



## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Policy: 4IP-403 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND CREDITS

Index: Instructional Programs- *Graduation* | Monitoring: As Needed

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The Board of Directors of Spectrum Academy (Board) has adopted this policy to specify standards and credit requirements for graduation from Spectrum Academy (School) high schools and to provide for diplomas or certificates of completion consistent with state law and rules.
- 1.2. The School provides an environment where learning comes first. Students master essential learning skills, demonstrate civic responsibility, prepare for post-secondary education and careers, and engage in positive personal development. Educators collaborate with individual students and their parents to form a plan of action (SEP/Plan for College and Career Readiness) which ties these primary purposes to the needs and goals of the student through the instructional process. This SEP/Plan for College and Career Readiness process is essential as a planning process which guides students through their education and ensures that their education goals are achieved, culminating in graduation.

#### 2. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A school may award a High School Diploma, an Alternate Diploma, or a Certificate of Completion:

##### 2.1. High School Diploma

A high school Diploma may be awarded to a student who has:

- 2.1.1. enrolled in and attended the awarding school for at least the final semester of their senior year;
- 2.1.2. completed the academic requirements established by the Utah State Board of Education (State Board) in Utah Administrative Code R277-700; and
- 2.1.3. completed the additional academic credit requirements as determined by the Board and enumerated in the *Course Requirements and Criteria for Graduation*.

##### 3. Certificate of Completion

A Certificate of Completion may be awarded to a student who has completed their senior year, is exiting the school system, but has not met all the requirements for a high school diploma or an alternate diploma.

#### 4. ACADEMIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1. The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) has established minimum



academic credit requirements for high school completion in courses approved by the State Board as follows:

- 4.1.1. Language Arts (4.0 units of credit);
  - 4.1.2. Mathematics (3.0 units of credit);
  - 4.1.3. Science (3.0 units of credit);
  - 4.1.4. Social Studies (3.0 units of credit)  
and successful completion of a basic civics test or alternate assessment described in Utah Administrative Code R277-700-8;
  - 4.1.5. The Arts (1.5 units of credit);
  - 4.1.6. Health Education (0.5 units of credit);
  - 4.1.7. Physical Education (1.5 units of credit);
  - 4.1.8. Career and Technical Education (1.0 unit of credit);
  - 4.1.9. Digital Studies (0.5 units of credit);
  - 4.1.10. Library Media Skills (integrated into subject areas);
  - 4.1.11. General Financial Literacy (0.5 units of credit); and
  - 4.1.12. Electives (5.5 units of credit).
- 4.2. Courses fulfilling these requirements must be approved by the State Board as well as the Board. A detailed listing of the qualifying courses may be accessed from a student's guidance counselor.
- 4.3. Upon parental or student request, graduation requirements may be modified for an individual student to achieve an appropriate route to student success if the modification:
- 4.3.1. is consistent with the student's written IEP or Plan for College and Career Readiness that includes the parent's signature; and
  - 4.3.2. maintains the integrity and rigor expected for high school graduation.
- 4.4. In accordance with Utah Administrative Code R277-717 and School Course Grade Forgiveness Guidelines, a student may, to improve a course grade received by the student, repeat the course one or more times or enroll in and complete a comparable course.
- 4.5. For purposes of graduation, the School shall recognize high school credits earned prior to grade 9 through participation in the Statewide Online Education Program, or other School-sponsored personalized learning program approved by the executive director of academics or his/her designee, provided the student has declared an intention to graduate early, and the high school courses are not used to replace junior high school educational requirements.

## 5. CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Graduation requirements of the School include satisfactory citizenship and adherence to the rules and policies of the School. Failure to remediate unsatisfactory citizenship grades shall result in withholding of the graduation diploma/certificate of completion.

## 6. FAILING GRADE/CITIZENSHIP NOTIFICATION



Earnest and persistent effort will be made to provide notice to the parent or guardian of a student receiving a failing grade or pending loss of citizenship credit, allowing time to remediate the grade or citizenship problem.

## 7. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities shall meet general graduation requirements with appropriate accommodations and curricular modifications as determined by their Individual Education Plans (IEP's).

- 7.1. Graduation issues must be addressed by the IEP team on an individual basis. The IEP is the vehicle for making changes to graduation requirements to meet the unique educational needs for students with disabilities. As such, the IEP must document the nature and extent of modifications, substitutions, and/or exemptions made to accommodate a student with disabilities. The decision to terminate services, through graduation, for a student with disabilities under the age of twenty-two, is an IEP team decision.
- 7.2. Graduation options, for students with disabilities whose same age peers will graduate during a given academic year, include the following:
  - 7.2.1. If all USBE and School graduation requirements are completed or if the student graduation requirements as amended on the IEP are completed, the student will graduate and receive a regular High School Diploma;
  - 7.2.2. If graduation requirements as amended on the IEP are not completed and the student's IEP or transition plan documents the need for transition services offered by the School, the student shall be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies. However, a diploma shall not be issued until the student has successfully completed his/her program;
  - 7.2.3. If graduation requirements as amended on the IEP are not completed before the student reaches age twenty-two, the student may be issued a certificate indicating that a record of competencies can be made available to them or to others who may legitimately inquire;
  - 7.2.4. If graduation requirements as amended on the IEP are not completed due to factors that are **not** a direct manifestation of the student's disability, as determined by the IEP team, the student is not eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies or receive a regular high school diploma until the amended requirements are met; or
  - 7.2.5. If graduation requirements as amended on the IEP are not completed due to factors that are a direct manifestation of the student's disability, as determined by the IEP team, the student shall be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies but is not eligible to receive a regular high school diploma until the amended requirements are met.

