

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Virginia Board of Education of the Commonwealth of Virginia establishes graduation requirements for all Virginia public schools. The Board of Education of the Chesapeake Public Schools maintains its graduation requirements based on regulations set by the Virginia Board of Education (8 VAC 20-131-10-et.seq.) To receive a high school diploma, students must meet the requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma, the Standard Diploma, the Modified Standard Diploma, a Special Diploma, or a Certificate of Program Completion. These diploma programs are designed to ensure that students have the skills and knowledge necessary to continue educational options after high school or to enter the world of work. Through elective choices, students have the opportunity to design a course of study that best prepares them for different goals. Students are encouraged to consider both educational and career goals in selecting courses.

Students must fulfill the following requirements in order to receive a diploma and graduate from a Chesapeake City Public School:

- Earn the required units of credit by passing required course work.
- Earn verified units of credits based on SOL tests required beginning with the graduating class of 2004.

Note: The standard unit of credit is based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction. Students may follow a regular program of studies to meet the Standard Diploma requirements, or an advanced program which meets the requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma.

DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS AND DIPLOMA OPTIONS

Standard Diploma

Students must earn twenty-two (22) standard credits. Sixteen of these credits must come from required courses while six (6) credits can be earned through elective courses.

Table 5

Standard Diploma	
<u>Discipline Area</u>	<u>Standard Credits Required</u>
English 9, 10, 11, 12	4 credits
Mathematics (including two courses from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other courses above the level of Algebra I)	3 credits
Science (selected from two different science disciplines: Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics)	3 credits
Social Studies (World Studies: 1 credit) (Virginia and U.S. History: 1 credit) (Virginia and U.S. Government: 1 credit)	3 credits
Health and Physical Education	2 credits
Fine Arts or Practical Arts	1 credit
Required Courses.....	16 CREDITS
Elective Courses ¹	6 CREDITS
TOTAL.....	22 CREDITS
¹ Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, courses to satisfy this requirement must include at least two sequential electives: for example, Art I, II, Journalism I and Journalism II, Basic Technical Drawing, and Engineering Drawing. Examples of sequential electives are Art I and Art II, Journalism I and Journalism II, Basic Technical Drawing and Engineering Drawing, Physical Education 11 th grade and Physical Education 12 th grade, Physics for Technology I and Physics for Technology II, and ROTC. Sequentials in Business, Career and Technical Education, Marketing, and the Fine Arts also qualifies.	

Advanced Studies Diploma

Students must earn twenty-four (24) standard credits. Twenty-two (22) of these credits must come from required courses while two credits can be earned through elective courses.

Table 6

Advanced Studies Diploma	
<u>Discipline Area</u>	<u>Standard Credits Required</u>
English 9, 10, 11, 12	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
(including three courses from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other courses above the level of Algebra II)	
Science	4 credits
(selected from three different science disciplines: Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics)	
Social Studies	4 credits
(World Studies: 2 credits)	
(Virginia and U.S. History: 1 credit)	
(Virginia and U.S. Government: 1 credit)	
Foreign Languages	3 credits
(three years of the same language or two years of two languages)	
Health and Physical Education	2 credits
..	
Fine Arts or Practical Arts	1 credit
Required Courses.....	22 CREDITS
Elective Courses	2 CREDITS
TOTAL.....	24 CREDITS
(8 VAC 20-131-50.K)	

Modified Standard Diploma

- 1) The Modified Standard Diploma program is intended for certain students at the secondary level who have a disability and are unlikely to meet the credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Students must earn **twenty (20)** standard credits. In addition, students must pass the 8th grade Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in both English: Reading, Literature, and Research (R/L/R) and mathematics. However, the student does not need to meet the SOL requirements for the Standard Diploma. Eligibility and participation in the Modified Standard Diploma program shall be determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and the student, where appropriate, at any point after the student's eighth grade year.
- 2) The school must secure the informed written consent of the parent/guardian and the student to choose this diploma program after review of the student's academic history and the full disclosure of the student's options.
- 3) The student who has chosen to pursue a Modified Standard Diploma shall also be allowed to pursue the Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma at any time throughout that student's high school career. The student must not be excluded from courses and tests required to earn a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma.
- 4) In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and do not meet the requirements for a Standard Diploma, shall be awarded a **Special Diploma**.
- 5) In accordance with the requirements of the Standard of Quality, students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board but do not qualify for diplomas, shall be awarded a **Certificate of Program Completion**.

