south dakota
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Learning. Leadership. Service.

High School Graduation Requirements Handbook

Updated January 2016

Overview

This handbook is designed to help school personnel understand the minimum high school graduation requirements approved by the South Dakota Board of Education in 2009.

The handbook was updated in January 2016.

Table of Contents

Contacts for Graduation Requirements Questions 2
Graduation Requirements Infographic 3

Frequently Asked Questions 5-19
- Is this a local decision? 5-6
- Personal Learning Plan 7
- Credit Requirements 7-8
- Transfer Students 8
- Limited English Proficient Students 8
- Students on IEP 9
- Online and Dual Credit Courses 9-10
- Math and Science Courses. 10
- Language Arts 11
- Credit for Extracurricular Activities 12
- Health and Health Integration 13-17
- Menu of Courses: CTE, Capstone Experience/Service Learning, World Languages 18-19

Appendix 21-27
- Algebra II or Geometry Exclusion Documentation (sample) 23
- Chemistry or Physics Exclusion Documentation (sample) 24
- Application for a Waiver from an Administrative Rule 25-27

Contacts for Graduation Requirements Questions

Below are the staff members at the South Dakota Department of Education who may be able to assist with types of questions involving graduation requirements.

This list is also located online: http://doe.sd.gov/octe/gradrequirements.aspx. Check online for any updates to this list.

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Career and Technical Education
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Course Codes
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Course Content Standards
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Fine Arts, Science, Social Studies
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Course Requirements to Graduate
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SOUTH DAKOTA

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

As approved by the South Dakota Board of Education in November 2009

4 units of LANGUAGE ARTS must include:

- Writing: 1.5 units
- Speech or Debate: .5 unit
- Language Arts elective: .5 unit
- Literature: 1.5 units (must include .5 unit American Literature)

3 units of MATHEMATICS must include:

- Algebra I: 1 unit
- Algebra II: 1 unit
- Geometry: 1 unit

3 units of LAB SCIENCE must include:

- Biology: 1 unit
- Any Physical Science: 1 unit
- Chemistry or Physics: 1 unit

3 units of SOCIAL STUDIES must include:

- U.S. History: 1 unit
- U.S. Government: .5 unit
- Social Studies elective: .5 unit
- World History: .5 unit
- Geography: .5 unit

1 unit of ANY COMBINATION of the following:

- Approved Career & Technical Education
- Capstone Experience or Service Learning
- World Language

1 unit of **Fine Arts**

½ unit of **Personal Finance** or **Economics**

½ unit of **Physical Education**

½ unit of **Health** or **Health Integration**

A student's personal learning plan must document a minimum of 22 credits that include the above requirements.

More information on reverse.

With school and parent/guardian approval, a student may be excused from a **math** and/or **science** course in favor of a more appropriate course. A student is still required to take three units of Math. If a student is excused from **Chemistry** or **Physics**, the student must still take three units of Lab Science. A student's parent or legal guardian and school counselor or administrator must agree to the decision, and the excuse must be documented at the local level. See Appendix for sample forms: Algebra II or Geometry Exclusion Documentation; Chemistry or Physics Exclusion Documentation.

Beginning with students who entered 9th grade in fall 2013, academic core content may be earned by completing an **approved career and technical education course**. Approval to offer credit must be obtained through an application process with the Department of Education. Visit http://doe.sd.gov/octe/corecontentcredit.aspx for application details.

A district may decide to offer credit for extracurricular **Fine Arts** activities. Students may be granted up to one credit in Fine Arts for participation in extracurricular activities. A maximum .25 credit may be granted for each activity in each school year.

Beginning with students who entered 9th grade in fall 2013, students are required to take .5 unit of **Health** at any time during grades 6-12. A district may choose to integrate Health across the curriculum at the middle or high school level in lieu of a stand-alone course. See the Health and Health Integration section of this handbook for more information.

