

*Existing policy with suggested revision based on P.A. 17-29.*

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements**

#### **Introduction**

In order to graduate from New Fairfield High School a student must earn a minimum of 26 credits in grades 9 through 12 (unless exceptions have been made by a duly convened planning and placement team, or otherwise in accordance with C.G.S. section 10-221a) and must have met the credit distribution requirements. Students participating in the Senior Enrichment Experience (SEE) program will earn graduation credits for all courses in which they have earned a passing grade at the start of their involvement in the program. Students who earn a passing grade for college coursework at accredited universities may submit official transcripts to the high school principal for consideration for credit approval. Students must also meet four performance standards: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Technology. These standards define the areas of literacy that the New Fairfield Public School District feels all students should know and be able to do.

#### **Credit Distribution Requirement:**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • English                          | 4 credits  |
| • Mathematics                      | 3 credits  |
| • Social Studies                   | 3 credits (including at least ½ credit in Civics or American Government) |
| • Science                          | 3 credits  |
| • Health/Physical Education        | 2 credits  |
| • World Language                   | 1 credit   |
| • School and Community             | .5 credit  |
| • Personal Finance                 | .5 credit  |
| • Fine/Applied Arts                | 2 credits*   |
| • Capstone (including SEE Project) | 1 credit   |
| • Electives                        | 6 credits  |

\* One credit may be earned if a student takes two world languages for four (4) years.

Per statute (C.G.S. 221a(f)) the determination of eligible credits is at the discretion of the Board of Education, provided the primary focus of the curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter of the specified course requirements. The Board may permit a student to graduate during a period of expulsion if the Board determines the student has satisfactorily completed the necessary credits. The graduation requirements shall apply to any student requiring special education except when the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) determines the requirement not to be appropriate.

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements** (continued)

A credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or State Board of Education or regionally accredited, (2) through online coursework or (3) through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.

### **Academic Advancement Program**

The Board of Education permits students in grades eleven and twelve to substitute (1) achievement of a passing score on an existing nationally recognized examination, approved by the State Department of Education, or series of examinations approved by the State Board of Education, (2) a cumulative grade point average determined by the State Board of Education and (3) at least three letters of recommendation from school professionals (defined in 10-66dd), for the required high school graduation requirement. The State Board of Education will issue an Academic Advancement Program Certificate to any student successfully completing such program. The Academic Advancement Program Certificate shall be considered in the same manner as a high school diploma for purposes of determining eligibility of a student for enrollment at a Connecticut public institution of higher education.

All students must carry seven classes each semester. Seniors may carry six classes and petition for early release if they have 20 credits, are in good academic standing and have the approval of their parents.

### **Credit Distribution Requirement for Diploma of Distinction:**

- English 4 credits
- Math 4 credits
- Science 4 credits
- Social Studies 3 credits
- World Languages 3 credits (in the same language at high school)
- Health & P.E. 2 credits
- Fine/Applied Arts 2 credits\*
- School & Community Service .5 credit
- Personal Finance .5 credit
- Capstone (including SEE Project) 1 credit
- Additional 3, 4, or 5 weight elective .5 credit (during the senior year)
- Must earn a total of 26 credits

\* One credit may be earned if a student takes two world languages for four (4) years.

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements (continued)**

To receive a Diploma with Highest Distinction a student in addition to all of the above, must complete the following:

#### **For the Class of 2017:**

Earn a score in the ADVANCED category of the Science CAPT plus earn a score in the top two bands of the English and Math State Mastery Assessments

**or**

Earn a score in the ADVANCED category of the Science CAPT; and earn a 1200 on the SAT (excluding writing) or earn a 26 Composite Score on the ACT.

#### **For the Class of 2018 and Class of 2019:**

Earn a score in the ADVANCED category of the Science CAPT; and earn a 1280 on the SAT or a 26 Composite Score on the ACT.

#### **For the Class of 2020 and beyond:**

Earn a score in the top band of the Science State Mastery Assessment; and earn a 1280 on the SAT or a 26 Composite Score on the ACT.

