

High School Graduation Requirements

As approved by the South Dakota Board of Education Nov. 2, 2009

Except where otherwise noted, these requirements begin with students entering 9th grade in the 2010-11 school year.

A Student's Personal Learning Plan must document a minimum of 22 credits that include the following:

- (1.) Four units of Language Arts — must include:
 - a. Writing - 1.5 units
 - b. Literature - 1.5 units
(must include .5 unit of American Literature)
 - c. Speech or Debate - .5 unit
 - d. Language Arts elective - .5 unit
- (2.) Three units of Mathematics - must include:
 - a. Algebra I - 1 unit
 - b. *Algebra II - 1 unit
 - c. *Geometry - 1 unit
- (3.) Three units of Lab Science - must include:
 - a. Biology - 1 unit
 - b. Any Physical Science - 1 unit
 - c. *Chemistry or Physics - 1 unit
- (4.) Three units of Social Studies - must include:
 - a. U.S. History - 1 unit
 - b. U.S. Government - .5 unit
 - c. World History - .5 unit
 - d. Geography - .5 unit
- (5.) ~One unit of the following - any combination:
 - a. Approved Career & Technical Education
 - b. Capstone Experience or Service Learning
 - c. World Language
- (6.) One unit of ^Fine Arts
- (7.) One-half unit of Personal Finance or Economics
- (8.) One-half unit of Physical Education
- (9.) ~One-half unit of Health or Health Integration

* With school and parent/guardian approval, a student may be excused from this course in favor of a more appropriate course. A student may be excused from Algebra II or Geometry, but not both. A student is still required to take three units of Math. If a student is excused from Chemistry or Physics, the student must still take three units of Lab Science.

~Required beginning Sept. 1, 2013

Regarding the health requirement: Beginning with students who are freshmen in the fall of 2013, students will be required to take .5 unit of health at any time grades 6-12. A district may choose to integrate health across the curriculum at the middle or high school level in lieu of a stand-alone course. See Frequently Asked Questions for details.

^Local decision. A district may decide to offer credit for extracurricular Fine Arts activities. Students may be granted up to one credit in Fine Arts for participation in extracurricular activities. A maximum of 1/4 credit may be granted for each activity in each school year.

Implementation Timeline

This chart indicates the timeline for when the new graduation requirements kick in, as well as the phasing out of the existing requirements.* Please note: The chart does not include all of the new requirements; it only shows those items that are changing.

9th grade in 2006-07 Graduating in 2010	9th grade in 2007-08 Graduating in 2011	9th grade in 2008-09 Graduating in 2012	9th grade in 2009-10 Graduating in 2013	9th grade in 2010-11 Graduating in 2014	9th grade in 2011-12 Graduating in 2015	9th grade in 2012-13 Graduating in 2016	9th grade in 2013-14 Graduating in 2017
Advanced Pathway Standard Pathway	Advanced Pathway Standard Pathway	Advanced Pathway Standard Pathway	Advanced Pathway Standard Pathway	New Requirements	New Requirements	New Requirements	New Requirements
				Personal Learning Plan	Personal Learning Plan	Personal Learning Plan	Personal Learning Plan
				Exclusion for math/science	Exclusion for math/science	Exclusion for math/science	Exclusion for math/science
.5 unit PE or Health	.5 unit PE or Health	.5 unit PE or Health	.5 unit PE or Health	.5 unit PE	.5 unit PE	.5 unit PE	.5 unit PE .5 unit of Health or Health Integration
Two Units - Any combo of following: a. World Languages b. Computer Studies c. Approved CTE courses d. Additional math courses e. Additional science courses	Two Units - Any combo of following: a. World Languages b. Computer Studies c. Approved CTE courses d. Additional math courses e. Additional science courses	Two Units - Any combo of following: a. World Languages b. Computer Studies c. Approved CTE courses d. Additional math courses e. Additional science courses	Two Units - Any combo of following: a. World Languages b. Computer Studies c. Approved CTE courses d. Additional math courses e. Additional science courses	Electives	Electives	Electives	One Unit - Any combo of following: a. Approved CTE courses b. Capstone experience or Service learnings c. World languages
				Extracurricular fine Arts option (if district approves)	Extracurricular fine Arts option (if district approves)	Extracurricular fine Arts option (if district approves)	Extracurricular fine Arts option (if district approves)

* The chart is based upon two key documents:

- 1) Senate Bill 185, passed during the 2009 legislative session, and 2) South Dakota Administrative Rule 24:43:11:10 as passed by the Board of Education November 2009.

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: Dec. 4, 2009

GENERAL AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

How are the new requirements different from the previous requirements?

Under the new requirements approved by the South Dakota Board of Education in November 2009, South Dakota will have just one set of minimum graduation requirements (as opposed to two pathways).

The major differences with the new requirements are as follows:

- 1) All students will be required to have a Personal Learning Plan.
- 2) A student may be excused from certain math and science requirements if it is deemed in the student's best interest.
- 3) Districts may choose to offer credit for Fine Arts extracurricular activities.
- 4) Effective Sept. 1, 2013, students will be required to take one-half credit of physical education and one-half credit of health. (NOTE: Schools will have the option of integrating health in lieu of a stand-alone health course.)
- 5) Effective Sept. 1, 2013, students will have the option of completing a capstone experience or participating in service learning, as part of a short menu of options.
That menu includes:
 - Approved career and technical education courses
 - World languages
 - Capstone experience or service learning

When do the new requirements take effect?

Except where otherwise noted above, the new requirements begin with students entering 9th grade in the 2010-11 school year.

What graduation requirements do students already in high school need to follow?

Students already in high school - those who entered 9th grade in 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 - may continue following either of the old graduation pathways. Those pathways are the Standard Pathway and the Advanced Pathway.

Can students already in high school follow the new requirements - specifically exclusion from certain math and science courses, and earning credit for extracurricular Fine Arts activities?

No. The new graduation requirements begin with students entering grade 9 in 2010-11.