



## **Graduation Requirements** (Beginning with the Class of 2021)

In pursuit of its mission to ensure that all students reach their learning potential and are prepared for postsecondary and career opportunities, the Board of Education has established the following graduation requirements for students entering the ninth grade in the 2017-18 school year and each ninth grade class thereafter.

To receive a high school diploma from the district, students must meet or exceed the district's academic standards and measures required by this policy. Students with disabilities shall be provided access to all graduation pathways provided by this policy and shall have the opportunity to earn a high school diploma from the district.

Graduation from high school is a culminating event that results from the foundations built at the elementary and middle levels. Graduation is a collaborative effort among levels in a student's public school career. Each level of school and each staff member or parent/guardian who instructs or counsels a student shares responsibility for the ultimate ability of that student to demonstrate proficiency in the district's academic standards and to meet the expectations for graduation.

### **College and career readiness**

The Colorado State Board of Education has adopted state graduation guidelines that identify college and career readiness measures in English and Math. The Board has selected its own measures from these state graduation guidelines.

Students must complete at least one English measure and one Math measure and meet or exceed the measure's corresponding cut score or criteria to demonstrate college and career readiness in English and Math. The Board's approved measures and cut scores are outlined in this policy's accompanying exhibit IKF-2-E.

### **Exceptions to the Board's required measures and cut scores/criteria**

If a student has demonstrated college and career readiness by completing an assessment or other measure that is not included in this policy's accompanying exhibit but is included in the state graduation guidelines, the principal or principal's designee may determine that such assessment or other measure is acceptable and meets the district's graduation requirements.

### **Courses required for graduation**

Cotopaxi High School offers three different graduation pathways, each providing specific credit/course requirements meeting the local and state requirements. Each will

carry the same weight as a Diploma, but they will each recognize the various pathways students achieve success in high school. Refer to Policy IKF-2-E.

**Clipper Requirements: Total 30 Credits**

- 29 Academic credits plus 1 Community Service credit requirement
- At minimum 13 academic core credits are required
- One (1) Community Service credit is given for 60 documented community service hours (\*\*sliding scale upon implementation)
- Minimum of two (2) or more high school credits in AP/Concurrent Enrollment courses are required to be completed.
- Must show competency within English and Math as demonstrated through the Board's approved measures and cut score as outlined in Policy IKF-2-E.
- Must complete this pathway to be considered for Valedictorian / Salutatorian honors

**Adventure Galley Requirements: Total 28 Credits**

- 27.5 Academic credits plus .5 community Service credit requirement
- At minimum 13 academic core credits are required
- One (1) Community Service credit is given for 30 documented community service hours (\*\*sliding scale upon implementation)
- Must show competency within English and Math as demonstrated through the Board's approved measures and cut score as outlined in Policy IKF-2-E.

**Schooner Requirements: Total 28 Credits**

- 27.5 Academic credits plus .5 community Service credit requirement
- At minimum 11 academic core credits are required
- One (1) Community Service credit is given for 30 documented community service hours (\*\*sliding scale upon implementation)
- Must show competency within English and Math as demonstrated through the Board's approved measures and cut score as outlined in Policy IKF-2-E.

**Units of credit required for graduation**

A minimum total of 28 credits earned during grades nine through 12 are required for graduation. A credit is defined as the amount of credit given for the successful completion of a course which meets (on a 4 day week) for at least 36 weeks, meeting state attendance guidelines or the equivalent. Successful completion means that the student obtained a passing grade for the course.

The following criteria shall entitle a student to a high school diploma:

- Achievement in the district's academic standards as demonstrated by mastery of the curriculum which may include, but is not limited to, daily classroom assignments, state and district assessments, classroom assessments, and student participation in, and completion of, assigned projects.

- Completion of a minimum of 28 credits in grades nine through 12 in the one of the prescribed pathways listed above.

### **Credit from other institutions and home-based programs**

All students entering from outside the district must meet the district graduation requirements. The principal shall determine whether credit toward graduation requirements shall be granted for courses taken outside the district. Students who are currently enrolled in the district and wish to obtain credit from outside institutions, or through "online" programs, must have prior approval from the principal.

The district shall accept the transcripts from a home-based educational program. In order to determine whether the courses and grades earned are consistent with district requirements and district academic standards, the district shall require submission of the student's work or other proof of academic performance for each course for which credit toward graduation is sought. In addition, the district may administer testing to the student to verify the accuracy of the student's transcripts. The district may reject any transcripts that cannot be verified through such testing.

### **Credit from a dropout recovery program**

In accordance with applicable state law, college courses completed pursuant to the student's participation in a "dropout recovery program" shall count as credit toward completion of the district's graduation requirements. A student seeking to enroll in a dropout recovery program shall work with his or her high school principal or designee in selecting college courses.

### **Class rankings and grade point averages**

Graduating seniors shall be ranked within the graduating class for each high school upon the basis of grade-point averages for the four-year program, excluding the last semester of the senior year. Each year, the principal or designee will conduct an audit verifying that each senior's grade point average and class rank is calculated correctly.

Grades for regular classes will be given the following values: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1.

Grades for advanced placement and concurrent classes will be given the following values: A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2.

After a course has been passed, no future grade earned in the same course shall be used to determine class rank or grade point average.

The student following the Clipper pathway with the highest-class rank will be valedictorian. When more than one student holds the numerical one rank, all students holding the rank will be declared co-valedictorians.

A student must have attended Cotopaxi High School for at least 3 semesters of their high school academic years, not including the last semester of their senior year to be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors.

When transcripts of transfer students show grades such as pass or satisfactory, such grades shall not be counted in determining class rank or grade point average. Students entering from home-based education programs must submit student work or other proof of academic performance for each course for which credit toward class ranking or grade point average is sought.

### **Independent study**

Independent study, work experience and experienced-based programs approved in advance by the principal may be taken for high school credit. Students must submit a request for approval that includes a summary of the educational objectives to be achieved and monitored by a faculty member.

### **Student course load**

The course load for freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors shall be a minimum of 7 credits per school year. Students who wish to take less credits in any given school year must obtain advance permission from the principal.

### **Early graduation**

The Board of Education believes that most students benefit from four years of high school experience and are encouraged not to graduate early. However, in some cases, students are ready for postsecondary education or other opportunities prior to completing four years of high school. Therefore, the superintendent or designee may grant permission to students wishing to graduate early, provided the student has met all district graduation requirements in accordance with this policy IKF-2 and its accompanying exhibit IKF-2-E.

(Adoption date: 2017)

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 22-1-104 (*teaching history, culture and civil government*)  
C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(kk) (*Board to establish graduation requirements that "meet or exceed" state graduation*)

*guidelines)*

C.R.S. 22-32-132 (*discretion to award diploma to honorably discharged veterans*)

C.R.S. 22-33-104.5 (*home-based education law*)

C.R.S. 22-35-101 *et seq.* (*Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act*)

CROSS REFS.: AE, Accountability/Commitment to Accomplishment

AEA, Standards Based Education

IHBG, Home Schooling

IHBK, Preparation for Postsecondary and Workforce Success

IHCDA, Concurrent Enrollment

IK, Academic Achievement

IKA, Grading/Assessment Systems