

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.

Nokomis Regional High has adopted a proficiency-based system of learning consistent with Maine law, which means that after January 1, 2019, the awarding of a diploma will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas and Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

To be awarded a high school diploma from the RSU #19 schools, students 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 Board.

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

The 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.

II. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with Maine law and Nokomis Regional High's proficiency-based system of learning, after January 1, 2019, the awarding of a diploma from Nokomis Regional High 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. The student must also fulfill any other requirements specified in this policy.

Students must meet the following requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma:

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 areas:

English language arts, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, health education and physical education, visual and performing arts, and career and education development.

For a student graduating in the graduating class of 2023, and for each subsequent graduating class:

- A. Certify that the student has demonstrated proficiency in meeting the state standards in all 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
- B. Meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results. A student graduating from RSU 19 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. Successful completion of a senior project.
- D. Complete a portfolio to include an Individual Graduation Plan, evidence of learning, and an application to a post-secondary educational institution, training program or other experience that provides an opportunity for further growth.
- E. The student must also complete the following non-academic requirements: 20 hours of Community Service.

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO THE AWARDING OF A PROFICIENCY-BASED DIPLOMA

RSU 19'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. The length of an experience is expected to be a full school year or its equivalent unless specifically noted as a half-year experience.

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 half-year health and one full-year or two half-year physical education experiences during their high school program.
- E. Engage in at least three half-year educational experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Learning Results plus the senior capstone project.

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

Twenty-two (22) total experiences are required to graduate.

Students may also opt to demonstrate proficiency toward a high school diploma through multiple additional pathways including:

- Early college/dual enrollment courses
- Career and technical education programming
- Online/virtual learning
- Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work
- Experiential/service learning
- 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 unit’s own educational experience (course) offerings.

In order to pursue one or more of the multiple/alternative pathways, a student must develop an Individual Graduation 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 Individual Graduation Plan must be reviewed by the Guidance Counselor and Department Chair and approved by the Principal.

III. 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.

IV. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM NOKOMIS REGIONAL HIGH

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

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Nokomis Regional High 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 Nokomis Regional High 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 Nokomis Regional High, the Nokomis Regional High Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation requirements. A home-schooled student must have attended Nokomis Regional High for a minimum of one year in order to receive a Nokomis Regional High diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Nokomis Regional High 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 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 adult learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

1. A student must complete all Board requirements for a high school diploma in order to participate in graduation exercises.

2. A student must wear the school issued cap, gown, tassel, and only school approved stoles, medals, and ribbons. No additional decorations or alterations are permitted.

Legal Reference: 20-A § 1001 (6); 6208 - 6209 .20-A M.R.S.A. § 253, 2902, 4502, 4701, 4704, 4706, 4711, 4722, 4723, 4724, 13016 Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options
IK – Student Achievement
IKFA - Early Graduation