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Hermon School Department

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR A PROFICIENCY BASED DIPLOMA

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

The Hermon School Department has adopted a standards-based system of learning consistent with Maine law, which means that after January 1, 2018, 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 credit.

To be awarded a high school diploma from the Hermon School Department schools, students graduating in the Class of 2018 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 Hermon School Committee.

Students graduating in the Classes of 2014-2017 must meet the credit and other graduation requirements specified in this policy.

A student who would have graduated with the Class of 2017 and have been awarded a diploma at commencement but for his/her failure to earn sufficient credits or meet other requirements set by School Committee policy will have until December 31, 2017, to fulfill the graduation requirements applicable to the Class of 2017.

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 will also be included in every edition of the high school student handbook.

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

The School Committee 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 2016 OR 2017

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

- A. The student must successfully complete a total of 21 credits. Of these credits, 12-1/2 (twelve and one-half) must be those specified by the State of Maine. They are:
1. English/language arts – 4 credits;
 2. Mathematics – 2 credits
 3. Social studies and history, including one year of American history and government – 2 credits
 4. Science, including at least one year of laboratory study – 2 credits
 5. Fine arts, which may include art, music, forensics or drama – 1 credit
 6. Health – ½ credit, and
 7. Physical education – 1 credit.
- B. The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the School Department's standards for computer literacy, proficiency and performance.
- C. In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following additional credit requirements established by the School Committee:
1. Math – 1 additional credit
 2. Science – 1 additional credit
 3. [Other area of study, e.g., World History] – 1 credit
 4. [Other area of study]- computer credit
 5. 20 hours of community service
 6. 6 credit electives.
- D. The remaining credits may be selected by the student based on his/her interest, satisfaction of course prerequisites, and requirements of the field that he/she plans to enter upon graduation.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDIT

A student who is deficient in these requirements or wishes to meet these requirements through alternative means may earn and apply credits in 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 requirement requirements.

- A. A student may earn up to two credits through an Adult Education Program. The student must have prior written approval from the director of adult education, guidance counselor, department chair and principal.
- B. A student may obtain up to two credits through summer school in classes that he/she completed at Hermon High School but did not pass. The student must obtain prior written approval from the guidance counselor, department chair and principal.
- C. A student may earn up to two 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.
- D. Advanced courses or courses not available at Hermon High School may be taken at other secondary schools or at approved post secondary institutions with the approval of the guidance counselor and principal.
- E. Note: A total of 2 credits from A,B, C above.

STUDENT 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 Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be awarded diplomas.

II: DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASS OF 2018 AND BEYOND

In accordance with Maine law and Hermon School Department's standards-based system of learning, after January 1, 2018, the awarding of a diploma from Hermon School Department schools will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas 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 other requirements specified in this policy.

Students who anticipate graduating in the Class of 2018 and beyond must meet the following requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

- 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.

A student graduating from Hermon School Department 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.

- C. Complete 20 hours of community service.
- D. **[OPTIONAL:** Complete a capstone project **[OR:** integrative research or service learning project] through which he/she will demonstrate in-depth research, presentation and technology application skills and evidence of proficiency in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.]
- E. **[OPTIONAL:** Complete an application to a post-secondary educational institution, training program or other experience that provides an opportunity for further growth.
- F. **[OPTIONAL:** The student must also complete the following non-academic requirements.]

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO THE AWARDING OF A PROFICIENCY-BASED DIPLOMA

The Hermon School Department'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 providing opportunities to gain and demonstrate proficiency in all of the content areas of the Learning Results and in the cross-content Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

Students following a traditional pathway will:

- A. Engage in educational experiences in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, and science and technology in each year of their high school program.

- B. Engage in at least three educational experiences in the content area of social studies during their high school program.
- C. Engage in at least one educational experience in each of the content areas of visual and performing arts during their high school program.
- D. Engage in at least one educational experiences in world languages during their high school program.
- E. Engage in at least two health and physical education experiences during their high school program.
- F. Engage in educational experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Learning Results.

Students following a traditional pathway must be enrolled in the equivalent of five or six full year learning experiences/courses or integrated equivalents in each of their high school years.

With prior approval of the principal, students may also opt to pursue a high school diploma through multiple additional pathways including:

- Early college/dual enrollment process
- Career and technical education programming
- Online/virtual learning
- Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work
- Additional community service
- Exchange programs
- Independent study
- Alternative education/"At Risk" programming
- Adult education.

Each pathway must provide a quality learning experience comparable in rigor to the School Department's own educational experience (course) offerings.

In order to pursue one or more of the multiple/alternative pathways, a student must have a Personal Learning 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 personal learning plan must be approved by the guidance counselor, department chair and principal.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

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

II. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM HERMON HIGH SCHOOL

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

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Hermon High School from another state or from an educational system that is not required to be aligned with the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the Hermon High School principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards meeting graduation requirements.

B. Home-schooled Students

For home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Hermon High School, the Hermon High School principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation credit requirements. A home schooled student must attend Hermon High School for a minimum of the final two semesters in order to receive a Hermon High School diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Hermon 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 Diploma

A student who has met the State's and the School Committee's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma but only with the recommendation of the principal.

E. Extended Study

Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Certificate of Completion

The School Committee may provide a certificate of completion to a student who leaves school having completed four years attendance as a full-time high school student and who has earned the required credits but has not met Learning Results proficiency standards that may be mandated by the State.

G. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

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

H. Honors and Awards at Graduation

In order to be eligible for honors or awards based wholly or in part on academic achievement, e.g., Top 10", a student must have been enrolled full time at Hermon High School during the year for two years or four full semesters preceding graduation. Students who do not meet this enrollment requirement will not be "ranked" for the purpose of determining eligibility for graduation honors, awards or 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
IK – Student Achievement
IKFA – Early Graduation