Table 7

Modified Standard Diploma	
<u>Discipline Area</u>	<u>Standard Credits Required</u>
English 9, 10, 11, 12.....	4 credits
Mathematics..... (including content from among applications of Algebra I, Geometry, Personal Finance, and Statistics)	3 credits
Science..... (including content from at least two of the following: applications of Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics)	2 credits
Social Studies..... (Virginia and U.S. History: 1 credit) (Virginia and U.S. Government: 1 credit)	2 credits
Health and Physical Education.....	2 credits
Fine Arts or Practical Arts.....	1 credit
Required Courses.....	14 CREDITS
Elective Courses¹.....	6 CREDITS
TOTAL.....	20 CREDITS
¹ Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, courses to satisfy this requirement must include at least two sequential electives: for example, Art I and Art II, Journalism I and Journalism II, or Basic Technical Drawing and Engineering Drawing. Examples of sequential electives are Art I and Art II, Journalism I and Journalism II, Basic Technical Drawing and Engineering Drawing, Physical Education 11 th grade and Physical Education 12 th grade, Physics for Technology I and Physics for Technology II, and ROTC. Sequentials in Business, Career and Technical Education, Marketing, and the Fine Arts also qualifies.	

(8 VAC 20-131-50)

**Table 8
DIPLOMA OPTIONS**

<p>Advanced Studies Diploma (24 credits) *of which nine (9) must be verified</p>	<p>*Nine (9) verified credits: English – 2 mathematics – 2 history and social science – 2 laboratory science – 2 and student selected test – 1</p>
<p>**Standard Diploma (22 credits) *of which (6) six must be verified</p>	<p>*Six (6) verified credits: English – 2 mathematics – 1 history and social science – 1 laboratory science – 1 and student selected test – 1</p>
<p>**Note: During a three-year transition period, applicable only to ninth graders in 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003, students have additional flexibility in how they may earn the six required verified credits for the Standard Diploma:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two verified units of credit in English. • Four additional verified units of credit of the student’s own choosing (rather than in specific content areas as prescribed by the Board of Education). 	
<p>Modified Standard Diploma (20 credits)</p>	<p>Has an I.E.P. Must pass 8th grade SOL tests in both English and mathematics</p>
<p>Special Diploma</p>	<p>Students with disabilities who complete the requirements of the I.E.P. and do not meet the requirements for other diplomas.</p>
<p>**Certificate of Program Completion</p> <p>** This certificate can also be awarded to any student that exits high school, but does not meet any diploma requirements.</p>	<p>Students with disabilities who complete prescribed programs of studies, but do not qualify for diplomas, shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion.</p>

**In accordance with the Standards of Quality and Regulations Establishing
Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia
(VAC 20-131-110)**

DEFINITIONS

- **Standard Unit of Credit**

The standard unit of credit for graduation is based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction and successful completion of the requirements of the course.

- **Verified Unit of Credit**

A verified unit of credit for graduation is based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction, successful completion of the requirements of the course, and a passing score on the end-of-course Standards of Learning (SOL) test or a substitute test for that course (8 VAC 20-131-110.B). (See the Table of Substitute Tests approved for Verified Credit at the end of this document.) A state-approved substitute test may be used for specified SOL tests. For further clarification, visit the Virginia Department of Education website at www.pen.k12.va.us/go/VDOE/. Questions can also be emailed to the Department of Education at askdoe@pen.k12.va.us.

- **Student-Selected Test**

A student-selected test for verified credit may come from any end-of-course SOL test that is not already satisfying a required verified credit or tests in computer science, technology, or other areas as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education.

- **Sequential Electives**

Sequential electives are defined as two years of study in a focused sequence of elective courses leading to further education or preparation for employment. Examples of sequential electives are Art I and Art II, Journalism I and Journalism II, Basic Technical Drawing and Engineering Drawing, Physical Education 11th grade and Physical Education 12th grade, Physics for Technology I and Physics for Technology II, and ROTC. Sequentials in Business, Career and Technical Education, Marketing, and the Fine Arts also qualifies.

Note: Students who are pursuing the Standard Diploma or the Modified Standard Diploma and who are expecting to graduate in the spring of 2003 and beyond must complete two sequential electives.

- **Fine Arts**

The following courses will meet the fine arts graduation requirement: all art courses, all music courses, and all drama courses.

- **Practical Arts**

All technical and career education courses, humanities, journalism, and designated courses in the gifted program will meet the practical arts requirement.

- **Standards of Learning**

Students must take all applicable end-of-course Standards of Learning (SOL) tests following course instruction. Students who successfully complete a course and who achieve a passing score on an end-of-course SOL test or a substitute test for that course shall be awarded a verified credit. End-of-course tests that are available are listed in the following chart.

