-004, -010

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Evaluation of Student Progress (3400R), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Citizenship and Character Education (policy 3530), Children of Military Families (policy 4050)

Replaces Board Policy 610/612

History of Policy 610

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History of Policy 612

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