

Bay-Arenac ISD



Michigan's

High School

Graduation
Requirements



Updated Winter 2011



Bay-Arenac ISD
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www.baisd.net

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Winter 2011

What you need to know about Michigan's

High School Graduation requirements

Introduction

Holding students to consistent, high standards that will prepare them for the life and global economy they will face is the focus behind Michigan's new high school graduation requirements. Successfully completing these requirements will give your high school graduate a strong foundation in preparation for higher education and to be competitive in securing the jobs of the 21st Century. In the short-term, the requirements will prepare your student to pass the **Michigan Merit Exam** and assist in college admission.

The State Board of Education introduced the new requirements, called the **Michigan Merit Curriculum**, in December 2005. When the state legislature enacted the requirements as law in March 2006, they became the driving force behind high school reform in Michigan and are among the most rigorous in the nation. In satisfying these requirements, graduates will meet and often surpass the most stringent entry requirements for all colleges and universities in the state, and will provide the academic and applied learning skills business and industry leaders they need in their workforce.

While the new requirements dramatically change the face of education in Michigan, parent involvement remains critical to a student's success. The failure of even one semester of a required course could result in your son or daughter being in danger of not graduating with his/her class. While local districts will continue to determine the total number of credits needed to graduate, the state has now set the number of credits in each subject area and, in many cases, specified the specific courses that must be taken in English, mathematics, science, social studies, health/physical education, the arts (visuals, performing or applied), world languages (required in the class of 2016), and online learning. Local districts can establish additional requirements for the students graduating from their schools. It is essential that you fully understand all the state and local requirements so you can guide your child in making sound academic decisions as they move toward high school graduation.

As updates to the MMC requirements occur, you will be able to find new information on the BAISD's website, **www.baisd.net**.

For questions specific to your child or further information, contact your school district's curriculum administrator or assistant superintendent of instruction, your building principal, or call BAISD at 989.686.4410.

Key Concepts

to help you understand the high school graduation requirements

Listed below are ten key concepts to help you understand the MMC high school graduation requirements.

Terms in **bold type** throughout this booklet can be found in a glossary at the back of this guide.

1. These requirements apply to ALL students in public schools. Special education students must satisfy these same standards to receive a high school diploma.
2. Local boards of education may add to the requirements, but cannot reduce them. Local boards determine the total number of requirements.
3. While in very limited cases **modifications** can be made to some class sections, there is no “opt out” provision.
4. Students can meet the requirements in any type of school day schedule set by the district (i.e., six-period day, seven-period day, block schedule, trimesters).
5. There is room left in your child’s high school schedule for electives.
6. Accelerated, honors, and **advanced placement** classes will count toward meeting the graduation requirements if the content matches the **Michigan Merit Curriculum** course expectations.
7. Students struggling with or failing required classes can get help to succeed. Parents are encouraged to check with the school about support opportunities available for students.

8. After the student has completed grade 9 and all other options have been earnestly attempted, the student or a teacher may request a meeting to determine if a **Personal Curriculum (PC)** is necessary. A request for modification(s) for a student with a disability may be made at any time, but the modification(s) cannot take effect until the student begins high school. Personal Curriculums have strict guidelines and may not be available for all students or in all situations.
9. As of June 2006, all public school teachers in the designated content areas are required to meet the *No Child Left Behind* federal certification and degree standards for **highly qualified teachers**.
10. Your child should be prepared to take the classes for these new requirements. All Bay and Arenac districts have a comprehensive plan for K-12 curriculum that is based on grade level content expectations (K-8) and **subject area content expectations** (9-12).

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Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements

Subject Area Credit Requirements	Personal Curriculum Modifications
4 English Language Arts Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELA in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade • All credits aligned with state content expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No modification except for students with an IEP and for transfer students who have completed two years of high school
4 Mathematics Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 credits aligned with the required state content expectations (i.e., Geometry, Algebra I & II) • 1 math or math-related credit (not required to be aligned with state content expectations) • 1 math or math-related course required in the final year which could include any of the 4 credits described above or may be an additional district credit • Note: Students may earn 2 math credits for Algebra II when the credit is earned over 2 years, 1.5 credits over 1.5 years, without requesting a personal curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1 credit of Algebra II may be modified to ½ credit Algebra II, statistics, or functions and data analysis ✓ Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
3 Science Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 credit Biology • 1 credit Chemistry or Physics • 1 additional Science credit • All credits aligned to state content expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No modification except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school
3 Social Studies Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .5 Civics • .5 Economics • US History and Geography • World History and Geography • All credits aligned to state content expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No modification of Civics ✓ Minimum of 2 social studies credits prior to modification ✓ 1 social studies credit (other than Civics) can be exchanged for an additional English language arts, math, science, or world languages credit ✓ Modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school
1 Physical Education and Health Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit aligned to state guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Credit can be exchanged for an additional English language arts, math, science, or world languages credit ✓ Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
1 Visual, Performing, Applied Arts Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit aligned to state guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Credit can be exchanged for an additional English language arts, math, science, or world languages credit ✓ Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
2 World Language Credits (Begins with Class of 2016) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credits earned in grades 9-12 or an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 • Credit aligned to state guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No modification except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
Online Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online course, learning experience or experience is incorporated into one or more required credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No modification except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school

