

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.

Augusta School District is implementing a proficiency-based system of learning as required by Maine law. After July 1, 2020, the awarding of a diploma in Augusta School District will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in all of the content areas and Guiding Principles of Maine's system of Learning Results in addition to the accumulation of credits.

To be awarded a high school diploma from Cony High School, students graduating in the Class of 2021 and beyond will need to demonstrate proficiency in the eight 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.

Students graduating in the Classes of 2015-2020 must 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 Program of Study.

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.

I. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASSES OF 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 OR 2020.

Students who anticipate graduating in the Classes of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020 must meet the following minimum requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

- A. The student must successfully complete a total of 24 credits. Of these credits, 12 ½ (twelve and one-half) must be those specified by the State of Maine. They are:
1. English/language arts – 4 credits;
 2. Mathematics – 2 credits;
 3. Social studies and history, including one credit year of American History, Government/Civics and Personal Finance (Economic Foundations – 2 credits;
 4. Science, including at least one credit of laboratory study – 2 years;
 5. Fine arts, which may include art, music, forensics or drama – 1 credit;
 6. Health – 1/2 credit; and
 7. Physical education – 1 credit.
- B. The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the school unit's standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.
- C. In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following additional credit requirements established by the Board:
1. Math – 1.5 additional credit(s);
 2. Science – 1.5 additional credit(s);
 3. Global Insights – 1 credit(s);
 4. Community Service – 20 hours;

- D. The remaining credits may be selected by the student based on his/her interest, satisfaction of course prerequisites, and requirements of the field that he/she plans to enter upon graduation.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDITS

A student who is deficient in these requirements or wishes to meet these requirements through alternative means may earn and apply up to 6 credits toward graduation in accordance with the provisions of this section.

A student who wishes to meet a credit requirement through an alternative method must have prior written approval of the Guidance Counselor and/or Principal.

A student who makes up deficiencies may participate in the next regular graduation ceremony following successful completion of all graduation requirements.

- A. A student may earn credits through the Augusta Adult Education Program.
- B. A student may earn credits through summer school.
- C. A student may earn credits through distance learning/virtual courses provided.
- D. Advanced courses or courses not available at Cony High School may be taken at other secondary schools, through Early College or at approved postsecondary institutions.
- E. A student may earn credits through independent study approved by the Guidance Counselor and teacher and monitored by the teacher(s) of the subject(s) to which the independent study is related.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

A student with a disability, as identified in 20-A MRS §7001(1-B), who achieves proficiency as required in 20-A MRS §4722-A(1), as specified by the goals and objectives of the student's individualized education plan (IEP) will be awarded a diploma.

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

For students graduating in the class of 2021 and beyond, the awarding of a diploma from Cony High School will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in all eight content areas of Maine's system of Learning Results and meeting the cross-content performance standards of the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results. Students will also need to fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the Board.

Cony High School's high school educational program will be 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 and earn credits** in all of the content areas of the Learning Results and in the cross-content Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

Students must complete the following:

- A. 4 English Language Arts, 3.5 Mathematics, and 3.5 Science and Technology during their high school program.
- B. Three educational experiences in the content area of social studies during their high school program.
- C. One educational experience in the content areas of visual and performing arts during their high school program.
- D. 2 educational experiences in world languages by the end of their high school program.
- E. 1.5 health and physical education experiences during their high school program.
- F. Educational experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Learning Results.

Students must be enrolled in the equivalent of 7 credits for 9th, 6 credits for 10th, 6 for 11th and 6 credits for 12th full year learning experiences/courses or integrated equivalents in each of their high school years.

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INFORMING STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The Superintendent/designee will inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any State-imposed proficiency standards/requirements that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma, but prior to the start of the class cohort's 9th grade school year.

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM CONY HIGH SCHOOL

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

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Cony High School 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 Cony High School Principal/designee shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards meeting graduation requirements.

B. Home-schooled Students

For previously home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Cony High School, the Cony High School Principal/designee shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation credit requirements. A home schooled student must have attended Cony High School for a minimum of 4 semesters or taken a minimum of 12 credits at Cony High School in order to receive a Cony High School diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Cony High School 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 will be awarded a diploma with prior approval from the Principal.

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 learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

A student must complete all Board requirements for a high school diploma or certificate of completion in order to participate in graduation exercises.

G. 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 Cony High School during the year of 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 MRS § 4502(8), 4722, 6209
Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options

Adopted: June 10, 2015