

Policy GRAD-006: Ninth Grade Students Accelerated Preparation for College Entry

Status: ADOPTED

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**NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Manual
DRAFT!!!!**

Item	Description
Policy Title	Ninth Grade Students Accelerated Preparation for College Entry Accelerated Pathway for Early Graduation
Policy Category	Graduation Requirements and Related Policies (GRAD)
Policy ID	GRAD-006
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All students will graduate from a rigorous, relevant academic program that equips them with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to succeed in their chosen post-secondary plan, enrollment, employment, or enlistment. ~~both post-secondary education and 21st Century careers and to be participating, engaged citizens.~~ Academic rigor and relevance are based on established expectations that ensure that all students develop the capacity to master content that is complex and challenging.

In this environment, school ~~guidance~~ counselors and other guiding adults in the middle and high school settings:

- shall provide information regarding the opportunity of an accelerated pathway to complete high school graduation requirements in three years prior to ninth grade course selections;
- shall provide guidance and information to students about course selections and requirements; ~~prior to ninth grade;~~

- shall know and understand the number and nature of credits required for **high school graduation**; college entrance;
- ~~shall encourage ninth grade students to complete these requirements in less than four years where feasible and appropriate;~~
- shall help students to set up schedules that promote their early completion (within three years) of requirements ~~for college entry~~, to the extent appropriate for the individual student, as they assist and advise ninth grade students in annual/semester course selection and in career planning activities;
- shall inform students about opportunities to accelerate completion of graduation requirements; ~~and early college entrance opportunities;~~
- shall provide information in such settings as orientation sessions, class and grade-level meetings, small group settings, and/or one-to-one sessions;
- shall distribute and explain this information to school staff and parents; **and**
- **shall obtain written commitment from parent/guardian and student prior to ninth grade and beginning on this pathway.**

All NEW INFORMATION BELOW

Based on HB 259, Public School Units (PSUs) shall provide students with an option of an accelerated pathway for graduation in three years of high school, in addition to the typical four years of high school.

To graduate early from high school, a student must follow the process for early graduation from high school (SBE policy GRAD-001).

Offering the SBE minimum graduation requirements in a three-year pathway takes intentional planning and a commitment from both the PSU and the student in Grade 9.

Students choosing to be part of an accelerated pathway must have an accelerated learning plan that both the student and parent/guardian will agree to before Grade 9. Student may withdraw from this pathway prior to completion with written communication to the school from the parent and student.

Course offerings vary in each PSU based on local context, such as schedule, teacher availability, classroom lab space, and student enrollment and interest. Below are recommended course sequencing options; however, a PSU may adapt the sequence as needed to their local context.

1. High School with a Traditional Schedule of 6 Courses/Year

- a. Students attending a traditional schedule high school will need to have at least four courses accelerated through Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, High School Courses in Middle School, NC Virtual Public Schools, summer courses, or other options to meet the minimum graduation requirements in three years. The course sequence will vary greatly based on how and when the student is accelerated.

b. Recommended Course Sequence:

- English: English I, English II, English III, and English IV.
- Math: Math I, Math 2, Math 3, 4th Math course.
- Science: Earth/Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry.
- Social Studies: World History, American History, Founding Principles of the USA and NC: Civic Literacy, Economics and Personal Finance.
- Health/Physical Education
- Six Electives: Based on interest, must include two credits from Career and Technical Education (CTE), World Languages, or Arts.

2. High School with a Block Schedule of 8 Courses/Year

- a. Students attending a block schedule high school will have enough time in their schedule to complete minimum state graduation requirements within the three years of the accelerated pathway.

b. Recommended Course Sequence:

- **Grade 9 (first year of pathway):**

- English I, English II
- Math 1, Math 2
- Earth/Environmental Science
- World History
- Health/Physical Education
- One elective course

- **Grade 10 (second year of pathway):**

- English III
- Math 3
- Chemistry
- American History
- Founding Principles of the USA and NC: Civic Literacy
- Two elective courses

- **Grade 11 (third year of pathway):**

- English IV
- Math – 4th course
- Biology
- Economics and Personal Finance
- Three elective courses

Students must also meet the other requirements for high school graduation as set forth in SBE GRAD-009 (High School Graduation Requirements) , including the arts content requirement and CPR.

If a student wants to graduate early in three years, the student is not to apply or attend a Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) program. Students attending a CIHS will not have the option to be on an accelerated path for graduation in three years, as the goal of those schools is to obtain a college certificate/credential/degree in addition to a high school diploma in four or five years.