Source: Michigan Department of Education

What you need to know about the

Mathematics

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
4 credits	<p>3 credits aligned with the required state content expectations, i.e. Geometry, Algebra I & II</p> <p>1 credit math or math-related, not required to be aligned</p> <p>Math or math-related course required in the final year which could include any of the 4 credits described above or may be an additional district credit</p> <p>Note: Students may earn 2 math credits for Algebra II when the credit is earned over 2 years without requesting a personal curriculum. Students may also earn 1.5 credits over 1.5 years without requesting a personal curriculum.</p>
<p>Personal Curriculum Modification - if applicable</p> <p>All pupils must complete a minimum of 3.5 credits (including 1 credit in final year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May reduce 1.0 credit Algebra II to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 0.5 credit Algebra II or – 0.5 credit Statistics or * – 0.5 credit Functions and Data Analysis * <p>Additional modifications allowed for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">*As enacted, Public Act 80 is effective July 1, 2011</p>	

- A mathematics course must be taken in the final year of high school enrollment. Taking four credits of mathematics prior to the senior year, including eighth grade does not satisfy the requirement of having to take a mathematics course in the senior year.
- If a student takes a mathematics class through **dual enrollment** at a college in the final year of high school enrollment, it will satisfy the requirement for having a mathematics class in the senior year
- The fourth credit in Mathematics may be earned in a math-related class as determined by the local district. Examples might include: Business Mathematics, Accounting, Engineering, Drafting, Medical Careers, Building Trades, etc.

What you need to know about the

English Language Arts

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
4 credits	ELA in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades All credits aligned with state content expectations
Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable No modification except for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and for transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.	

- An English Language Arts (ELA) class can include writing, speaking, representing, viewing, literature, and culture and language.

What you need to know about the

Science

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
3 credits	One (1) credit – Biology One (1) credit – Chemistry or Physics One (1) additional Science credit All credits aligned to state content expectations
Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable No modification except for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.	

- The required science classes—Biology and Chemistry or Physics—may be offered by the district in any order and taken by the student in any sequence.
- The science courses are specified because they are most often the prerequisite courses for additional study in science, mathematics, or engineering.
- Colleges strongly encourage four (4) credits.

What you need to know about the

Social Studies

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
3 credits	One (1) credit – U.S. History and Geography One (1) credit – World History and Geography .5 credit – Economics .5 credit – Civics All credits aligned to state content expectations
<p>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No modification of Civics• Minimum of 2 social studies credits prior to modification• Modified by exchanging 1 Social Studies credit (other than Civics) for an additional English Language Arts, Math, Science, or World Language credit(s)• Modifications allowed for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.	

What you need to know about the

Health and Physical Education

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
1 credits	Credit aligned to state guidelines
Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modification by exchanging this credit for an additional English Language Arts, Math, Science, or World Languages credit(s)• Modifications allowed for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.	

- The state mandate allows a modification for the Health and Physical Education requirements; however, local boards of education may still require students to take additional classes in Health and Physical Education.

What you need to know about the

Visual, Performing, or Applied Arts

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
1 credit	Credit aligned to state guidelines
<p>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modified by exchanging this credit for an additional English Language Arts, Math, Science, or World Languages credit(s)• Modifications allowed for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.	

- The Michigan Department of Education will determine credit guidelines for courses in the visual, performing and applied arts.

What you need to know about the

World Languages

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
2 credits	Begins with Class of 2016 Credits earned in grades 9-12 OR an equivalent learning experiences grades K-12 Credit aligned to state guidelines
Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable <ul style="list-style-type: none">No modification except for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.	

- This requirement does not go into effect until the Class of 2016—students entering 3rd grade in the 2006-2007 school year.
- American Sign Language will satisfy this requirement.
- The Michigan Department of Education will determine the amount of language instruction needed for a credit if taken in grades three through eight.

What you need to know about the

Online Experience

requirements



Requirement	Specifics
Online Learning Experience	Online course, learning experience OR experience is incorporated into one or more required credits
<p>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</p> <p>No modification except for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out-of-state or at a non-public school.</p>	

- Students must take an online course or learning experience or have the online experience incorporated into each of the required credits of the Michigan Merit Curriculum.
- Every student will have meaningful technology-enabled learning opportunities based on research and best practice that include virtual learning experiences.
- As technology quickly advances, there will be expanded opportunities for districts to meet this online learning requirement.