"Double dipping" is not allowed. Courses may not be counted more than once to fulfill high school graduation requirements. For example, Economics cannot meet both the Social Studies elective credit requirement and the Personal Finance or Economics credit requirement. It can only meet one of the requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated January 2016

IS THIS A LOCAL DECISION?

Below are some of the most frequently asked questions about graduation requirements that must be answered at the local level. This is not an exhaustive list.

Is a school district allowed to set requirements of credit beyond the 22-credit minimum?

Yes. Local school boards or governing bodies may set requirements of credit beyond the minimum. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01)

What if a transfer student is unable to meet local graduation requirements that are beyond the 22-credit minimum?

Transfer students unable to meet graduation requirements set by a local school board or governing body because of time and scheduling constraints, but not due to course failure, may graduate on the basis of meeting state minimum requirements for graduation. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01)

A senior student transferred into our district from another state and will be unable to meet South Dakota graduation requirements on time. What can we do?

The local school board or governing body may waive one or more graduation requirements for senior students who transfer from another state, who have met the standards in that state, and who are unable to meet the graduation requirements set by the state board because of time and scheduling constraints but not due to course failure. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01)

Is a school district required to accept credits for a student who transferred from another school district?

No. A school district can determine at the local level whether or not to accept credits for a student who transferred from another school district.

Can limited English proficient students be excused from taking required units of credit?

Yes. A student identified as limited English proficient, as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 7801 (25) (2002), may be excused from taking required units of credit if the student's parent or legal guardian and school counselor or administrator agree and the excuse is documented. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01) Documentation should be noted in the Language Acquisition Plan. If proper documentation is not included the request may be denied. As part of the documentation, it is required to include the name of team members involved in the decision.

When considering whether to excuse students from taking required units of credit, it is important to keep in mind their career and postsecondary goals.

Can dual credit courses be counted towards the 22-credit graduation requirement?

A local school district has the authority to decide if dual credit courses may count as credit towards the graduation requirement or be considered elective credit. For example, if a student takes Speech 101 for dual credit, it is a local decision whether that counts towards the Speech graduation requirement or counts as a Language Arts elective.

How many high school units of credit can be given for a dual credit course?
A local school district has the authority to determine how dual credit courses will equate to high school units of credit. In most cases, a 3-credit college course will equate to .5 credit up to 1 credit at the local high school.

Is a school district required to accept online course credits other than those offered through the South Dakota Virtual School (SDVS) (www.sdvs.k12.sd.us)?
No. A school district can determine at the local level whether or not to accept online course credits other than those offered through the South Dakota Virtual School.

Who pays for online (including SDVS) and dual credit courses for students?
This is a local decision. A school district may require students, parents or legal guardians to pay course fees for online (including SDVS) and dual credit courses.

What courses can students be excused from?
In the area of Mathematics, a student may be excused from taking Algebra II or Geometry, but not both. Students must still take three units of Math.

In the area of Lab Science, a student may be excused from the requirement to take Chemistry and/or Physics. Students must still take three units of Lab Science.

A student's parent or legal guardian and school counselor or administrator must agree to the decision, and the excuse must be documented at the local level. See the sample exclusion documents in the Appendix of this handbook.

What courses meet the definition of Lab Science?
A school district can determine at the local level whether a course meets the definition of a Lab Science course. A laboratory class is defined as a course providing opportunities for students to interact directly with the material world, or with data drawn from the material world, using tools that are not found in a library, media center, study hall, or classroom, and in which students use safe and appropriate laboratory techniques, as well as implement data collection techniques, models, and theories of science. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:01:01)

May districts offer credit for extracurricular Fine Arts activities? If so, what are the parameters?
Yes, a district may choose to offer credit for extracurricular Fine Arts activities.

Students may be granted up to one credit in Fine Arts for participation in extracurricular activities. A maximum of .25 credit may be granted for each extracurricular Fine Arts activity each school year.

The local school district decides which extracurricular Fine Arts activities may be used for credit. This decision must be a formal action by the local school board. In order to grant credit for an activity, the district must document the alignment of the activity with South Dakota's Fine Arts content standards. The documentation should be kept on file at the local school district.

