

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 18

File: IKF

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.

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. An overview of graduation requirements will be disseminated to all incoming ninth grade students at the time of course selection. This policy will also be referenced in every edition of the high school student handbook.

The Board has approved this schedule of minimum requirements for graduation, which includes minimum requirements specified by the State. 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 practical of any additional State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma.

Academic Requirements for Students' Graduation from Messalonskee High School

To ensure that all Messalonskee graduates leave our District prepared with a quality education based on a high level of knowledge and skills, they must:

- satisfy specific core curriculum requirements; and
- display the ability to synthesize and apply their learning by achieving at the proficiency level on the curriculum research project.

For the Class of 2011, all students must satisfactorily complete the core course requirements: English (4 credits); Mathematics (3 credits - students who fail to demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills of Algebra I will be required to take additional coursework); Science (3 credits); Social Studies (4 credits –inclusive of American History/Government); Fine Arts (1 credit, which may include Art, Band, Second-level Tech Trades, Chorus, Social Issues, or Drama), Health (.5 credits), Physical Education (1.5 credits), and JMG Career Prep (.5 credits).

Starting with the Class of 2012, all students must satisfactorily complete the core course requirements: English (4 credits); Mathematics (3 credits - students who fail to demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills of Algebra I will be required to take additional coursework); Science (3 credits); Social Studies (3 credits – World History, U.S. History, and Civics); Fine Arts (1 credit, which may include Art, Band, Second-level Tech Trades, Chorus, Social Issues, or Drama), Health (.5 credits), Physical Education (1.5 credits), and JMG Career Prep (.5 credits).

The State also requires that students demonstrate computer skills according to the School Unit's standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.

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Each student must satisfactorily complete the equivalent of twenty-three (23) credits, including the core course requirements listed above. The remaining credits may be selected by the student based upon the student's interests, abilities, and the requirements of the field that the student plans to enter upon graduation.

Comprehensive course examinations will assess student knowledge and skills in all courses.

As part of the curriculum research project, students will demonstrate their knowledge and skills in conducting in-depth research and in the presentation of material through the application of technology.

Multiple Pathways for Learning

Most students will satisfy graduation requirements during a four-year experience; however, students may fulfill the requirements for a diploma in a time period which is accelerated or lengthened, based on their individual needs. These students are expected to develop a proposed plan with guidance from counselors, teachers and/or administrators. This proposed plan would show satisfactory performance on the comprehensive examinations, the curriculum research project, and completion of the course requirements. The plan will be presented to a team comprised of the building principal and guidance director who are collectively empowered to rule on all individual action plans for accelerated students.

A student who wishes to meet a credit requirement through an alternative method must have prior written approval as specified in this section. The student may participate in the next regular graduation ceremony following successful completion of graduation requirements.

A student may earn up to two credits through an Adult Education Program. The student must have prior written approval from the Guidance Director and Principal.

A student may obtain credit recovery through a standards-based summer school program or through an adult education course. These recovery credits will not take the place of earned credits through Adult Education. The student must obtain prior written approval from the Guidance Director and Principal.

A student may earn credit through distance learning/virtual courses provided the course is approved in advance by the Guidance Director and Principal and progress is monitored by a member of the professional staff. Students may not replace a course offered at MHS, with a virtual high school course, unless they cannot fit the MHS course into their schedule/educational plan.

A student may earn credits through independent study approved by the Guidance Director, and Principal and monitored by the teacher(s) of the subject(s) to which the independent study is related.

Sophomore, junior, and senior alternative education students may receive academic credit for on-the-job work experience at the rate of 1/2 credit for 100 hours of work, to a maximum of two credits for 400 hours. The work program will be graded pass/fail.

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Transfer Students

The building principal and guidance director shall review and determine the awarding of transfer courses from other schools. Students who transfer to Messalonskee High School must attain satisfactory performance on the curriculum research project and complete coursework comparable to twenty-three (23) credits.

Additional Considerations Applicable to the Awarding of a Diploma from Messalonskee High School

A veteran of World War II or the Korean Conflict who left secondary school to serve in the armed forces and who received an honorable discharge, may be granted a diploma at the discretion of the local school board, subject to requirements in statute.

A student who leaves Messalonskee 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.

A student who has met the State's and the Board's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. § 4722
Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options
IKFA - Early Graduation
IHBGA – Home Schooling - Participation in School Programs
AFABB – Admission of Foreign Students

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