### **District's Performance Standards**

#### **English Language Arts (ELA)**

##### **Definition:**

Students should be able to communicate effectively in a variety of ways, both verbally and in writing. As part of this goal, students must demonstrate proficiency at reading a variety of materials and responding appropriately. This may include making connections between a variety of sources, using problem-solving strategies, and interpreting and evaluating information.

**Objectives:** The student will be able to:

- read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.
- produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purpose and audiences.
- employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.
- engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements** (continued)

#### **Assessment:**

Students will take the Connecticut SAT School Day in Evidence-based Reading and Writing. If a student does not take the SAT, s/he must create a piece of writing that follows the Writing Process Model and produce a publishable, superior product. This writing sample will then be evaluated using a locally created assessment rubric.

#### **Implementation:**

Students will have numerous opportunities in all English/Language Arts and Social Studies classes to produce writing samples using the Writing Process Model.

#### **Assistance:**

For assistance, students may go to the Learning Center, National Honor Society Tutorial Service, and/or receive one-on-one consultation with a classroom teacher.

## **Mathematics**

### **Definition:**

Students should become mathematical problem solvers, learn to communicate mathematically, learn to reason mathematically, learn to value mathematics, and become confident in their ability to do mathematics. While it is still important for students to be able to calculate and manipulate mathematical symbols, the focus is on technology and application of knowledge and skills.

**Objectives:** The student will be able to:

- explain and apply mathematical concepts and interpret and carry out mathematical procedures with precision and fluency.
- solve a range of well-posed problems in pure and applied mathematics, making productive use of knowledge and problem-solving strategies.
- clearly and precisely construct viable arguments to support their own reasoning and to critique the reasoning of others.
- analyze complex, real-world scenarios and can construct and use mathematical models to interpret and solve problems.

#### **Assessment:**

Students will take the Connecticut SAT School Day. If a student does not take the SAT, s/he must meet one of the following criteria for the standard:

- Achieve a C+ or better in three math courses required for graduation, or
- Complete a performance based learning assessment demonstrating the above skills.

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements (continued)**

#### **Implementation:**

Students will have numerous opportunities in all mathematics classes to complete performance-based learning assessment activities.

#### **Assistance:**

For assistance, students may go to the Learning Center, National Honor Society Tutorial Service, and/or receive one-on-one consultation with a classroom teacher.

## **Science**

#### **Definition:**

To meet graduation requirements in science, the student will be able to master scientific methodology as a basis of inquiry for all problem solving and decision making challenges.

**Objectives:** The student will be able to:

- define a problem and identify dependent and independent variables.
- form a hypothesis after gathering information about the problem.
- design an experiment.
- collect data through quantitative and qualitative observation.
- use the data to support or disprove the hypothesis.
- use technology to present the data in accordance with meeting the district technology standard.

#### **Assessment:**

##### **For the classes of 2017, 2018 and 2019:**

Students will take the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) and receive a score in Science that indicates their competency. If a student does not meet proficiency level in 10<sup>th</sup> grade s/he must meet one of the following criteria for the standard:

- Achieve a C+ or better in three science courses required for graduation, or
- Conduct a field-based research project, or
- Complete a science research project and presentation.

##### **For the Class of 2020 and beyond:**

Students will take the Science State Mastery Assessment. If a student does not take the Science State Mastery Assessment, s/he must meet one of the following criteria for the standard:

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements**

#### **Assessment:**

#### **For the Class of 2020 and beyond:** (continued)

- Achieve a C+ or better in three science courses required for graduation, or
- Conduct a field-based research project, or
- Complete a science research project and presentation.

#### **Implementation:**

Students will have numerous opportunities in all science activities to complete projects using the scientific method.

#### **Assistance:**

It is strongly recommended that students who are working on a field-based research project or science research project take a fourth year of science in order to work with a science teacher for help with his/her project. Students producing a field-based research project or science research project will use the Learning Center for mentoring in the implementation of their project.

