

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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 Ellsworth School Department is implementing a proficiency-based system of learning as required by Maine law.

After July 1, 2020, the awarding of a diploma will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in *ALL* of the content areas and Guiding Principles of Maine's system of Learning Results **as demonstrated through completion of coursework requirements or approved alternate pathway experiences** rather than the accumulation of credits.

To be awarded a high school diploma from Ellsworth High School, students graduating in the Class of 2021 and beyond will need to demonstrate proficiency in the eight content areas identified in Maine's system of Learning Results in accord with 20-A MRSA §4722-A, (1), (B-1), 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 School Board.

Students graduating in the Classes of 2015-2020 must meet the credit and other graduation requirements specified in 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 School Board policy will have until **October 31, 2020** to fulfill the graduation requirements applicable to the Class of 2020.

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

The School 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.

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.

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

- A. The student must successfully complete a total of 24 credits. Of these credits, 12 ½ (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 years;
 5. Visual and Performing Arts/Fine arts, which may include art, music, forensics or drama – 1 credit;
 6. Health – 1/2 credit; and
 7. Physical education – 1 credit.
- B. The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the school unit'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 Board:
1. Math – 1 credit;
 2. Science – 1 credit;
 3. Social Studies – 1 credit;
 4. Complete 60 hours of Community Service in four years (Class of 2017 and 2018). Complete 40 Hours of Community Service in four year (Classes 2019 and beyond)
- 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.
- E. Students classified as Freshmen, Sophomores, or Juniors who are following a traditional pathway must be enrolled, at a minimum, in the equivalent of five full credit academic courses in each school year.

Students classified as Seniors who participate in school sponsored Co and/or Extra-Curricular activities must be enrolled, at a minimum, in the equivalent of four full-credit academic courses during their senior year.

Students classified as Seniors who require fewer than the equivalent of four full-credit academic courses to fulfill graduation requirements may enroll in learning experiences necessary to fulfill graduation requirements.

All student schedules must have parental consent.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDITS

A student who is deficient in these requirements or wishes to meet these requirements through alternative means may earn and apply credits toward graduation in accordance with the provisions of this section.

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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. A student may obtain credits through summer school in classes that he/she completed at Ellsworth High School but did not pass. The student must obtain prior written approval from the Principal.
- B. A student may earn credits through distance learning/virtual courses provided the course is approved in advance by the Principal and progress is monitored by a member of the high school's professional staff.
- C. Advanced courses or courses not available at Ellsworth High School may be taken at other secondary schools, through Early College or at approved postsecondary institutions with the approval of the Principal.
- D. A student may earn credits through independent study approved by the Principal and monitored by the teacher(s) of the subject(s) to which the independent study is related.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

A student with a disability, as identified in 20-A MRSA §7001(1-B), who achieves proficiency as required in 20-A MRSA §4722-A (1), as specified by the goals and objectives of the student's individualized education plan (IEP) will be awarded a diploma.

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

After July 1, 2020, the awarding of a diploma from Ellsworth High School will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in content areas of Maine's system of Learning Results and meeting the cross-content performance standards of the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results. Students will also need to fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the School Board.

The Ellsworth School Department will phase in content area diploma requirements in accord with 20-A MRSA §4722-A, (1), (B-1).

Students graduating in the graduating class of 2020-2021 will demonstrate proficiency in meeting state standards in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and technology, and social studies.

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Students graduating in the graduating class of 2021-2022 will demonstrate proficiency in meeting state standards in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and at least one additional content area of the student's choice.

Students graduating in the graduating class of 2022-2023 will demonstrate proficiency in meeting state standards in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and at least two additional content areas of the student's choice.

Students graduating in the graduating class of 2023-2024 will demonstrate proficiency in meeting state standards in the content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and at least three additional content areas of the student's choice.

Students graduating in the graduating class of 2024-2025 and in each subsequent graduating class will demonstrate proficiency in meeting state standards in all content areas.

Ellsworth High School's high school educational program will be 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 two educational experiences in world languages during their high school program.
- E. Engage in at least one health and one physical education experience during their high school program.
- F. Engage in educational experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Learning Results.
- G. Engage in a minimum of four additional educational experiences.
- H. Engage in and complete 40 hours of community service in four years.

Students classified as Freshmen, Sophomores, or Juniors who are following a traditional pathway must be enrolled, at a minimum, in the equivalent of five full-year learning experiences.

