

Note: This version of Board Policy 102-15, High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement, shall take effect School Year 2011-2012, and shall apply to students beginning with the incoming eighth grade class.

POLICY 102-15

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COMMENCEMENT

A. Requirements for High School Graduation. The purpose of high school graduation requirements is to establish rigorous standards of learning that will enable all public school students to meet the vision of a Hawaii public school graduate.

Vision of a Hawaii Public School Graduate

The Hawaii State Department of Education, together with families and communities, envisions every graduate as a lifelong learner who is globally competitive and locally committed. Graduates will:

- Apply academic knowledge and an innovative mindset to think critically, communicate effectively, and create impactful contributions in the pursuit of excellence.
- Be resilient and adaptable to an ever-changing world. Graduates will take initiative in charting their next steps to advance their life journey - such as in postsecondary education, career, enterprise, service or exploration.
- Cultivate well-being and compassion, care for self and others, and build deep roots in Hawaii to fulfill their kuleana and strengthen their community.

Students who demonstrate proficiency in the State Standards and General Learner Outcomes in the required courses or proficiency based equivalents shall receive a Hawaii High School Diploma. Proficiency shall be determined in accordance with established Department of Education procedures.

The minimum course and credit requirements to receive a high school graduation diploma are:

Course Requirements	Hawaii High School Diploma
English	4.0 credits including English Language Arts 1 (1 credit), English Language Arts 2 (1 credit), and Expository Writing (0.5 credit) and 1.5 credits of common core aligned language arts electives or proficiency based equivalents
Social Studies	4.0 credits including U.S. History and Government (1 credit), World History and Culture (1 credit), Modern History of Hawaii (0.5 credit) and Participation in a Democracy (0.5 credit) and 1 credit of standards based social studies elective or proficiency based equivalent
Mathematics**	3.0 credits including Algebra 1 (1 credit), Geometry (1 credit) and 1 credit of common core aligned math elective or proficiency based equivalent

Science	3.0 credits including Biology and 2 credits of standards based science electives or proficiency based equivalents
World Language	2.0 credits in one of the specified programs of study or proficiency based equivalents
Fine Arts	
Career and Technical Education	
Physical Education	1.0 credit or proficiency based equivalent
Health	0.5 credit or proficiency based equivalent
Personal/ Transition Plan	0.5 credit
Electives	6.0 credits
Total	24.0 credits

A Hawaii High School Diploma shall be issued to students who meet the course and credit requirements.

High school diplomas may be granted to 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds who have qualified for graduation through adult schools.

*DOE will establish a process for developing and approving all proficiency-based equivalents similar to the process followed for all other new Authorized Courses and Code Numbers.

** A series of courses that satisfy the minimum learning expectations for all students as delineated in the College and Career Readiness Standards that are encompassed by the Common Core State Standards (“CCSS”) for Mathematics.

The graduation requirement for a high school diploma for students with disabilities shall be the same as students without disabilities.

B. Commencement Exercises. Commencement exercises may be scheduled any time after the last day of school for seniors. The last day of school for seniors shall be set by the Department of Education. Students shall be permitted to participate in commencement exercises if they: (1) meet the requirements for a diploma or a certificate; (2) have fulfilled their financial obligations; and (3) meet other conditions, established by the Department of Education, which meet the standards of clarity, reasonableness, and justifiability.

[Approved: 05/19/2015 (as Board Policy 104.1); amended: 06/21/2016 (renumbered as Board Policy 102-15); amended: 02/12/2026]

Former policy 4540 history: former code no. 5127; approved: 05/1947; amended: 01/1959, 06/1959, 06/1960, 02/1964, 08/1978, 03/1988, 03/1997, 06/2004, 03/06/2008