**Technology** (*To be removed beginning with the Class of 2018, as all students use technology in class regularly and have met the standard*)

#### **Definition:**

Students should be able to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate situations at home, school, or work and apply technology to complete tasks efficiently and effectively. Students should identify capabilities and limitations of technology resources and assess the potential of these systems and services to address personal, lifelong learning, and workplace needs. They also must use technology tools and resources for managing and communicating personal/professional information. Finally, students will select and apply technology for research, information analysis, problem solving, and decision-making in content learning.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to:

- operate a personal computer
- use word processing software to create, modify, store, retrieve and print documents
- use specialized software
- apply computers to a job task

#### **Assessment:**

- To meet the objectives, each student must demonstrate competency using three specialized software packages.

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements** (continued)

#### **Implementation:**

Students will have numerous opportunities in their courses to demonstrate the ability to use technology.

#### **Assistance:**

Depending on the technology application, students may receive assistance in any one of their courses. Students may also go to the Learning Center, National Honor Society Tutorial Service, and/or receive one-on-one consultation with a classroom teacher.

#### **Special Circumstances**

- Transfer students – Consideration will be given to a student who transfers into New Fairfield after the first three years of high school.
- Special Education students – The IEP will outline the expected performance standards for a student in special education.
- 504 students – Considerations will be given to modifications provided by the appropriate 504 plan.
- The Board of Education shall award a high school diploma to any World War II veteran or veteran of the Korean Hostilities or Vietnam Era veteran requesting such diploma who left high school for military service as defined in the statutes.
- The Board of Education shall award a high school diploma to any person who (1) withdrew from high school prior to graduation to work in a job that assisted the war effort during World War II, December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946, inclusive, (2) did not receive a diploma as a consequence of such work, and (3) has been a resident of the state for at least fifty (50) consecutive years.

#### **Notification:**

##### **Of teachers:**

In September of each school year, or as soon as the scores are available, the School Counseling Department will provide a list of juniors and seniors who have not met performance standards for graduation. This list will be sent to Department Heads of each specific subject area.

##### **Of students:**

At the end of the year, the School Counseling Department will notify all juniors who have not met a performance standard for graduation. At the beginning of each school year, the School Counseling Department will notify seniors as to their status relative to the performance standard requirements for graduation. They will include the options available for the student. Successful completion of a performance standard will be included on the final report period of the junior year or on the first report period it is met in the senior year.

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements (continued)**

#### **Of parent/guardian(s):**

At the beginning of each school year, the School Counseling Department will notify, in writing, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any senior who has not yet met one or more of the performance standards for graduation. Successful completion of a performance standard will be included on the final report period of the junior year or the first report period it is met in the senior year.

#### **Appeals**

- Students should submit their appeal to the Principal within 20 days of receiving their score. The appeal should include the rubric along with a statement explaining why the student feels the score is incorrect. An independent assessor will score the performance standard.
- The Chief Academic Officer or his/her designee will name the independent assessor.
- The outcome of this assessment will be sent to the Principal who will share this information with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s).

#### **Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy**

Commencing with the graduating class of 2018, and for each graduating class thereafter, the Board of Education, utilizing criteria established by the State Board of Education, may/shall affix the “Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy” to a diploma awarded to a student who has achieved a high level of proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages. “Foreign language” means a world language other than English and includes American Sign Language and any other language spoken by a federally recognized Native American tribe. The Board of Education shall include on such student’s transcript a designation that the student received the “Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy.”

~~Commencing with the graduating class of 2023 (beginning with the incoming class of 2019-2020) and for each graduating class thereafter, in order to graduate and be granted a diploma, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) credits, including not fewer than (1) nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education; (5) one credit in world languages and (6) a one-credit mastery-based diploma assessment.~~

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-5 State high school diploma; “honors diploma.” Payment of fees; exceptions. (as amended by PA 17-29)

10-5c Board examination series pilot program. Issuance of certificate (as amended by P.A. 13-247 and P.A. 14-230).

