

School Board Meeting:

May 23, 2022

Subject:

BHS Graduation Requirements

Presenters:

**Pam Miller, Director
Teaching and Learning
Mark Mischke, BHS Principal**

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Recommend approval.

DESCRIPTION:

As Buffalo High School transitions from the 4-period block schedule to the 5-period trimester schedule, revised graduation requirements are needed, as well as a credit transition plan for current and incoming students through the Class of 2027 when full implementation of the trimester schedule is reached for all students.

Background information

Currently, the Buffalo High School graduation requirement is a total of 30 credits out of a possible 32 credits. Of the 30 credits needed, 16.5 credits are required courses. 13.5 credits are required elective credits, with 15.5 elective credits possible.

The current required courses are listed below:

- English: English 9, English 10, and 2 credits student choice
- Math: Intermediate Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II
- Science: Science 9, Biology, Chemistry or Physics
- Social Studies: American Government, American History, World Studies, Economics
- The Arts: One course in any Art, Music or Dance class (*and other select courses*)
- Physical Education: Phy Ed 9, Phy Ed 10
- Health: Health 10

Recommended BHS Graduation Credit Requirements & Course Requirements

The recommended adjustments for course requirements, as well as the credit requirement transition plan are outlined in the following charts and descriptions.

Credit Requirement Comparison: Block & Trimester

Summary of Credit Change	BHS Block	BHS Trimester
Schedule	4x4 block	5x3 trimester
English Language Arts	4	4
Math	3	3
Science	3	3
Social Studies	3.5	4
Arts	1	1
Physical Education	1.5	1
Health	0.5	0.5
Personal Finance		0.5
Required Credits	16.5	17
Required Elective Credits	13.5	10.5
Total Credits Required	30	27.5
Total Credits Possible	32	30
Total Core Cr.	13.5	14

Class (current grade)	2023 (11)	2024 (10)	2025 (9)	2026 (8)	2027 (7)
English	4	4	4	4	4
Math	3	3	3	3	3
Science	3	3	3	3	3
Social Studies	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	4
Personal Finance	0	0	0	0	0.5
Fine Arts	1	1	1	1	1
PE	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1
Health	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total Required	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	17
Electives Required	13.5	13	12.5	11.5	10.5
Electives Possible	15.5	15	14.5	14	13
Required Credits / Possible Credits	30/32	29.5/31.5	29/31	28/30.5	27.5/30

Course Requirements

Current Course Requirements
2022-2023

Recommended Course Requirements
2026-2027

PROGRAM	CREDITS	BHS REQUIREMENTS
English	1 credit	English 9
	1 credit	English 10
	2 credits	Student Choice
Math	3 credits	Intermediate Algebra
		Geometry
		Algebra 2
Science	1 credit	Science 9
	1 credit	Biology
	1 credit	Chemistry or Physics
Social Studies	1 credit	American Government 9
	1 credit	American History 10
	1 credit	World Studies 11
	½ credit	Economics
The Arts	1 credit	ALL Art, Music and Dance Courses and select courses
Physical Education	1 credit	Physical Education 9
	½ credit	Physical Education 10 Elective Course
Health	½ credit	Health 10
Remaining Course Credits	13½ credits	Chosen Courses
Total	30 credits	

PROGRAM	CREDITS	BHS REQUIREMENTS
English	1 credit	English 9
	1 credit	English 10
	1 credit	English Literature & Composition or CIS Intro to Literature
	1 credit	Student Choice
Math	3 credits	Intermediate Algebra
		Geometry
		Algebra 2
Science	1 credit	Science 9
	1 credit	Biology
	1 credit	Chemistry or Physics
Social Studies	1 credit	Government & Citizenship 9
	1 credit	U.S. History 10
	1 credit	World History 11
	½ credit	Economics
	½ credit	Human Geography
Business	½ credit	Personal Finance
The Arts	1 credit	ALL Art and Music Courses and select courses
Physical Education	½ credit	Physical Education 9
	½ credit	Physical Education 10
Health	½ credit	Health 10
Remaining Course Credits	10½ credits	Chosen Courses
Total	27½ credits	

Proposed Required Course Adjustment Recommendations

English

The recommendation is to add a course requirement for students of either *English Literature & Composition* or *CIS Literature* for the Class of 2026 and beyond. This course may be taken in either the junior or senior year. The current [Minnesota English Language Arts Standards](#) require all students in Grades 11-12 to receive instruction and to be assessed in the three strands of (1) Reading, (2) Writing, and (3) Listening, Speaking, Viewing and Exchanging Ideas. Both course options will include all required standards. This requirement will ensure that all students receive instruction on all standards. If the district continued with student choice for the 2 credits of English beyond English 9 and English 10, there is not a guarantee all students would receive instruction on all required standards. This requirement will be in place for the Class of 2026 and beyond, as students in the Class of 2023, Class of 2024, and Class of 2025 are already taking their choice English elective

courses to meet the current graduation requirement of 2 credits of English beyond English 9 and English 10. One credit of student choice remains as a requirement. This will be met through a variety of English elective options.

Social Studies

The recommendation is to add a course requirement of *Human Geography* for the Class of 2027 and beyond. This course will be taken during a student's senior year. The proposed [Minnesota Social Studies Standards](#) require all students in Grades 9-12 to receive instruction and to be assessed in the five strands of (1) Citizenship and Government, (2) Economics, (3) Geography, (4) History, and (5) Ethnic Studies. Previously, the Social Studies Department has integrated the Geography standards into other required courses. However, the depth and the number of the standards are such that this is not a viable option to continue into the future to ensure instruction on all standards. The *Human Geography* course will be added as an elective option beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. It will then become a required course for the Class of 2027.

Business

The recommendation is to add a course requirement of *Personal Finance* for the Class of 2027 and beyond. This course may be taken in either the junior or senior year. Over the course of time, district staff, parents and community members have all expressed support for this course requirement. The perception of the student need in this area has grown in recent years. The current *Personal Finance* elective course will be modified for the trimester schedule, and will include the 5 personal finance standards currently taught in the required Economics course. The addition of this course requirement aligns with the district's mission, as well as the district's goal for each student to be college, career and workforce ready.

Physical Education

The recommendation is to reduce the course requirement in Physical Education from 1.5 credits to 1 credit for the Class of 2027 and beyond. The state of Minnesota has no credit requirement in Physical Education as a graduation requirement. High school students must receive instruction in Physical Education at least once. The amount of credit and graduation requirement is determined at the local level. The recommended total of 1 credit in Physical Education for the Class of 2027 and beyond will be through one trimester in Grade 9 and 1 trimester in Grade 10. The reduction in credit requirement for Physical Education satisfies the state requirement and provides additional room in the schedule for student choice as the course requirements are increased in other areas.

These proposed required course adjustments meet statutory requirements and align with the district's mission and goals. The proposed adjustments also still allow for as much student choice in their course selection as is possible.

Next Steps

Once approved, we will continue our steps in the plan towards 2023-2024 implementation of the trimester schedule.