What you need to know about

**Career and
Technical Education
opportunities**



- Districts will continue to offer Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. However, some courses may be taught in a manner that will allow credit to be granted for both CTE and the specified content area.
- Eligible students, as determined by local districts, may be able to participate in a co-op, internship, or externship experience.
- Certain requirements, such as some English, mathematics or science courses, may be satisfied in a CTE environment.
- CTE classes are electives. They are generally taken in a specific sequence and should be considered early in a student's educational career. Since the new graduation requirements leave little room for electives, careful planning will be necessary to schedule CTE courses.
- Graduation requirements taken in the eighth grade, such as Algebra I or Spanish I (World Languages), will allow more opportunity for CTE classes/electives during the high school experience.

What you need to know about

Educational Development Plans

- **Educational Development Plans (EDP)** are now required to be completed by all students before they enter high school which would include discussions about **Career Pathways**.
- It is in the best interest of a student to use an EDP to focus and plan in order to successfully complete the graduation requirements, and prepare for the transition to the world of work. Parental guidance is critical, check with your school to determine the procedure for reviewing your child's EDP.

What you need to know about

How credit is granted

- A student is considered to have completed a credit if the student successfully completes the subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the Michigan Department of Education. Credit can be granted in a variety of ways (e.g., end-of-course exams; dual enrollment; **testing out**; accelerated, honors and/or **advanced placement (AP)** courses; summer school make-up classes).
- A student will be given graduation credit for a requirement that is successfully completed prior to high school, as long as it is of the same level of content and rigor associated with the corresponding high school required course. Taking qualifying classes before high school will make room in the student's schedule to take more electives.
- If a student fails a required course for graduation, no credit is granted and the class must be made up. Since this is little room in a student's schedule each year for make-up classes, the failed credit can be recovered in various ways, such as summer school or online.

Key terms

to help you understand the new high school graduation requirements

Advanced Placement (AP) Advanced placement classes are accelerated classes that, when successfully completed in high school, help determine placement in college. Although a student would not get college credit for the class, by passing the class the student would not have to take that class in college, but could move ahead to the next required class.

NOTE: Successful completion of certain AP classes counts toward meeting the high school graduation requirements.

Career Pathways Broad groupings of career that share similar characteristics and whose employment requirements call for many common interests, strengths and competencies. Students opting for Career and Technical Education elective courses will most likely choose courses that fit the career pathway they have chosen as a general area of interest they wish to pursue.

NOTE: Some of these courses, if taught by a teacher meeting the highly qualified standards set by the federal *No Child Left Behind* initiative, can be applied toward the high school graduation requirements.

CTE Career Technical Education.

Dual Enrollment When a high school student successfully completes a course as part of dual enrollment through a college or university, the student will get credit for that class at either the high school or higher education level or, in some cases, both.

Educational Development Plan (EDP) An educational development plan documents an ongoing process in which a learner identifies both career goals and a plan of action to achieve them. EDPs are developed for every student in middle/junior high school and periodically revised throughout their secondary educational experience to reflect the student's career interests and options.

ELA English Language Arts

Equivalent Learning Experience Equivalent Learning Experience guidelines will be developed by the Michigan Department of Education.

Highly Qualified Teacher To be deemed highly qualified, teachers must have: 1) Bachelor degree, 2) Full state certification of licensure, and 3) Proof that they know each subject that they teach.

Key terms

Continued

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) A document created by an IEP team for special education eligible students identifying what programs and services they need to progress in the curriculum. The IEP document is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Michigan Merit Curriculum The official title for the new high school graduation requirements is the Michigan Merit Curriculum. To get a high school diploma from a Michigan high school, students must successfully complete all the elements in the Michigan Merit Curriculum. The curriculum is shown in full in pages 2-3.

Michigan Merit Exam The new Michigan Merit Exam tests English, Mathematics, Science, U.S. History, Government, World History and Geography in the 11th grade, including the ACT Test that is used by colleges for admission purposes. The new required curriculum is designed so that students will have taken the appropriate courses in preparation for this test.

Personal Curriculum The parent/guardian, student or school personnel may request a personal curriculum for the student that modifies certain of the Michigan Merit Curriculum standard requirements. If all of the requirements for a personal curriculum are met, then the board of a school district may award a high school diploma to a student who successfully completes his or her personal curriculum.

The personal curriculum will be considered only after all other options have been attempted and must meet stringent requirements for determining educational goals and evaluating student progress.

Student Area Content Expectations Content expectations were developed to provide a descriptions of what students should know and be able to do by the end of high school for postsecondary success – college, careers, and community. The expectations provide a foundation for curriculum and assessment development that represents rigorous and relevant learning for all high school students.

Testing Out High school students may “test out” or be given credit for a high school course that they are not enrolled in by exhibiting a certain level of mastery in the course. The student must receive a grade of not less than a C+ on a final exam or other means of basic assessment in order to receive credit. Testing out guidelines to meet the new graduation requirements will be developed by the Michigan Department of Education.

World Languages Any language other than English, including American Sign Language.

For the most current information go to www.baisd.net.

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