

INSTRUCTION

High School Graduation Requirements

Prior to registering in high school and each year thereafter, each student and his/her parents or guardians will be provided with a copy of the graduation requirements in effect for that student (those in effect when the student enrolled in ninth grade unless ten years have lapsed). Graduation requirements shall also be included in the student handbook.

High School Completion

Each student is to develop, update as necessary and initially have on file a high school completion plan. Counselors will provide assistance to ninth graders and their families in developing educational plans. Changes in plans should normally reflect parent consent and should be submitted to the appropriate counselor. At the conclusion of each year the school will provide the student and his/her parents or guardians with a report that reflects the progress that has been made toward satisfying the graduation requirements. If progress is not adequate, the school will identify alternative courses that can be taken to correct the deficiencies.

To receive a high school diploma from Port Townsend High School a student must meet the following criteria:

- Earn the subject area and credit requirements for PTHS;
- Pass the **reading** and **writing** statewide assessments;
- Complete a Culminating Project;
- Complete a High School and Beyond Plan; and
- If the student did not pass the Math statewide assessment, complete additional math credits as outlined below:
 - Students in the classes of 2009-2012 must earn two mathematics credits or career and technical education equivalent math credits after 10th grade. Students meeting the above requirements will NOT earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) unless they meet the reading, writing and math standards on the high school statewide assessment.
 - These credits must be earned in classes “intended to increase the student’s mathematics proficiency toward meeting or exceeding the mathematics standards assessed on the high school statewide assessment.”

The following courses are approved for satisfying the subject area requirements as established by the state board of education:

	<u>Class of 2009-2012</u>	<u>Class of 2013 and Beyond</u>
English (reading, writing and communications)	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics *	2 credits	3 credits
Science (physical, life and earth. including one laboratory credit)	2 credits	2 credits

Social Studies (civics, history and geography)		
United States History & Government	1 credit	1 credit
Washington State History& Government	.5 credit	.5 credit
Contemporary World History, Geography & Problems	1 credit	1 credit
World History	.5 credit	.5 credit
Health and Fitness	2 credits	2 credits
Arts (Fine, Visual & Performing)	1 credit	1 credit
Occupational Education	1.5 credit	1.5 credit
Careers	.5 credit	.5 credit
Electives	6.5 credits	5.5 credits
TOTAL	22.5 credits	22.5 credits

*The required number of mathematics credits is dependent upon meeting math statewide assessment standards and the student’s high school and beyond plan.

Credits

Students shall be expected to earn a total of 22.5 credits in order to complete graduation requirements. For credit purposes a class must meet for a total of 150 hours of planned instruction.

The principal or designee is responsible for determining which credits will be recognized by the district for students enrolling from another state-approved learning program (public school, approved private school or home school), or from out-of-state, or out-of-country schools. Credits from another Washington public school or accredited state private school or accredited out-of-state public or private school shall be accepted to the extent the credit matches a district graduation requirement; or it may be counted as an elective credit. Credits from unaccredited programs or home schools shall be evaluated as described below. Decisions of the principal or designee regarding acceptance of credits from unaccredited programs or home school may be appealed to the superintendent within fifteen school days after the initial decision.

Culminating Project Guidelines

- A. Advise the student and parents of the requirement to complete a culminating project as a graduation requirement.
- B. Provide the student assistance and guidance annually on completing the project.
- C. The culminating project may include:
 - 1. A demonstration of the student’s ability to communicate in writing by completing an analytical, argumentative and/or reflective letter;
 - 2. A demonstration of the student’s ability to communicate orally through a presentation to peers, teachers and/or community members;
 - 3. Completion of a self-directed student project that demonstrates the student’s academic and management skills; and

4. The opportunity for the student to complete a community service project or a project working with a community member.
- D. Review each student's progress annually.
- E. Provide opportunities within the curriculum for students to work on projects.
- F. Ensure that projects align with goals three and four of the statewide learning goals.

State Learning Goals

- Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly.
- Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; and health and fitness.
- Think analytically, logically and creatively, and to integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.
- Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

High School and Beyond Plan Guidelines

In assisting students with developing a High School and Beyond Plan the district should:

- A. Provide internal and external resources to ensure successful development and implementation of the High School and Beyond Plan.
- B. Provide the opportunity for student choice, voice and ownership of the High School and Beyond Plan.
- C. Teach students a planning process that provides a capacity to create, review and revise the High School and Beyond Plan.
- D. Prepare all students for post-secondary options.
- E. Align the High School and Beyond Plan with the the Essential Academic Learning Requirements, State Learning Goals and district goals and link to district high school graduation requirements.
- F. Collect and analyze data to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the High School and Beyond Plan.
- G. Encourage parental involvement in the planning process.