PERSONAL LEARNING PLAN

Are students required to have a personal learning plan?
Yes. As a requirement of SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01 all students in grades 9-12 must have a personal learning plan (PLP).

What is a personal learning plan?
A personal learning plan is a plan based on a student's skills and interests that identifies the things a student can do and the courses he or she should take to reach his or her academic and career goals.

When developing a personal learning plan, students may include:

- Description of their personal life aspirations, specifically their education and career goals
- Self-assessment of their learning strengths and weaknesses
- Specific knowledge, skills and character traits the student would like to acquire
- Personal interests, passions, and hobbies and how they integrate them into their education
- Personal education program that allows them to reach their goals while also fulfilling school and graduation requirements
- Major accomplishments and milestones

Students can complete a personal learning plan on SDMyLife, a free online career development program for South Dakota students in grades 7-12. Infinite Campus also offers the Multi-Year Academic Planner in which a student can plan courses.

As students progress through high school, their interests and goals may change, so it is important that they revisit their personal learning plans regularly to make any necessary adjustments.

For more information about personal learning plans and SDMyLife, contact Megan Tatum (605) 773-4726.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Is a school district allowed to set requirements of credit beyond the 22-credit minimum?
Yes. Local school boards or governing bodies may set requirements of credit beyond the minimum. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01)

Is "double dipping" allowed to meet graduation requirements?
No. "Double dipping" is when a course is counted for more than one content area. For example, Economics cannot meet both the Social Studies elective credit requirement and the Personal Finance or Economics credit requirement. It can only be counted for one of the content areas.

Can high school credit be offered before 9th grade?
Yes. School districts can apply for waivers to offer courses for high school credit before 9th grade. Districts must show that teachers of such courses are highly qualified to teach at the high school level. Such courses must also use the same standards used for high school content. See Appendix for Application for a Waiver from an Administrative Rule.

Are students who take a course for high school credit before 9th grade required to pass a state-approved end-of-course exam?
No. In November 2015, the state Board of Education approved changes to SD Administrative Rule 24:43 eliminating the requirement that a student taking a high school course from a qualified teacher before 9th grade pass a state-approved assessment before credit can be awarded. This allows the local school district to determine whether the student has met the criteria for passage of the course and awarding of credit. The changes also remove the Department of Education (DOE) requirements for state approval of end-of-course (EOC) exams. Districts may use EOC exams if they wish. DOE does plan to continue to offer EOC assessments in Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Spanish, Physical Science, and Civics/Government that districts may use if they would like.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

What if a transfer student is unable to meet local graduation requirements that are beyond the 22-credit minimum?
Transfer students unable to meet graduation requirements set by a local school board or governing body because of time and scheduling constraints, but not due to course failure, may graduate on the basis of meeting state minimum requirements for graduation. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01)

A senior student transferred into our district from another state and will be unable to meet South Dakota graduation requirements on time.
What can we do?
The local school board or governing body may waive one or more graduation requirements for senior students who transfer from another state, who have met the standards in that state, and who are unable to meet the graduation requirements set by the state board because of time and scheduling constraints but not due to course failure. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01)

Is a school district required to accept credits for a student who transferred from another school district?
No. A school district can determine at the local level whether or not to accept credits for a student who transferred from another school district.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

Can limited English proficient students be excused from taking required units of credit?
Yes. A student identified as limited English proficient, as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 7801 (25) (2002), may be excused from taking required units of credit if the student's parent or legal guardian and school counselor or administrator agree and the excuse is documented. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:11:01) Documentation should be noted in the Language Acquisition Plan. If proper documentation is not included the request may be denied. As part of the documentation, it is required to include the name of team members involved in the decision.

When considering whether to excuse students from taking required units of credit, it is important to keep in mind their career and postsecondary goals.