## **Instruction**

### **Graduation Requirements**

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes (continued)

10-14n Statewide mastery examination. Conditions for reexamination. Limitation on use of test results.

10-16(1) Graduation exercises. (As amended by P.A. 96-108, An Act Concerning Student Use of Telecommunication Devices and the Appeals Establishment of Graduation Dates).

10-221a High school graduation requirements as amended by P.A. 08-138, P.A. 11-135, An Act Concerning Implementation Dates for Secondary School Reform, P.A. 13-57, An Act Concerning Honorary Diplomas for Vietnam Veterans, P.A. 13-122, An Act Concerning Minor Revisions to the Education Statutes and P.A. 13-247, Budget Implementer Bill, P.A. 15-237, An Act Concerning High School Graduation and P.A. 16-4(SS), section 310, P.A. 17-42, An Act Concerning Revisions to the High School Graduation Requirements and P.A. 17-29, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Seal of Bilingualism.

P.A. 13-108, An Act Unleashing Innovation in Connecticut Schools.

P.A. 13-247, An Act Implementing Provisions of the State Budget.

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**NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
New Fairfield, Connecticut

## MISSION STATEMENT

New Fairfield High School strives to provide a safe educational environment in which students *respect* the right for all to become *engaged* learners and responsible citizens who *belong*, *excel* and *lead* within a diverse society and changing world.

## CORE VALUES & BELIEFS STATEMENT

New Fairfield High School is committed to all students achieving high academic standards and personal wellness, enabling continuous growth through authentic, flexible pathways. By prioritizing connectedness and compassion, we empower all members of our learning community to take ownership of our individual and collective development as we foster the *Attributes of the Graduate*.

## ATTRIBUTES of the GRADUATE

(21st Century Learning Expectations)

<u>Critical Thinker</u>	<u>Problem Solver</u>	<u>Effective Communicator</u>	<u>Productive Citizen</u>
<i>Improves the quality of understanding by skillfully analyzing, assessing, and constructing new knowledge within different contexts.</i>	<i>Engages in the process and act of finding the best solution(s) to a difficult or complex issue.</i>	<i>Uses a variety of methods to communicate persuasively and effectively, including written, spoken, visual, or audio discourse, appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</i>	<i>Actively participates, demonstrates, and contributes in the responsibilities related to classroom, community, state, national and global issues.</i>
A. Synthesize and make connections through analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of collected information, including prior knowledge from multiple disciplines.	A. Observe and evaluate situations in order to define problems and specify successful outcomes.	A. Organize and express thoughts and ideas in a concise and purposeful manner, supported by spoken and textual evidence and logic.	A. Demonstrate a commitment to personal and community health and wellness.
B. Construct, justify, and refute arguments using sound reasoning and evidence to draw conclusions.	B. Conduct background research to collect artifacts/information related to problem.	B. Use appropriate language and mode(s) of communication for the given audience, context and purpose.	B. Listen to, interact with and respect the varying perspectives of others.
C. Engage in the process of analyzing, reconsidering, and questioning understandings by considering different perspectives, biases, and opinions within a broad context of issues.	C. Generate possible solutions and use evidence to choose a solution(s).	C. Integrate and synthesize information gathered from multiple sources including active speaking and listening.	C. Recognize and demonstrate ethical values and behavior in both the academic environment and the greater communities.
	D. Develop and carry out a plan to implement the chosen solution(s).	D. Use the conventions of standard English language, including grammar, syntax, punctuation, and vocabulary.	D. Demonstrate digital responsibility appropriate to task.
	E. Evaluate the best solution and persevere in attempting to solve challenging problems.		E. Volunteer to enhance community life.

It is the goal of New Fairfield High School to develop multiple valid and reliable assessments along with the flexible pathways necessary for students to demonstrate the *Attributes of the Graduate*. At this time, attaining the *Attributes of the Graduate* is not a graduation requirement. However, it is the intention of the Board of Education to require attaining the *Attributes of the Graduate* prior to graduation in the future.