

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 career and college ready and productive members of society.

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

1. successful completion of all State Board of Education course unit requirements as described in Section A; and
2. successful completion of cardiopulmonary resuscitation instruction; and
3. successful completion of all other requirements mandated by the board, as provided in this policy
4. be approved by the principal for the 22 Credit High School Diploma Program.

Principals shall ensure that students and parents are aware of the number and nature of credits required for high school graduation, the potential to complete high school graduation requirements in three years, and the availability of early graduate college scholarships.

A. COURSE UNITS

As described in State Board of Education Policy GRAD-004, all students must fulfill the course unit requirements of the Future-Ready Core Course of Study unless they are approved for the Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study. The tables below list the course unit requirements for the Future-Ready Core Course of Study and the Future-Ready Occupational Course of Study, as well as additional course units recommended by the board, based on the student's year of entry into ninth grade for the first time. School counseling program staff shall assist students in selecting high school courses to ensure that students are taking all required units and selecting electives consistent with their post-graduation plans.

In accordance with policy 3101, Dual Enrollment, and State Board of Education requirements, students may earn high school credit for college courses completed. In addition, students may earn credit for certain high school courses in the Future-Ready Core Course of Study completed prior to grade nine, as authorized by the State Board of Education. Students also have the opportunity to meet course unit requirements without completing the regular period of classroom instruction by demonstrating mastery of the course material in accordance with policy 3420, Student Promotion and Accountability, and State Board of Education requirements. 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. See policy 3420 for information regarding receiving credit

toward graduation for courses taken abroad.

All awards of high school course credit must be consistent with State Board of Education requirements. Any inconsistency between board policy and State Board graduation requirements will be resolved by following the State Board requirements. While the board endeavors to keep its policy up to date with current State Board of Education graduation requirements, students should verify current requirements with their school counselors when planning course schedules or making other decisions based on graduation requirements.

1. Students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2021-2022 or afterward must pass the following courses and earn at least 22 credits. Elkin City Schools recommends earning a total of 28 credits.

Type of Course	State Requirements	Credits
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English I ● English II ● English III ● English IV 	4 credits
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NC Math I ● NC Math II ● NC Math III ● NC Math IV(fourth mathematics course to be aligned with the student’s post-high school plans)*** <p><i>**In rare instances, a principal may exemption may include Math I, II, and 2 additional maths from the NC math options chart)</i></p>	4 credits
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Earth/Environmental Science ● Biology ● Physical Science or Chemistry 	3 credits
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● World History ● Founding Principles of the USA and NC: Civic Literacy † ● American History ● Economics and Personal Finance 	4 credits
Health/PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health/PE with required CPR instruction 	1 credit
Electives of any combination from either:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career and Technical Education (CTE) ● Arts Education ● World Language± 	2 credits

Elective credits from the following <i>(four-course concentration is recommended)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career and Technical Education (CTE) ● ROTC ● Arts Education ● Any other subject area or cross-disciplinary courses (e.g., mathematics, science, social studies, English and dual enrollment courses)* 	<p>4 credits</p>
TOTAL NC STATE REQUIRED GRADUATION CREDITS		<p>22 credits</p>
ECS Additional Recommended Electives- Student’s Choice		<p>6 credits</p>
TOTAL ECS RECOMMENDED GRADUATION CREDITS		<p>28 credits</p>

NOTE: Beginning in fall 2022, students entering Grade 6 and subsequently entering Grade 9 for the first time in 2025-26 shall have at least one arts education course in grades 6-12. Students must complete the standard course of study (no local electives) for a given arts education course in its entirety to satisfy this requirement. After-school activities or partial courses do not fulfill this graduation requirement. Students who transfer into a public school unit beginning in the ninth grade or later may be exempt, if such a requirement would prevent a student from graduating with the graduation cohort to which the student was assigned when transferring.

*Certain International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), and Cambridge International Examination (CIE) courses will satisfy specific graduation requirements. See SBE Policy [GRAD008](#). In addition, [Dual Credit Allowances for Career & College Promise](#) Effective 2024-2025 courses will satisfy specific graduation requirements. CCP dual credits must be earned at Surry Community College in which ECS has a MOU to satisfy graduation requirements.

** Students who are learning disabled in math may have other options for meeting the four mathematics credits requirement. [NCDPI Math Options chart](#)

***Students seeking to complete minimum course requirements for UNC universities must complete four mathematics courses, including a fourth math course with Math 3 as a prerequisite. [NCDPI Math Options chart](#)

† The Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy, must follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCGS S.L. 2019-82) in its entirety and may not be satisfied by any other courses, except as provided in SBE Policy [GRAD008](#). See also SBE Policies CCRE-001 and GRAD-004.

± Completion of two sequential world language courses is recommended to attend a [UNC System University](#). However, two additional academic courses from English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, or computer science will also be accepted starting in Fall 2025.