## 8. TRANSFER STUDENTS



- 8.1. The School will approve credits and grades received from an accredited public or private school. Credit earned at a school accredited by the USBE or the Northwest Accreditation Commission is accepted at face value. Credit earned at non- accredited schools must be reviewed by the School's Credit Evaluation Committee.
- 8.2. Students enrolling at any time prior to the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) term of the senior year will be eligible for a diploma from the School. Those students enrolling during the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) term of their senior year shall have their graduation status coordinated by the School principals.

## 9. CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES

- 9.1. Schools shall work with enrolled military children to evaluate the students' coursework or to assist students in completing coursework to allow military children to graduate with the students' age-appropriate graduating class consistent with Utah Code Ann. § 53E-3-908.

School shall work with the sending school to ensure the student receives a diploma from the sending school, if the student meets the graduation requirements of the sending school. If the state in which the sending school is located is not a member of the Interstate Compact and is unwilling to facilitate the student's receipt of a diploma, the School shall use best efforts to facilitate the on-time graduation of the military child through appropriate waivers of graduation requirements.

## 10. DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY PROGRAM

- 10.1. The School shall provide a dropout prevention and recovery program for a designated student in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 as described in Utah Code Ann. §53G-9-802.
- 10.2. If a designated student chooses to enroll in a dropout prevention and recovery program, the School, in consultation with the designated student, shall develop a learning plan to identify:
  - 10.2.1. an attainment goal; and
  - 10.2.2. an annual goal to measure a year's worth of academic progress towards the student's attainment goal.
- 10.3. A designated student shall attend six hours of instruction within a given calendar week, as scheduled in the designated student's learning plan.



## 11. GRADUATION CEREMONY

Participation in the graduation ceremony is an opportunity and not a protected property right.

- 11.1. Participation may be denied as a disciplinary measure, or if a student refuses to comply with graduation ceremony standards established and developed at the individual school site.
- 11.2. Participation in the graduation ceremony is optional and is not required.
- 11.3. Caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner as designated by the school administration.
  - 11.3.1. A student who is an enrolled member of a tribe, or a student who is otherwise eligible to be enrolled under Utah Code Ann. §53G-4-412, may wear tribal regalia during a graduation ceremony.
  - 11.3.2. Wearing tribal regalia includes decorating graduation attire with tribal regalia such as beads, feathers, or other items of cultural significance.
- 11.4. Special needs students shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in ceremonies utilizing criteria based upon their unique circumstances as outlined in section 7 of this policy.
- 11.5. Students who complete the graduation requirements early under School *Policy 4IP-406 Early Graduation Options*:
  - 11.5.1. by the end of the regular academic year, may participate in that year's graduation ceremony; or
  - 11.5.2. any time after the end of the regular academic year, may participate in the next graduation ceremony.



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## DEFINITIONS

**“Accredited”** means the formal process for internal and external review and approval under the Standards for the Northwest Accreditation Commission, a division of Advance Education Inc., (AdvancED).

**“Attainment goal”** means earning a diploma, as described in this policy, or an employer-recognized, industry-based certificate that is likely to result in job placement and included in the State Board of Education’s approved career and technical education industry certification.

**“Cohort”** means a group of students, defined by the year in which the group enters grade 9.

**“Children of Military Families”** means a child enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 who is legally residing in a household of an active service member or whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty service member.

**“Designated student”** means a student who 1) has withdrawn from a secondary school prior to earning a diploma; 2) has dropped from average daily membership; and whose cohort has not yet graduated; or is at risk of meeting the criteria above as determined by the School because of risk factors that include: [a] low academic performance, as measured by grades, test scores, or course failure; [b] poor behavior, as measured by office disciplinary referrals, suspensions, or expulsions; and absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused absences, and including days tardy and truant.

**“Early Graduation”** means any secondary public school student, with the approval of the student, the student’s parent or guardian, and an authorized local school official, who has completed all required courses or demonstrated mastery of competencies, graduates prior to the conclusion of the twelfth grade.

**“Statewide Online Education Program”** is created to enable an eligible student to earn high school graduation credit through the completion of publicly funded online courses.

**“Transcript”** means an official document or record generated by one or several schools which includes, at a minimum; the courses in which a secondary student was enrolled, grades and units of credit earned, citizenship and attendance records. The transcript is usually one part of the student’s permanent or cumulative file which also may include birth certificate, immunization records and other information as determined by the school in possession of the records.

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## REFERENCES

[Utah Code Ann. Title 53E, Chapter 3, Part 9](#) – Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

[Utah Code Ann. §53E-4-205](#) – American civics education initiative.

[Utah Code Ann. §53E-4-302](#) – Statewide assessments -- Duties of State Board of Education.

[Utah Code Ann. §53E-4-305](#) – College readiness assessments.

[Utah Code Ann. Title 53F, Chapter 4, Part 5](#) – Statewide Online Education Program

[Utah Code Ann. §53G-7-](#) – Acceptance of credits and grades awarded by accredited

schools. [Utah Code Ann. §53G-4-412](#) - Tribal regalia at high school graduation ceremonies.

[Utah Code Ann. Title 53G, Chapter 9, Part 8](#) - Dropout Prevention and Recovery

[Utah Administrative Code R277-499](#) – Seal of Biliteracy.

[Utah Administrative Code R277-606](#) – Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program.

[Utah Administrative Code R277-700](#) – The Elementary and Secondary School General Core.

[Utah Administrative Code R277-705](#) – Secondary School Completion and Diplomas.

[Utah Administrative Code R277-717](#) – High School Course Grading Requirements.

[Utah Administrative Code R277-733-8](#) – Program, Curriculum, Outcomes and Student Mastery.

[Utah State Board of Education Special Education Rules – VII.C Graduation](#)

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## FORMS AND OTHER LINKS

Adopted: 5/20/20

Revised: 10/19/20 No substantive changes

