

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Before entering high school, students need to know the standards for attaining a high school Cape Elizabeth diploma in order to plan an appropriate, sequential, educational program to meet that goal.

~~Cape Elizabeth has adopted a proficiency-based system of learning consistent with Maine law, which means that after January 1, 2021, the awarding of a diploma will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas and Guiding Principles and the Learning Results rather than the accumulation of credits.~~

~~To be awarded a high school diploma from the Cape Elizabeth schools, students graduating in the Class of 2021 and beyond must demonstrate proficiency in the content areas identified in Maine's system of Learning Results, meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results, and fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the Board.~~

The Cape Elizabeth School Department is in the process of implementing proficiency-based education and transitioning, over a period of five years, from traditional graduation requirements to proficiency-based diploma requirements. When fully implemented, these new diploma requirements will require students to demonstrate proficiency in the content areas and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results and to fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the Board.

Students graduating in the Classes of ~~2015~~ 2018-2020 must meet the credit and other graduation requirements specified in Part I of this policy.

A student who would have graduated with the Class of 2020 and ~~have~~ been awarded a diploma at commencement but for his/her failure to earn sufficient credits or meet other requirements set by Board policy will have until December 31, 2020 to fulfill the graduation requirements applicable to the Class of 2020.

The transition to proficiency-based diploma requirements will begin with the Class of 2021 and be completed with the Class of 2025.

The Superintendent, through the high school principal or other designee, shall be responsible for making accurate information concerning diploma requirements available to incoming students and their parents prior to the start of their ninth grade school year. ~~A copy of this policy will be disseminated to all incoming ninth grade students at the time of course selection.~~ This policy These requirements will also be included in every ~~edition~~ of the high school student handbook.

The Board has approved the following ~~schedule~~ of minimum requirements for graduation, which includes the ~~minimum~~ requirements specified by the State of Maine. The Board is aware that current law and regulations are subject to change-

~~and~~ ~~The Board~~ expects the Superintendent/\_designee to inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any additional State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma.

### **I. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASSES OF 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, OR 2020**

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Students who anticipate graduating in the Classes of ~~2015, 2016, 2017~~, 2018, 2019, or 2020 must meet the following minimum requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

- A. The student must successfully complete a total of 230 credits. Of these credits, 125 must be those specified by the State of Maine. They are:
1. English/~~L~~anguage ~~A~~arts – 40 credits;
  2. Mathematics – 20 credits;
  3. Social studies ~~and history~~, including one year of American history and government – 20 credits;
  4. Science, including at least one year of laboratory study -- 20 credits;
  5. ~~Fine arts~~Visual and Performing Arts, which may include art, music, ~~forensics~~, or ~~drama~~theater – 10 credits;
  6. Health – 5 credits; and
  7. Physical Education – 10 credits.
- ~~B.~~ ~~The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the high school's standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.~~
- B. In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following additional credit requirements established by the Board:
1. Math – 10 additional credits for a total of 30 credits;
  2. Science – 10 additional credits for a total of 30 credits, including credits in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology unless alternative credit arrangements in Science are approved by the Principal;
  3. Social Studies ~~and History~~ – 10 additional credits for a total of 30 credits, including 15 credits in World History unless alternative credit arrangements in Social Studies are approved by the Principal;
  4. Technology – 5 credits;
  5. ~~Fine Arts~~Visual and Performing Arts/Technology – 5 credits; and
  6. Electives – 45 credits.

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~~DC.~~ The remaining credits may be selected by the student based on ~~his/her~~ the student's interest, satisfaction of course prerequisites, and requirements of the field that ~~he/she~~ the students plans to enter upon graduation.

~~ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDITS~~

~~ED.~~ A student who wishes to meet these requirements through alternative means or is deficient in these requirements may earn and apply credits ~~in~~ following prior written approval from the Department Chair, Guidance Counselor, and Principal. ~~accordance with the provisions of this section.~~

~~A student who wishes to meet a credit requirement through an alternative method must have prior written approval as specified in this section.~~

A student who makes up deficiencies may participate in the next regular graduation ceremony following successful completion of all graduation requirements.