TABLE 9

Standards of Learning End-of-Course Tests Available for Verified Credit			
ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE	HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 11: Reading/Literature/Research • English 11: Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra I • Geometry • Algebra II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth Science Science • Biology • Chemistry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World History to 1500 A.D. • World History since 1500 A.D. • World Geography • VA and U.S. History

Students who were first-time ninth graders in the 2000-01 school year or later must earn standard credits and a minimum of six verified credits for a Standard Diploma or a minimum of nine verified credits for an Advanced Studies Diploma.

Note: Students who were first-time ninth graders in the 2000-01 school year or later will always be under the SOL regulations for receiving a high school diploma in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**TABLE 10
SOL REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Students Entering	SOL Requirements Advanced Diploma	SOL Requirements Standard Diploma
At the 10 th grade, or the beginning of 11 th grade	6 verified units of credit: 2 English 1 mathematics 1 history 1 science 1 of the student's choosing	4 verified units of credit: 1 English 1 history 1 mathematics 1 science
At the 11 th grade, or the beginning of the 12 th grade	4 verified units of credit: 1 English 3 of the student's choosing	2 verified units of credit: 1 English 1 of the student's choosing
Seniors transferring after 20 instructional hours per course shall be given every opportunity to earn a Standard, Advanced, or Modified Standard Diploma. If this is not possible, arrangements should be made for the student's previous school to award the diploma.		

(8 VAC 20-131-60 Transfer of Credits)

**TABLE 11
AWARDS FOR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE**

Diploma Seals	Standard Diploma	Advanced Diploma
Board of Education Seal	Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2000-01, students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma with an average grade of "A" will receive a Board of Education Seal on the diploma. Students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades in 2000-01 may earn the seal with a "B" average.	Not Applicable
Governor's Seal	Not Applicable	Students who complete the requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "B" or better, and successfully complete at least one advanced placement course (AP), international baccalaureate (IB), or one college-level course for credit will receive the Governor's Seal on the diploma.
The Board of Education's Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology (e.g., AP Computer Science qualifies for this)	Students who (a) satisfy all of the mathematics requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma (four units of credit including Algebra II); two verified units of credit with a "B" average or better; and either (b) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association; (c) acquire a	Students who (a) satisfy all the mathematics requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma (four units of credit including Algebra II), two verified units of credit with a "B" average or better in those courses; and either (b) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association; (c) acquire a professional license in a career and

	<p>professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (d) pass an examination approved by the Board that confers college-level credit in a technology or computer science area.</p>	<p>technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (d) pass an examination approved by the Board of Education that confers college-level credit in a technology or AP computer science area.</p>
<p>The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal</p>	<p>Student completes a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that they choose and maintain a "B" or better average in those courses; or (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade or professional association; or (b) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia.</p>	<p>Student completes a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that he/she chooses and either (a) maintains a "B" or better average in those courses; (b) pass an examination in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association; or (c) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia.</p>

- Vocational Completer = Concentration
 - *Certification = Specialization
- (8 VAC 20-131-50)

- **Testing Accommodations**

Testing accommodations may be available to students with disabilities, 504 students, or students with limited English proficiency.

- **Senior Examination Exemption**

Graduating seniors who have an “A” average in a course are exempt from taking the final examination in the course.

BLOCK SCHEDULING

Changes in graduation requirements and curriculum with a higher emphasis in academics, (e.g., all high school graduates will be required to pass Algebra I.), present new challenges for all high schools. In order to meet these challenges, high schools are using the 4 x 4 semester plan. In the 4 x 4 semester plan, the school day is divided into four instructional blocks approximately 90 minutes each (as opposed to six periods of 50 minutes each) and the school year is divided into two semesters or terms.

During the first term, students are enrolled in four courses which meet daily. At the end of the fall term, students receive one credit for each course successfully completed and enroll in four additional courses for the second term. In this scheduling arrangement, it is possible to earn thirty-two credits in four years without attending summer school.

TABLE 12
SAMPLE 4 X 4 BLOCK SCHEDULE

BLOCKS	FALL SEMESTER	SPRING SEMESTER
1	English	Social Studies
2	Foreign Language	Math
3	Elective (Can be additional math, science, or foreign language)	PE
4	Science	Elective (Can be additional math, science, or foreign language)

In addition to the possibility of earning more credits, the goals of block scheduling:

- allow students more time to learn without lowering standards and enable students to repeat failed courses in time to graduate with their peers;
- provide longer class periods so that teachers have more time to use a variety of techniques which encourage student involvement;
- reduce the number of class changes during the school day;
- reduce the number of students per teacher each semester;
- reduce the number of teacher preparations; and
- reduce the number of classes per student each semester.

