

BOARD POLICY
Graduation Requirements 2008-2009+

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Revised: 3-14-08

This policy specifies graduation requirements for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time during the 2008-2009 school year and subsequent years.

The Pickens County Board of Education (“the Board”) shall provide secondary school curriculum and instructional and support services that reflect the high school graduation and state assessment requirements and assist all students in developing their unique potential to function in society.

To be eligible for graduation with a secondary school credential as defined in the State Board of Education (SBOE) Rule 160-4-2-.48, High School Graduation Requirements for Students Enrolling in the Ninth Grade for the First Time in the 2008-09 School Year and Subsequent Years, students must successfully complete selected courses specified in the SBOE rule and satisfy additional requirements specified in this policy.

Students who enroll from another state must meet the graduation requirements for the graduating class they enter and the state assessment requirements as referenced in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07, Testing Programs - Student Assessment.

Students who enroll in the ninth grade for the first time during the 2008-2009 school year and then withdraw, must meet the graduation requirements specified in this policy and the assessment requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07, Testing Programs - Student Assessment.

The Board shall make available to all students the required areas of study.

A course shall count only once for satisfying any unit of credit requirement for graduation. See the following chart:

AREAS OF STUDY	Units Required
(I) English/Language Arts*	4
(II) Mathematics*	4
(III) Science*	4
<i>The 4th Science unit may be used to meet both the science and elective requirement.</i>	
(IV) Social Studies*	3
(V) CTAE and/or Modern Language/Latin and/or Fine Arts	3
(VI) Health and Physical Education**	1
(VII) Electives	4
STATE REQUIRED UNITS (MINIMUM)	23
(VIII) Additional locally required or elective units	5
TOTAL UNITS	28

*Required Courses and/or Core Courses

COURSE CREDIT

1. Unit credit shall be awarded only for courses that include concepts and skills based on the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for grades 9-12 or those approved by the SBOE. Unit credit may be awarded for courses offered in the middle grades that meet 9-12 GPS requirements. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall specify whether core courses taken as part of an IEP shall receive core unit credit.
2. No course credit may be awarded for courses in which instruction is based on the GPS curriculum for grades K-8.
3. Completion of diploma requirements does not necessarily qualify students for the HOPE Scholarship Program.

STATE REQUIRED PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT

A unit of credit for graduation shall be awarded to students only for successful completion of state-approved courses of study based on a minimum of 150 clock-hours of instruction provided during the regular school year, 135 clock-hours of instruction in an approved block schedule during the regular school year, or a minimum of 120 clock-hours of instruction in summer school.

STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

Students with significant cognitive disabilities may graduate and receive a regular high school diploma when the student's IEP team determines that the student has:

- (a) Completed an integrated curriculum based on the GPS that includes instruction in Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies as well as career preparation, self determination, independent living and personal care to equal a minimum of 23 units of instruction, and
- (b) Participated in the GAA during middle school and high school and earned a proficient score on the high school GAA test, and
- (c) Reached the 22nd birthday OR has transitioned to an employment/education/training setting in which the supports needed are provided by an entity other than the local school system

GRADUATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The Board shall provide instructional, support and delivery services that include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. A continuous guidance component beginning with the eighth grade. The purposes of the guidance component are to familiarize students with graduation requirements, to help them identify the likely impact of individual career objectives on the program of work studies they plan to follow and to provide annual advisement sessions to report progress and offer alternatives in meeting graduation requirements and career objectives.
2. Record keeping and reporting services that document student progress toward graduation and include information for the school, parents and students.
3. Diagnostic and continuous evaluation services that measure individual student progress in meeting competency expectations for graduation.

4. Instructional programs, curriculum and course guides and remedial opportunities to assist each student in meeting graduation requirements.
5. Appropriate curriculum and assessment procedures for students who have been identified as having disabilities that prevent them from meeting the prescribed competency performance requirements.