Waiver Of Graduation Requirements

All state requirements must be satisfied except that Washington history and government may be waived for students who have completed and passed a state history and government course in another state during grades seven through twelve and who have fulfilled study of the Washington state constitution through an alternative learning experience approved by the Principal.

Additionally, physical education, pursuant to RCW 28A.230.050, may be waived upon written request of a parent or guardian on account of physical disability, employment or religious belief or because of participation in directed athletics or military science and tactics. A waiver may be

granted for participation in interscholastic athletics or academic load and should be part of the students high school plan. This shall not alter the credit requirements established by the board.

The following procedure shall be followed in graduation waiver requests:

- A. The principal is responsible for evaluating educational experiences of individual students and recommending graduation to the superintendent when requirements have been met.

An individual student may be granted an exemption from any requirement in this policy if such requirement impedes the progress toward graduation provided there is a direct relationship between the failure to meet the requirement and the student's ability. When a 12th grade student transfers from another high school, the student may be permitted to graduate with a lesser number of credits provided that minimum state course and credit requirements are satisfied and the student successfully passes a full schedule of classes during his/her 12th year of school.

- B. Waiver of graduation requirements is determined by the principal. The procedure for processing requests for waiver shall be as follows:

1. Request shall be initiated by the parent or the eligible student;
2. The principal shall investigate the request for waiver of graduation requirements;
3. The principal shall make a determination in writing based upon appropriate data and upon conclusions of the investigation;
4. The principal shall develop appropriate record keeping procedures for storage of all pertinent data relating to each waiver request, and;
5. The parent or eligible student shall be notified that an appeal to the decision on waiver requests may be made in writing to the superintendent no later than 30 days prior to the anticipated graduation date.

Extended Learning Experiences and Alternative Programs

Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for planned learning experiences primarily conducted away from the facilities owned, operated or supervised by a district. A proposal for approval of out-of-school learning activities shall be submitted prior to the experience, shall be at no additional cost to the district and shall include the information as designated under each option below. These options include, but are not limited to:

- A. Work Experience
- B. Mentorship Experience
- C. Correspondence Courses
- D. Contract Classes

General Guidelines for Extended Learning Experiences

A maximum of six (6) credits from Extended Learning Programs may be applied toward a student's graduation requirements.

High school students who are enrolled in approved programs that are part of a college program (such as Running Start) do not fall within the six credit limitation. However, for these exceptions, prior permission from the principal is required.

Approval of Extended Learning Activities

A proposal for approval of Extended Learning activities shall be submitted to the principal prior to the experience. Students may be assisted in planning by a high school staff member. The proposal shall include at least the following information where applicable:

- A. Name of program.
- B. Length of time for which approval is desired.
- C. Objectives of the program.
- D. Description of how credits will be determined.
- E. Request for the class meeting a core requirement or an elective credit. Needs to be determined prior to starting the class and confirmed with the principal or designee.
- F. Content outline of the program and/or major learning activities.
- G. Description of how student performance will be assessed.
- H. Qualifications of instructional personnel.
- I. Plans for evaluation of program.

The reasons for disapproval of a request shall be communicated to the person making the request by the principal or his/her designee in a timely manner in order to make other arrangements as needed.

Credit for Digital and Online Curricula

Credit may be granted for the district's digital and on-line curricula, if the program satisfies the requirements of WAC 392-121-182.

Types of Extended Learning Programs

Work Experience

The use of work experience as a part of the educational program of students should be regarded as part of the secondary school curriculum. The following are the bases upon which credit may be granted for work experience:

- A. The school shall supervise the work program.
- B. The work experience shall be related to the school program of the student.
- C. Credit given for work experience shall represent growth of the student, and the type of work done should have definite educational value.
- D. The job in which experience is gained shall provide varied experience.
- E. A work experience program shall be supplemented by an adequate program of guidance, placement, follow-up and coordination between job and school.
- F. One work credit may be granted for not less than 405 hours of work experience related to student's school program.
- G. A student participating shall be legally employed and must have passed his/her sixteenth birthday.

- H. An employer's report of the student's work record (pay stub), indicating satisfactory progress on the job shall be filed with the school.

Mentorship Experience

Students may receive one credit for satisfactory completion 150 hours of on the job mentoring. Half of this credit may fulfill occupational education requirements. Any subsequent approved mentorship credits will count as elective credits. This mentorship experience will be planned and monitored by a Port Townsend School District employee. A mentorship contract will be completed by the student and the mentor prior to the beginning of the mentorship. Mentorships are graded on a pass-fail basis.