Block scheduling has the following advantages for students:

- it allows students to earn eight credits each year;
- students concentrate on only four classes at one time; and
- it allows students to repeat failed classes without attending summer school.

Note: When scheduling for the next academic term, students should select course combinations in which there is a balance between “high-homework” classes and “low-homework” classes each semester.

Freshman, sophomores, and juniors must take four courses each term. Seniors may have the option of taking three courses per term. In addition, the sequence of math and foreign language courses must remain consistent.

- Math classes can be taken in the order dictated by the curriculum with a greater likelihood of success because if a student fails a course in the first term, he or she will be able to repeat the course during the second term.
- Foreign language students will have the opportunity to take several levels of one language as well as to take multiple languages. The sequence of foreign language study will continue to be Level I, II, III, IV, V and AP (Advanced Placement). Level V will serve as a pre-AP course. Students are encouraged to follow the entire sequence of foreign language study.

AVERAGING CREDIT GRADES ON A 4 X 4 BLOCK SCHEDULE

The term grade is determined by averaging the student’s four-quarter grades and the final exam grade in credit-bearing courses.

1. The school year is divided into two terms.
2. Each term consists of four quarters. The four quarter grades and the exam grade will be used to determine the final term grade with a weight of twenty percent each.
3. For those AP courses scheduled for two credits, a term exam will be given in January and in June. The eight quarter grades and the two exam grades will be used to determine the final grade with a weight of ten percent each.
4. The midterm exam has been eliminated; however, the teacher has the option of giving a midterm test to count no more than any other test or major assignment during the grading period.
5. Grades for courses on an A/B alternating block, or at the Chesapeake Center for Science and Technology, or at the Governor’s School for the Arts will be considered interim grades at the O1, O3, O5, and O7 reporting periods. These grades will not be used to determine the final grade.
6. As required by School Board Policy (6-44), all grades are subject to improvement based upon the timely completion of make-up work.

ATTENDANCE AND THE 4 X 4 BLOCK SCHEDULE

Students need to report to classes on time. Regular school attendance is important in the academic development of the student. Excessive and unexcused absences from school are harmful to such development. On days when it is necessary for students to be absent, parents are requested to call the school that morning. Parents will be notified of the exact procedure for reporting absences.

On the 4 x 4 block schedule, a high school student shall not be granted credit if absences total more than nine class periods per course per term. The principal shall be the judge of extenuating circumstances.

The personal illness of a student, severe illness or death in the immediate family, exposure to contagious disease, and religious holidays shall be considered the only legitimate excuses for absences or tardiness. In all cases of absences or tardiness, parents/guardians shall provide a written excuse in their writing, stating the reason for the absence or tardy.

CRITERIA FOR ACCELERATED AND HONORS COURSES

When deciding whether or not a certain course or sequence is appropriate, students should be aware that these courses have been designed for students who meet the following criteria:

1. have consistently received grades of "B" or better in that subject area in the past;
2. have received scores of 90% or above on the applicable achievement test in math or reading;
3. have the recommendation of their present teacher(s) in the appropriate subject; and
4. have the approval of their parents.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSE OPPORTUNITIES

Advanced Placement (AP) is a College Board program that offers students the opportunity to take college-level courses while they are enrolled in high school. Their pace is more rapid than accelerated or honors courses and, likewise, they cover material in much greater depth.

Students have the opportunity to learn a subject in greater depth, develop analytical reasoning skills, and develop study skills necessary for success at the college level.

All high schools in Chesapeake City Public Schools participate in the Advanced Placement Program. Parents are strongly encouraged to assist their child with AP course selections. Students and parents may contact the guidance and counseling office of the respective high school to obtain additional information and a list of the AP courses offered. AP teachers are also available to answer course content and requirement questions. In addition, the College Board publishes a booklet *Advanced Placement Course Descriptions* for each course. This booklet describes the content of the AP course and provides sample examination questions. Additional information is available at www.collegeboard.org.