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Students classified as Seniors who participate in school sponsored Co and/or Extra-Curricular activities must be enrolled, at a minimum, in the equivalent of four full-year learning experiences during their senior year.

Students classified as Seniors who require fewer than the equivalent of four full-year learning experiences to fulfill graduation requirements may enroll in learning experiences necessary to fulfill graduation requirements.

All student schedules must have parental consent.

In order to pursue a personalized pathway to graduation, a student may have a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) detailing how the student will demonstrate competency when the pathway involves alternatives to the program of classroom-based experiences. Each option must provide a quality learning experience that is rigorous and identifies applicable learning standards and methods of assessment. Multiple pathway experiences will be detailed, assessed, and documented through the PLP with prior approval by the building principal. Pathway options may include but are not limited to the following:

- Early college/dual enrollment courses
- Career and technical education programming
- Online/virtual learning
- Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work
- Community service
- Exchange programs
- Independent study
- Alternative education/“At Risk” programming

Each pathway must provide a quality learning experience *aligned to the EHS Graduation Standards and* comparable in rigor to the 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/or the Guiding Principles and how the student will demonstrate proficiency in meeting the standards. The personal learning plan must be approved by the Principal.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

A student who is a child with a disability, as identified in 20-A MRSA §7001(1-B), may meet the requirements of subsection 1 and become eligible for a diploma by demonstrating proficiency in state standards established in the system of learning results through performance tasks and accommodations that maintain the integrity of the standards as specified in the student’s individualized education program by the student’s individualized education program team pursuant to the requirements of chapter 301.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

For the graduating class of 2020-2021 and each subsequent graduating class, a student

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

who has satisfactorily completed a state-approved career and technical education program of study and either met 3rd-party-verified national or state industry standards set forth in department rules established pursuant to section 8306-B or earned 6 credits in a dual enrollment career and technical education program formed pursuant to chapter 229 from a regionally accredited institution of higher education and who has successfully demonstrated proficiency in meeting state standards in the content areas and the guiding principles set forth in department rules governing implementation of the system of learning results established pursuant to section 6209, is eligible to receive a high school diploma from the secondary school the student last attended. A student may be awarded a high school diploma from the secondary school the student last attended in accordance with the phase-in of the following diploma requirements for the graduating class of 2020-2021 to the graduating class of 2023-2024 consistent with 20-A MRSA §4722-A(3)(B-2).

TRANSCRIPTS

The Ellsworth School Department shall:

- A. Maintain student transcripts containing certification of proficiency for each content area and guiding principle in the system of learning results pursuant to 20-A MRSA §6209 (2) in which the student has demonstrated proficiency;
- B. Certify on the basis of objective measures in the transcript a student’s post-secondary readiness; and
- C. Establish a transcript that meets the requirements of A and B as an officially sanctioned credential of student learning for admission to a post-secondary education institution and employment in a business, trade, or industry.

INFORMING STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The Superintendent/designee will inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any State-imposed proficiency standards/requirements that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma, but prior to the start of the class cohort’s 9th grade school year.

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM ELLSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL

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

A. Transfer Students

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

B. Home-schooled Students

ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

For previously home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Ellsworth High School, the Ellsworth High School Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation credit requirements. A home schooled student shall demonstrate proficiency in all Ellsworth High School Graduation Standards and other graduation requirements as determined by the Principal in order to receive an Ellsworth High School diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Ellsworth 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 School 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 resources suitable to young learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Certificate of Completion

The School Board may provide a certificate of completion to a student who leaves school having completed four years attendance as a full-time high school student who has earned/completed the required credits or courses/learning experiences 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 Board 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 the following Honor Parts (Valedictorian, Salutatorian, or First Honor Essayist), a student must have been enrolled full time at Ellsworth High School for two years preceding graduation. Students who do not meet this enrollment requirement may be eligible to earn an honors diploma, scholarships, or other awards.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA § 4502(8), 4722, 4722-A, 6209
Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IK – Assessment of Student Learning
IKA – Grading and Reporting System
IKC – Transcripts
IHCDA – Dual Enrollment and Early College
IKD – Academic Recognition
IKE – Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration
IKFF – Multiple Pathways
Ellsworth High School Program of Study

Adopted: August 9, 2016

Amended: July 10, 2018