

EARLY GRADUATION

The MSAD #11 Board recognizes that students may need more or fewer than the typical four years of high school to meet the requirements for a high school diploma. For the purpose of this policy, “early graduation” refers to graduation that occurs prior to the completion of the traditional four years of high school.

A student may complete graduation requirements in fewer than four years of study. A student who has otherwise met all credit, course, and other requirements established by the State and the Board may receive a high school diploma at the end of the school year in which they have qualified to do so.

Before registering for the year in which early graduation is anticipated, the student and parent/guardian must notify the high school principal, in writing, that they wish the student to complete his/her high school requirements at the conclusion of that school year. Form IKFA-E must be completed and provided to the principal.

After this notification but prior to registering for courses, the student and parent/guardian must complete a conference with the principal/designee and school counselor to discuss the request.

It is the belief of administration and staff at Gardiner Area High School that the majority of students greatly benefit by experiencing the traditional four years of high school. We realize, however, that extenuating circumstances may require that a student complete graduation requirements early. We are open to that concept, providing the following criteria are met:

1. The student petitioning for Early Graduation must be at least a second semester sophomore.
2. The student must be on track to earn a minimum of 14 credits by the end of their sophomore year. Failure to achieve this requirement will result in any existing approval for Early Graduation being revoked.
3. The student must not have a grade lower than “C” in any required course at the time of application.

In addition, the following documents must be submitted to the student’s guidance counselor:

1. A detailed essay addressing the reasons that Early Graduation is being sought, as well as an outlined plan to meet all graduation requirements.
2. A plan for post-graduation that includes goals and objectives.
3. A letter from a parent/guardian supporting the application.

Following submission of application material, a meeting will be held between student, parent/guardian, school counselor, principal, and advisor to discuss the merits of the application. Should the application be approved, the following requirements will be instituted:

1. All courses required for graduation unless otherwise approved by the principal must be part of the approved courses as noted in the Gardiner Area High School Program of Studies and a minimum “C” average must be maintained in these courses.
2. Quarterly meetings will be held with the student’s school counselor to monitor progress. A student’s plan may be terminated or adjusted at any meeting if criteria are not being met.

The student will be awarded a high school diploma at the conclusion of the school year if all courses have been successfully completed, the student has met applicable graduation requirements, and if the student and parent/guardian approve at that time.

Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

Students who leave school prior to completion of four years of high school, to enroll in an accredited institution of higher learning from which credits are transferred back to the high school, are also eligible to receive a high school diploma after all credits have been earned. Prior to the conclusion of the final school year in which the student is enrolled, the student and parent/guardian will notify the high school principal in writing that they wish the student to complete their high school requirements at an institution of higher learning in which the student has been accepted. The student and parent/guardian will confer with the principal and school counselor to agree on a course of study that will fulfill high school diploma requirements. On successful completion of the course of study, the student will be awarded a high school diploma.

Cross Reference: IKF – Graduation Requirements

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 4721(2);
Ch. 127 § 7.02 (B), (C)

Adopted: June 31, 1971

Revised: January 8, 1976; May 5, 1994; May 3, 2007; November 6, 2008;
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