STUDENTS ON IEP

How do graduation requirements impact students on an IEP (Individual Education Plan)?
Students with disabilities should strive to meet the same course requirements as all students. The IEP team has the authority to modify the specific credits required for graduation. The IEP team must take into consideration the student's postsecondary goals along with the nature of the student's disability, which prevents the student from accessing the same curriculum with accommodations and supports. See Guidance Policy: Applying Graduation Requirements to Students with Disabilities at http://doe.sd.gov/oess/documents/sped_transition_GraduationQA.pdf.

Can a student graduate with Algebra I (1 unit), Geometry (.5 unit) and Algebra II (.5 unit) and waive the third Math unit?
Yes, if the student is on an IEP and the IEP team determines it is in the student's best interest. A district must keep in mind the student's postsecondary and career interests after high school. See Guidance Policy: Applying Graduation Requirements to Students with Disabilities at http://doe.sd.gov/oess/documents/sped_transition_GraduationQA.pdf.

ONLINE AND DUAL CREDIT COURSES

If a student takes a course via the South Dakota Virtual School (SDVS), should it be included on the student's transcript?
Yes. Local districts have the authority regarding transcribing credit. However, if the student does not pass the course, it is best practice to still record the course on the transcript.

Do courses taken through the South Dakota Virtual School count towards graduation requirements?
Yes. The South Dakota Virtual High School offers a variety of courses that students can take on their own time, all taught by qualified professionals and aligned to the state's content standards. Because the South Dakota Department of Education approves all courses, students can be assured that course offerings meet the state's academic standards.

Can dual credit courses be counted towards the 22-credit graduation requirement?
A local school district has the authority to decide if dual credit courses may count as credit towards the graduation requirement or be considered elective credit. For example, if a student takes Speech 101 for dual credit, it is a local decision whether that counts towards the Speech graduation requirement or counts as a Language Arts elective.

How many high school units of credit can be given for a dual credit course?
A local school district has the authority to determine how dual credit courses will equate to high school units of credit. In most cases, a 3-credit college course will equate to .5 credit up to 1 credit at the local high school.

Is a school district required to accept online course credits other than those offered through the South Dakota Virtual School (SDVS) (www.sdvs.k12.sd.us)?
No. A school district can determine at the local level whether or not to accept online course credits other than those offered through the South Dakota Virtual School.

Who pays for online (including SDVS) and dual credit courses for students?
This is a local decision. A school district may require students, parents or legal guardians to pay course fees for online (including SDVS) and dual credit courses.

MATH and SCIENCE COURSES

What courses can students be excused from?
In the area of Mathematics, a student may be excused from taking Algebra II or Geometry, but not both. Students must still take three units of Math.

In the area of Lab Science, a student may be excused from the requirement to take Chemistry and/or Physics. Students must still take three units of Lab Science.

A student's parent or legal guardian and school counselor or administrator must agree to the decision, and the excuse must be documented at the local level. See the sample exclusion documents in the Appendix of this handbook.

What courses meet the definition of Lab Science?
A school district can determine at the local level whether a course meets the definition of a Lab Science course. A laboratory class is defined as a course providing opportunities for students to interact directly with the material world, or with data drawn from the material world, using tools that are not found in a library, media center, study hall, or classroom, and in which students use safe and appropriate laboratory techniques, as well as implement data collection techniques, models, and theories of science. (SD Administrative Rule 24:43:01:01)

What constitutes a Physical Science course?

Physical Science classes include courses such as those listed below.

Course Code	Course Title
03101	Chemistry
03102	Chemistry - Advanced Studies
03103	Organic Chemistry
03104	Physical Chemistry
03105	Conceptual Chemistry
03106	AP Chemistry
03151	Physics
03152	Physics – Advanced Studies
03155	AP Physics B
03156	AP Physics C
03159	Physical Science
03161	Conceptual Physics

What should happen if a student does not have Algebra I on his or her transcript, but has taken three units of Math?
The student does not need to take Algebra I if he or she has taken and passed Math courses that are more advanced than Algebra I. For example, if the student has completed Algebra II, Geometry and Pre-Calculus, the student would not need to take Algebra I.