Correspondence Courses

Credit for correspondence course may be granted within the general guidelines of Extended Learning Programs listed above. The following schools are approved to grant credit:

- A. Schools approved by the National University Continuing Education Association or accredited by the National Home Study Council.
- B. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges and universities, and approved private schools in the state of Washington.
- C. Other schools or institutions that are approved by the school district after evaluation for a particular course offering.

Contract Classes

Contract classes are intended for elective classes. Students requesting a required course to be completed by contract must meet with the building principal to ascertain whether an exception should be granted. The reasons for disapproval of a request shall be communicated to the person making the request by the principal or his/her designee.

Proposals for contract classes shall include:

- A. Name of the class.
- B. Length of time for which approval is desired.
- C. Course objectives.
- D. Description of how credits will be determined.
- E. Content outline of the program and /or major learning activities.
- F. Description of how student performance will be assessed.
- G. Name of school district instructor sponsoring and supervising the contract.
- H. Name of the instructor of the course.
- I. Student, parent, teacher(s) and principal's signature of approval prior to beginning the course.
- J. Contract classes will be graded on a pass-fail basis.

Home School

The following guidelines shall be followed for consideration of granting credit for home school students.

- A. Have had on file with the Port Townsend School District an annual declaration of intent to home school for the period in question.
- B. Provide documentation that the home school program was supervised according to state law.
- C. Provide a collection of evidence demonstrating both the quality of academic work and progression of skills that are consistent with high school level work, at minimum 80% mastery.
- D. Provide evidence of annual achievement testing or written documentation by a certificated teacher in the State of Washington consistent with state law.

Home school credits accepted by the building principal will be entered on the student's transcript as a "Pass" grade only. A maximum of six (6) credits will be granted on the student's high school transcript under the course code HMS.

Any district testing shall be available to home school students as an ancillary service of the district if it is regularly available to all students. Students wishing to take the statewide assessment need to notify the appropriate school each fall.

Credit is granted for the following approved schools:

- A. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges and universities and approved private schools in the state of Washington, and
- B. Other schools or institutions which are approved by the district after evaluation for a particular course offering.

National Guard High School Career Training

Credit may be granted for National Guard high school career training in lieu of either required or elective high school credits. Approval by the district shall be obtained prior to a student's participation in a National Guard training program as follows:

- A. MIL Form 115 or an equivalent form now or hereafter provided by the National Guard shall be completed and filed with the school district; and
- B. The number of credits toward high school graduation to be granted shall be calculated, agreed upon by the student and an authorized representative of the school district, and such agreement noted on MIL Form 115 or such equivalent form.

Credit toward high school graduation may be granted by the school district upon certification by a National Guard training unit commander on the completion component of MIL Form 115 or such equivalent form that the student has met all program requirements.

Graduation Ceremonies

Typically, only those students who have earned 19.5 credits by the start of the second semester of their senior year will be eligible to graduate in June of that year. Students must have successfully completed all credit and program requirements in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. The Port Townsend School District shall make every effort to assist all students desiring to graduate with their class, and shall notify students and their parent(s) or

guardian(s) of alternative education experiences available to assist in making appropriate progress.

A diploma will not be withheld as a disciplinary measure, but participation in graduation ceremonies may be denied if personal conduct warrants suspension, or if outstanding fines, fees or damage charges are unpaid.

In order to receive a Port Townsend High School diploma, a student must be enrolled in Port Townsend High School for at least one semester of his/her senior year. Valedictorian and Salutatorian honors will be awarded to only those students who:

- Have attended PTHS for their entire senior year, and
- Have completed 90% of their classes through an accredited high school, and
- Have taken 80% of their classes on the PTHS campus.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian honors will be determined based on the cumulative grade point average earned in all classes grades 9-12 as determined at the end of the first semester of the twelfth grade year. Within this honor, a new GPA will be calculated with a bonus awarded for honors or Advanced Placement level classes that were taken on the PTHS campus.

Graduation ceremonies will be conducted in the following manner:

- A. Each participating student must participate in the graduations ceremony rehearsal. Each student who participates must purchase or rent the proper cap and gown as designated by the school administration and the class advisor.
- B. Caps and gowns will be worn as designated by the school administration and class advisor.
- C. Each student who participates will be expected to cooperate with the administration and the class advisor and participate in all parts of the graduation ceremony.
- D. Failure to comply with the above requirements will automatically cause a student to forfeit his/her privilege to participate in the graduation ceremony.

Date: 1/4/88; 4/21/91; 11/8/95; 3/24/97; 6/19/00; 3/25/02; 4/28/03; 9/24/07; 6/8/09; 8/9/10.