~~A student who wishes to meet a credit requirement through an alternative method must have prior written approval as specified in this section.~~

~~A. A student may obtain credits through summer school in classes that he/she completed at Cape Elizabeth High School but did not pass. The student must obtain prior written approval from the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair, and Principal.~~

~~B. A student may earn credits through distance learning/virtual courses provided 1) the course is approved in advance by the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair, and Principal, and 2) progress is monitored by a member of the High School's professional staff.~~

~~C. Advanced courses or courses not available at Cape Elizabeth High School may be taken at other secondary schools or at approved postsecondary institutions with the approval of the Guidance Counselor and Principal.~~

~~D. A student may earn credits through independent study approved by the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair, and Principal and monitored by the teacher(s) of the subject(s) to which the independent study is related.~~ STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

~~Students who achieve proficiency in meeting the content standards of the Learning Results as specified in the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) will be awarded diplomas.~~

## II. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASS OF 2021 AND BEYOND

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In accordance with Maine law and Cape Elizabeth's proficiency-based system of ~~learning~~ education, after January 1, 2021, the awarding of a diploma from Cape Elizabeth schools will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results, ~~of Maine's system of Learning Results and meeting the cross-content performance standards of the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results~~, rather than the accumulation of credits. The student must also fulfill ~~any~~ the other requirements specified in this policy.

~~Students who anticipate graduating in the Classes of 2021 and beyond must meet the following requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma:~~

A. Phase in of content-area requirements from the 2020-2021 school year to the 2024-2025 school year:

1. Commencing with the Class of 2021, in order to receive a high school diploma, students must demonstrate proficiency in meeting the state standards in the four content areas of:

- a. English Language Arts;
- b. Mathematics;
- c. Science; and
- d. Social Studies.

2. Commencing with the Class of 2022, in order to receive a high school diploma, students must demonstrate proficiency in meeting the state standards in the content areas of:

- a. English Language Arts;
- b. Mathematics;
- c. Science; and
- d. Social Studies
- e. At least one additional content area of the student's choice.

3. Commencing with the Class of 2023, in order to receive a high school diploma, students must demonstrate proficiency in meeting the state standards in the content areas of:

- a. English Language Arts;
- b. Mathematics;
- c. Science;
- d. Social Studies; and
- e. At least two additional content areas of the student's choice.

4. Commencing with the Class of 2024, in order to receive a high school diploma, students must demonstrate proficiency in meeting the state standards in the content areas of:

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- a. English Language Arts;
- b. Mathematics;
- c. Science;
- d. Social Studies; and
- e. At least three additional content areas of the student’s choice.

5. Commencing with the Class of 2025 and all graduating classes thereafter, in order to receive a high school diploma, students must demonstrate proficiency in meeting the state standards in the content areas of:

- a. English Language Arts;
- b. Mathematics;
- c. Science;
- d. Social Studies;
- e. World Languages;
- f. Computer, Industrial, Performing, and Visual Arts;
- g. Health and Physical Education; and
- h. Career and Education Development.\*

\*The Career and Education Development standards may be embedded and addressed in other content-area learning experiences.

~~A. Demonstrate proficiency in meeting standards in the following content areas of the Learning Results. Meeting the standards entails demonstrating proficiency for each standard within each content area:~~

~~English Language Arts~~

~~Mathematics~~

~~Science and Technology~~

~~Social Studies~~

~~Health Education and Physical Education~~

~~Visual and Performing Arts~~

~~World Languages~~

~~Career and Education Development (embedded in the other content areas)~~

~~B. Meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.~~

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~~———— A student graduating from Cape Elizabeth schools is expected to be a:~~

- ~~———— Clear and effective communicator;~~
- ~~———— Self-directed and life-long learner;~~
- ~~———— Creative and analytical problem solver;~~
- ~~———— Responsible and involved citizen; and an~~
- ~~———— Integrative and informed thinker.~~

### MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO THE AWARDING OF A PROFICIENCY-BASED DIPLOMA

~~Cape Elizabeth’s high school educational program is designed to enable students to satisfy graduation requirements in four years through a sequence of educational (learning) experiences/courses (courses) providing opportunities to gain and demonstrate proficiency in all of the content areas and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results, and in the cross-content Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.~~