Students may gain advanced standing and/or earn college credit through their performance on the Advanced Placement examinations that are given each year in May. If the score received on the AP exam is high enough, the student can receive advanced standing and possibly college credit in that discipline, depending on the requirement of the college or university. However, most students who take AP courses do so to prepare themselves better for college. All AP examinations (except Studio Art) contain both multiple choice and free response questions that require essay writing, problem solving, and other skills. In Studio Art, students submit portfolios of their work instead of taking the exam. Advanced Placement examinations are offered in the following subjects:

ART

- Art History
- Studio Art
- Drawing

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

- French
- Spanish
- German
- Latin

ENGLISH

- English Language and Composition
- English Literature and Composition

MATHEMATICS

- Calculus AB
- Calculus BC
- Computer Science
- Statistics

SCIENCE

- Biology

- Chemistry
- Physics

SOCIAL STUDIES

- European History
- United States History
- Government and Politics

GRADING SCALE

To derive semester, term, and final grade averages, the four-point conversion scale is to be used. The grading scale used is the 4.0 alphabetical system with the quality points and numerical equivalents distributed as follows:

A	4.0	94-100
B	3.0	86-93
C	2.0	78-85
D	1.0	70-77
E	0.0	69 or below

Once letter grades have been changed to the four-point scale, the following conversion is used:

CONVERSION SCALE

3.6 - 4.0	= A
3.5	= A or B
2.6 - 3.4	= B
2.5	= B or C
1.6 - 2.4	= C
1.5	= C or D
.6 - 1.4	= D
.5	= D or E
.4 or below	= E

REPEAT COURSES

If a student passes a course and elects to repeat the course, the student will receive credit for the higher grade. The lower grade will remain on the student's cumulative record, but will not be calculated in the grade point average.

WEIGHTED CREDITS

Certain courses have been approved for additional quality point weight, which is added to the grade point average of students. These courses are approved because they are academically demanding. The courses are identified as honors

or advanced placement classes. Students will earn the following quality points: A-4.0, B-3.0, C-2.0, D-1.0, and E-0. After the students' averages have been calculated with the above-stated quality points, a weight of .025 is added to the grade point average for each honors class completed successfully, and a weight of .05 is added to the grade point average for each advanced placement credit class completed successfully.

Students who transfer into the Chesapeake Public Schools will be given weighted credit for courses passed successfully in other school divisions **only** if the specific courses are weighted in the Chesapeake Public Schools.

The following courses have been identified as honors classes:

Advanced Drafting/Design
Calculus
Computer Networking Administrator
Engineering
Foreign Language 3
Foreign Language 4
Foreign Language 5
Honors Biology
Honors Chemistry
Honors Earth Science
Honors English 9
Honors English 10
Honors English 11
Honors English 12
Honors Social Studies 9
Honors Social Studies 10
Honors Social Studies 11
Honors Social Studies 12
Mathematical Analysis
Multimedia and the Internet
Physics
Practical Nursing
(Note: Other classes may be added when approved.)

The following courses have been identified as advanced placement courses:

AP Art History
AP Biology
AP Calculus-AB
AP Calculus-BC
AP Chemistry
AP Computer Science
AP Foreign Languages – French, German, Latin, Spanish
AP Government

AP English Language and Composition
AP English Literature and Composition
AP European History
AP Physics
AP Statistics
AP Studio Art
AP U.S. History
(Note: Other classes may be added when approved.)

HONOR ROLL

Honor roll is determined at the end of each nine weeks. All students who have a 3.0 or greater grade point average in all courses (credit bearing or non-credit bearing classes) are given the distinction of honor roll.

HONOR GRADUATES

The distinction of honor graduate is awarded to all students who graduate with a 3.0 or greater weighted grade point average in all credit bearing classes. Determination is made by the averaging of grades after final examinations have been given and final grades have been derived in the senior year.

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

For the purpose of representing the senior class, the determination of valedictorian and salutarian is made based upon the weighted grade point average at the end of the first semester of the senior year. In addition, the student shall not have been enrolled in the last four years of high school for a period of more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the semester in which he/she was enrolled for the first time in the ninth grade.

The eight consecutive semesters shall be counted continuously from that point, regardless of whether or not he/she remains continuously enrolled in school. On the student's final transcript, final class rank including valedictorian (number one in class) and salutarian (number two in class) is calculated following graduation.

PROMOTION

Promotion from one grade level to the next grade level is based upon the successful completion of a specified number of courses or credits. The specific regulation is written in the **Chesapeake Public Schools Policies and Regulations** manual. The general criteria are as follows:

- **To be promoted to the 10th grade, a student must have earned four (4) graduation credits, including one credit in English.**

- **To be promoted to the 11th grade, a student must have earned ten (10) graduation credits, including two credits in English.**
- **To be promoted to the 12th grade, a student must have earned fifteen (15) graduation credits including three credits of English.**

Note: In order for a student to be classified as a senior, a student must have a schedule that will satisfy all the minimal course requirements necessary for graduation. Graduation is dependent on the successful completion of all course work and competencies prescribed by the Commonwealth of Virginia.