The student needs to take Algebra I if he or she has not taken advanced Math courses beyond Algebra. For example, if a student took Pre-Algebra, Consumer Math and Geometry, the student would still need to complete Algebra I. The only exception is if the student is on an Individual Education Program (IEP), and the IEP team has made the decision to substitute different Math courses.

Can a student graduate with Algebra I (1 unit), Geometry (.5 unit) and Algebra II (.5 unit) and waive the third Math unit?
Yes, if the student is on an IEP and the IEP team determines it is in the student's best interest. A district must keep in mind the student's postsecondary and career interests after high school. See Guidance Policy: Applying Graduation Requirements to Students with Disabilities at http://doe.sd.gov/oess/documents/sped_transition_GraduationQA.pdf.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Can a student take Debate instead of Speech?
Yes. The rules state a student must have .5 unit of Speech or Debate.

Does a district have to offer both Speech and Debate?
No. The local district must offer one of the two courses, but could choose to offer both.

CREDIT FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Do athletic activities count toward Physical Education credit?
No, the state Board of Education did not approve extracurricular athletic activities to count towards Physical Education credit. For example, a student participating in basketball would not be able to count his or her athletic participation towards Physical Education credit.

May districts offer credit for extracurricular Fine Arts activities? If so, what are the parameters?
Yes, a district may choose to offer credit for extracurricular Fine Arts activities.

Students may be granted up to one credit in Fine Arts for participation in extracurricular activities. A maximum of .25 credit may be granted for each extracurricular Fine Arts activity each school year.

The local school district decides which extracurricular Fine Arts activities may be used for credit. This decision must be a formal action by the local school board. In order to grant credit for an activity, the district must document the alignment of the activity with South Dakota's Fine Arts content standards. The documentation should be kept on file at the local school district.

How do I transcript Fine Arts activities?

Credit granted for extracurricular Fine Arts activities must be graded, transcripted and included in the GPA calculation. If a district chooses to offer Fine Arts activities on a pass/fail basis, it must be noted on the transcript; however, it is up to the district to determine if it would be calculated in the GPA.

HEALTH AND HEALTH INTEGRATION

What are the requirements regarding Health?

Beginning with students who entered 9th grade in 2013, .5 unit of Health is required for graduation. This is in addition to the .5 unit of Physical Education required.

A district can choose to offer a stand-alone Health course or to integrate Health at any time during grades 6-12 to meet this requirement.

The Department of Education recommends that districts which currently have stand-alone courses keep them in place. A stand-alone Health course is the most effective for teaching students the skills they need to become healthy adults. Best practice would be to provide Health instruction in elementary, middle and high school – creating a sequential base of knowledge and skills.

Who is qualified to teach Health Education?

Any person who has a K-12 Health endorsement is qualified to teach Health.

What is a stand-alone Health course?

A stand-alone Health course is one that specifically focuses on Health Education standards. (See standards at http://doe.sd.gov/schoolHealth/Healtheducation.aspx.) Typically, at the high school level, this is a .5 credit course delivered in a traditional classroom setting or offered via the South Dakota Virtual School.

What if my district has a year-long Wellness course that incorporates both Physical Education and Health Education standards?

The student's transcript would reflect both .5 unit of Physical Education and .5 unit of Health Education, as long as the standards for each area are met. The course code 08016 can be used for courses that intertwine the content. Otherwise, school districts need to use two separate course codes.

What is Health Integration?

Health Integration is the process of incorporating key Health Education standards relative to maintaining and improving health, preventing disease, and avoiding or reducing health-related risk behaviors into existing courses that all students are required to take.

If my district chooses to integrate Health into required courses, what might this look like?

Teachers of required courses would be expected to incorporate the key Health Education standards, identified by the Department of Education, into their various content areas. The district would be required to assign a staff person to lead this effort. This person would be responsible for bringing together the team of teachers to determine where and how the key standards will be incorporated. Integration of key standards must occur in classes that all students are required to take.