2. Students following the Occupational Course of Study entering ninth grade for the first time in 2021-2022 must pass the following 22 credits plus any local requirements (only available to certain students with disabilities who have an IEP):

Type of Course	State Requirements	Credits
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English I ● English II ● English III 	<p>4 credits</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English IV 	
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Mathematics NC Math I Financial Management Employment Preparation IV: Math (to include 150 work hours) 	4 credits
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied Science Biology Employment Preparation I: Science (to include 150 work hours) 	3 credits
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy † Economics and Personal Finance Employment Preparation II: Citizenship 1A (to include 75 work hours) Employment Preparation II: Citizenship IB (to include 75 work hours) 	4 credits
Health/PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health/PE with required CPR instruction 	1 credit
Employment Preparation Education Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Preparation III: Citizenship II A (to include 75 work hours) Employment Preparation III: Citizenship II B (to include 75 work hours) 	2 credits
The work hours included in Employment Preparation I, II, III, IV shall be as follows:	<p>150 hours of school-based training work with activities and experiences that align with student's post-high school goals</p> <p>225 hours of community-based training</p> <p>225 hours of paid employment or 225 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internship, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours.</p>	600 total work hours
Career and Technical Education Credits	<p>Any combination of CTE courses: <i>*OCS students may be asked to take a course twice for credit to meet all standards.</i></p>	4 credits

Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career Portfolio ● Completion of student’s IEP objectives 	
TOTAL NC STATE REQUIRED GRADUATION CREDITS		22 credits
ECS Additional Recommended Electives- Student’s Choice		6 credits
TOTAL ECS RECOMMENDED GRADUATION CREDITS		28 credits

3. Early Graduation- 22 credit Diploma (GRAD-001)

Students have the option of graduating early by completing the State Board of Education minimum graduation requirements on an accelerated three-year pathway. Students choosing to use an accelerated pathway must follow the process required for early graduation as described in State Board Policies GRAD-001.

Elkin City Schools will encourage “at risk” students who are experiencing difficulty meeting the 28 local graduation recommended credits to apply for early graduation (22 credits). At-risk students may be struggling with any of the following criteria:

- Continual attendance or truancy issues
- Chronic behavior problems
- Academic/credit deficiencies
- Previous drop-out or planning to drop out
- Failed at least one grade
- Have environmental, psychological and/or physiological challenges such as:
 - Chronic Substance Abuse, Depression, Teen Pregnancy, Parental
- Responsibilities, Socially Delayed, Anger Management Problems, Judicial Problems, Homelessness

A high school student in a public school unit who is at least 16 years of age and desires to graduate after three years may request to graduate after three years of being in high school in accordance with the following procedures:

1. The student shall complete and sign a request form provided by Elkin High School no later than September 30 of the student's final graduating year. The form must be signed by the student's parent or legal guardian unless the student is at least 18 years of age or has been emancipated in accordance with Chapter 7B, Article 35 of the General Statutes.
2. The Elkin High School Principal shall meet with the student and, if the student is under 18 years of age and not emancipated, the student's parent or legal guardian, to discuss the implications of graduating early. The administrator shall address, at minimum, the following topics in the discussion:
 - Plans for transitioning into higher education, employment, or enlistment in the armed forces;
 - Discontinued access to high school services and programming, including extracurricular activities and interscholastic athletics; and
 - School support structures that will no longer be available to the student, such as nutrition and school counseling services.
 - Permission to attend school-related events will be an administrative decision. Inappropriate actions or a disciplinary record may lead to the forfeiture of the right to participate in graduation exercises or graduation events at the end of the school year.
3. The local school administrative unit shall verify that the student has met the minimum graduation requirements established by the State Board and submit the request to the local superintendent for final approval.

The local superintendent shall approve the request upon verification of the student's eligibility and compliance with the procedures set forth above, no later than 45 school days after receipt of a request. If the request is submitted before the first day of classes, the student may elect to graduate immediately or graduate at the end of the semester. If the student submits the request after the first day of school, the student shall be required to complete the current semester, unless the local superintendent approves an early graduation.

B. HIGH SCHOOL END-OF-COURSE AND OTHER TESTING

High school students must take all end-of-course (EOC) tests, Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Assessments required by the State Board of Education and pursuant

to policy 3410, Testing and Assessment Program.

C. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**1. Honor Graduates**

Honor graduates may be designated by principals on the basis of criteria established by the superintendent. 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, as defined in policy 4050, Children of Military Families, school officials shall comply with the requirements of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (G.S. 115C-407.12, and the following requirements.

a. Waiver Requirements

Specific course work required for graduation will be waived for children of military families 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 from children of military families 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. Graduation Certificates

Graduation certificates will be awarded to eligible students in accordance with the standards set forth in State Board policy GRAD-010.

5. Diploma Endorsements

Students have the opportunity to earn diploma endorsements as described in State Board Policy GRAD-007. No endorsement is required to receive a diploma.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-12(40), -47, -81.25(c)(10)(c), -81.45(d), -81.65, -81.90(c), -83.31, -83.32, -174.11, -276, -288, -407.5, -407.12; 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0309; State Board of Education Policies CCRE-001, GRAD-001, GRAD-004, GRAD-006, GRAD-007, GRAD-008, GRAD-010, TEST-003

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Dual Enrollment (policy 3101), Testing and Assessment Program (policy 3410), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Citizenship and Character Education (policy 3530), Children of Military Families (policy 4050)

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