~~Students will:~~

~~A. \_\_\_\_\_~~

~~B. In addition to the content-area requirements, the student must meet the following additional credit requirements established by the Board:~~

~~1. Engage in educational learning experiences in the content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, and Technology Social Studies in each year of their high school program and participate in other educational experiences to demonstrate proficiency in.~~

~~B2. Engage in learning experiences in world languages in at least two years of high school educational experiences in the content area of social studies during their high school program.~~

~~C. Engage in 3. Engage in learning experiences in the computer, industrial, performing, and visual arts in at least two years of high school, at least one educational experience in each of the content areas of visual and performing arts during their high school program.~~

~~D4. Engage in educational learning experiences in world languages during their high school program.~~

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~~E. Engage in health and physical education experiences during their~~ in at least two years of high school program.

~~F5.~~ Engage in educational learning experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Maine Learning Results.

C. Students may also opt to pursue proficiency through ~~multiple additional~~ other pathways including:

- 1. Early college/dual enrollment courses;
- 2. Career and technical education programming;
- 3. Online/virtual learning;
- 4. Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work;
- 5. Community service;
- 6. Exchange programs;
- 7. Independent study;
- 8. Alternative education; and ~~“At Risk” programming~~
- 9. Adult education.

Each pathway must provide a quality learning experience comparable in rigor to the school unit's own Cape Elizabeth's educational learning experience (course) offerings; and be preapproved by the appropriate Department Chair, Guidance

Counselor, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Principal.

~~In order to pursue one or more of the multiple/alternative pathways, a student must have a plan detailing how the pathway will provide exposure to the content standards of the Learning Results and how the student will demonstrate proficiency in meeting the standards. The plan must be approved by the Guidance Counselor, Department Chair and Principal.~~

#### STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

D. Students identified for special education; who achieve proficiency in the content standards and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results ~~and Guiding Principles~~, as

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specified in

the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) will be awarded diplomas.

### III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM CAPE ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL

This section applies to all students, in all graduation classes.

#### A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Cape Elizabeth High School from another state or from an educational program that is not required to be aligned with the content standards and Guiding Principles of the system of Maine Learning Results, the Cape Elizabeth High School Principal principal shall determine evaluate the value of the student's prior educational experience and determine to what degree the student has met the school's towards meeting graduation requirements.

#### B. Home-schooled Students

For home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Cape Elizabeth High School, the Cape Elizabeth High School Principal principal shall evaluate determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting experiences and determine to what degree the student has met the school's graduation credit requirements. A home-schooled student must have attended Cape Elizabeth High School for a minimum of two semesters in order to receive a Cape Elizabeth High School diploma.

#### C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Cape Elizabeth High School to attend an accredited, degree-granting institution of higher education may upon satisfactory completion of the freshman year be awarded a high school diploma, provided that the student has notified the principal at the time of the early admission.

#### ~~D. Early Awarding of Diplomas~~

~~A student who has met the State's and the Board's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma.~~

#### E. Extended Study

Students are eligible for extended years of study to complete the requirements of a diploma if they have not reached the age of 20 at the start of the school year. Students eligible for extended years of study may be referred to adult education or other programs and resources suitable to young learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in



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the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

A student must complete all Board requirements for a high school diploma ~~or certificate of completion~~ in order to participate in graduation exercises.

G. Honors and Awards at Graduation

In order to be eligible for valedictorian status at graduation, a student must have been in attendance at least three semesters prior to graduation. If a student in attendance less than three semesters prior to graduation qualifies for the "top ten percent," the number of students qualifying for that status will be expanded by one for each student meeting this description. Students in attendance less than three semesters are otherwise fully eligible, without condition, for all end-of-year honors, awards, and scholarships.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. § 4722  
Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options  
IKE – Student Promotion, Retention and Acceleration / Progress Through Grades  
IKFA - Early Graduation  
IKFC: Awarding of High School Course Credit Prior to Grade 9

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