

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Sanford High School has adopted a proficiency-based system of learning consistent with Maine law, LD 1422, which means that beginning with the Class of 2021, the awarding of a diploma will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the Graduation Standards of each content area and Guiding Principles and Habits of Work, in addition to the accumulation of credits, and fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the School Committee.

Students graduating in the Classes of 2018-2020 must continue to meet the credit and other graduation requirements specified in this policy.

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.

### I. **DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASSES OF 2018, 2019, or 2020**

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

A. **Credits**: The student must successfully complete a total of 25 credits. Of these credits, 12½ (twelve and one half) must be those specified by the State of Maine, and additional credits required by the School Committee as follows:

- English Language Arts – 5 credits;
- Mathematics – 3 credits;
- Social Studies and History, including one year of US/World History and government – 3 credits;
- Science, including at least one year of laboratory study – 3 credits;
- Fine Arts, which may include art, music – 1 credit;
- Health – ½ credit;
- And Physical Education – 1 credit.

The remaining credits may be selected by the student based upon the student's interests, abilities, and the requirements of the field that the student plans to enter upon graduation.

B. **Computer Proficiency**: The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the school unit's standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.

C. **Community Service**: In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following graduation requirement established by the School Committee: 20 hours of community service.

D. **Financial Literacy**: Students must participate in at least one Financial Literacy experience either as part of a course, seminar, on-line program or other approved program.

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

In accordance with Maine law, LD 1422, and Sanford School Department's policy, beginning with the Class of 2021, the awarding of a diploma from Sanford High School will be contingent on a student demonstrating proficiency in the Graduation Standards for each content area of Maine's system of Learning Results, and demonstrating proficiency in the Guiding Principles, and Habits of Work. The student must also fulfill any other requirements specified in this policy.

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

A. **Credit**: A student must successfully complete a total of 25 credits. Of these credits, 12½ (twelve and one half) must be those specified by the State of Maine, and additional credits required by the School Committee as follows:

- English Language Arts – 5 credits;
- Mathematics – 3 credits;
- Social Studies and History, including one year of US/World History and government – 3 credits;
- Science, including at least one year of laboratory study – 3 credits;
- Fine Arts, which may include art, music – 1 credit;
- Health – ½ credit;
- And Physical Education – 1 credit.

The remaining credits may be selected by the student based upon the student's Personal Learning Plan (PLP), interests, abilities, and the requirements of the field that the student plans to enter upon graduation.

B. **Graduation Standards for Proficiency**: To be eligible for the diploma, students must demonstrate proficiency in the content-areas that apply to their graduating class listed below. Proficiency is demonstrated when a student achieves a year-end average score of 2.5 on each Graduation Standard for that content area.

- Class of 2021: **4 core content areas** (English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) plus Guiding Principles.
- Class of 2022: 5 content areas plus Guiding Principles (the 4 core content areas and a 1 additional content area of the student's choosing and informed by the PLP).
- Class of 2023: 6 content areas plus Guiding Principles (the 4 core content areas and 2 additional content areas of the student's choosing and informed by the PLP).
- Class of 2024: 7 content areas plus Guiding Principles (the 4 core content areas and three additional content areas of the student's choosing and informed by the PLP).
- Class of 2025 and thereafter: Students must demonstrate proficiency in all 8 content areas plus Guiding Principles.

### **Eight Content Areas**

#### Core Content Areas

- \*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

- C. **Habits of Work Proficiency:** Students must demonstrate proficiency in the “Habits of Work,” “HOW.” Proficiency is demonstrated when a student achieves a year-end average score of 2.5 on each of the “HOW’s. Sanford defines “Habits of Work” as:
- **Attitudes toward Learning** – Behaviors such as: presents an “I can learn” attitude; exhibits enthusiasm for learning; displays a positive attitude; manages emotions; advocates for self; exhibits perseverance; shows a willingness to keep trying; takes pride in work and self.
  - **Interactions in Learning** - Behaviors such as: shows a “We Can” attitude; listens to other’s opinions; is a team player; collaborates with others; is respectful; participates; compromises; shows compassion; is flexible; shares; acts as a problem solver; is helpful and resourceful.
  - **Responsibility for Learning** - Behaviors such as: is self-directed but advocates for help when needed; engages with peers and teachers appropriately; displays a willingness to learn; is motivated; is prepared and organized; follows directions; completes tasks and values work completion; knows learning targets; produces quality work; focuses on task at hand; displays time management; attends class regularly.
- D. **Guiding Principles Proficiency:** Demonstrate proficiency in meeting the Graduation Standards set forth in the Guiding Principles. Proficiency is demonstrated when a student achieves a year-end average score of 2.5 on each Graduation Standard.
- A student graduating from Sanford High School 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.
- E. **Computer Proficiency:** The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the school unit’s standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.
- F. **Community Service:** In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following graduation requirement established by the School Committee: 20 hours of community service.
- G. **Financial Literacy:** Students must participate in at least one Financial Literacy experience either as part of a course, seminar, on-line program or other approved program.

### III. ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDITS AND/OR DEMONSTRATING PROFICIENCY

Sanford High School offers students a variety of learning options that allow students to demonstrate proficiency on expected learning standards, earn academic credit, and satisfy graduation requirements.

Sanford high school’s curriculum 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 Guiding

Principles. Students may also meet graduation requirements through alternative activities that provide a quality learning experience comparable in rigor to Sanford High School's own educational course offerings.

Some possible alternative activities:

- Early college/dual enrollment courses
- Career and technical education programming
- Online/virtual learning
- Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work
- Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO's)
- Community service
- Exchange programs
- Independent study
- Alternative education/"At Risk" programming
- Adult education

In order to pursue one or more of the alternative learning options, a student must have an Approved Personal Learning Plan (PLP) detailing how the pathway will provide exposure to the Content Area Graduation Standards and how the student will demonstrate proficiency in meeting the Graduation Standards. The Personal Learning Plan must be approved by the Guidance Department Chair.

#### **IV. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM SANFORD HIGH SCHOOL**

- A. Transfer and Home-schooled Students: For students who transfer to Sanford High School from another state or from an educational program that is not required to meet the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the Sanford high School principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards achieving the standards in a manner consistent with Sanford's Local Assessment System and applicable School Committee policies.
- B. Students Receiving Special Education Services: Students who successfully meet the content standards of the Learning Results, as specified in the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP), will be awarded diplomas.
- C. Early Awarding of Diplomas: 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.
- D. Certificate of Attendance: The School Committee may provide a student who leaves school without meeting the standards of the Learning Results with a Certificate of Attendance, provided that the student has attended for two years and received a minimum of ten credits as a full time student. This certificate acknowledges participation in the educational program for a specific period of time and includes a record of the student's course credits and Learning Results proficiency.
- E. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas: At the Superintendent's discretion, a student who leaves Sanford High School prior to graduation to attend an accredited, degree-granting institution of higher education may, upon satisfactory completion of the freshman year be awarded a high school diploma, although he/she may not have met all diploma requirements.

Students who receive a high school diploma must notify the high school principal forty-five days before graduation so that there is ample time for evaluation of the request and, if approved, for preparation of the diploma and planning for the student's participation in the graduation ceremony, if the student desires to do so.

- F. 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 twenty 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.

- G. Participation in Graduation Ceremony: A student must complete all requirements for a high school diploma in order to participate in graduation exercises. Additionally, the student must be in compliance with the Sanford Code of Conduct.
- 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., valedictorian, salutatorian, class speaker, "Top 10"), a student must have been enrolled full time at Sanford High School for the two 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: IHEDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options  
IKFA- Early Graduation  
IK – Student Achievement  
ILA – Testing and Assessment of Students (Local Assessment System)

Adopted: September 8, 2003, September 11, 2017  
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Corrected: July 30, 2007