Below are some examples of how to integrate Health concepts:

> **Science** – When students learn about microorganisms, they could also learn about how to prevent the spread of microorganisms that cause disease.
>
> **Math** – Have students measure, record, graph, interpret and predict data about physical activity, heart and respiration rates and blood pressure.
>
> **Social Studies** – When studying the differences in eating habits among different cultures, have students discuss the factors that determine food choice.

Teachers can be encouraged to integrate Health Education material into their subject areas through national health education days, weeks and months; for example, Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. The benefit of using the national health observances is that free materials are often available from corresponding agencies and organizations.

If stand-alone Health or Health Integration is offered in middle school, what are the parameters?

There are two scenarios – both of which meet the graduation requirements.

Scenario #1: Meeting graduation requirement & offering high school credit

> If a district offers stand-alone Health or Health Integration in 6th, 7th or 8th grade to meet the graduation requirement and chooses to give the student high school credit for that work, the district will need to apply for a waiver from the Department of Education. This waiver process would be the same as any high school credit given to a student before 9th grade (eg., 8th grade Algebra). See Appendix for Application for a Waiver from an Administrative Rule.
>
> Credit for the course shall appear on the student's high school transcript with the unit of credit and a letter grade. A waiver is good for five years. A district must re-apply after five years.

Scenario #2: Meeting graduation requirement but not offering high school credit

If a district offers stand-alone Health or Health Integration in 6th, 7th or 8th grade to meet the high school graduation requirement but will not offer high school credit for that work, the district must do the following:

1) Report in the Department of Education's Personnel Record Form (PRF) if it is meeting the graduation requirement through stand-alone Health or Health Integration. This will be a simple check-off in the PRF system.

2) For Health Integration only, document how the district plans to meet the key Health Education standards. Keep this document on file at the district level.

3) Provide recognition of completion on the student transcript. No grade is earned; no credit is assigned; and therefore, it does not count toward the student's GPA.

What if districts offer a stand-alone Health course in high school?

Districts that offer a stand-alone Health course in high school would transcript the course and the associated credit the way they do any other high school course taken for credit.

If Health Integration is offered at the high school level, what are the parameters?

There would be two scenarios for Health Integration at the high school level. Both would meet the graduation requirement of .5 unit of Health. No waiver from the state is required for either scenario.

Scenario #1: Meeting graduation requirement & offering credit

If Health Integration is offered for credit, that credit would be earned in one of three ways: authentic assessment, end-of-course exam or 73 hours of seat time. (This is in accordance with SD Administrative Rule 24:43:01:01, which defines a unit of credit.)

The district must:

1) Report in the Department of Education's Personnel Record Form (PRF) if it is meeting the graduation requirement through Health Integration. This will be a simple check-off in the PRF system.

2) Document how the district plans to meet the key Health Education standards. Keep this documentation on file at the district level.

3) Issue a grade that will be transcripted and included in the GPA calculation. If a district chooses to offer Health Integration on a pass/fail basis, it must be noted on the transcript. If a district chooses to offer Health Integration on a pass/fail basis, it must be noted on the transcript; however, it is up to the district to determine if it would be calculated in the GPA.

Scenario #2: Meeting graduation requirement but not offering credit

If Health Integration is offered with no credit attached, the district must do the following:

1) Report in the Department of Education's Personnel Record Form (PRF) if it is meeting the graduation requirement through Health Integration. This will be a simple check-off in the PRF system.

2) Document how the district plans to meet the key Health Education standards. Keep this documentation on file at the district level.

3) Provide recognition of completion on the student's transcript. No grade is earned; no credit is assigned; and therefore, it does not count toward the student's GPA.

If my district is integrating Health, must the teachers have a Health endorsement?
No.

If Health is offered for 6th, 7th or 8th graders and used to meet the high school graduation requirement, does the teacher have to be a high school teacher?
In South Dakota, Health Education is a K-12 endorsement, so a teacher with this endorsement can teach at any level: elementary, middle or high school.

I need help with the Health Integration piece. Who can I call?
Call Karen Keyser, Health and Physical Education Specialist, at (605) 773-3261 or (605) 220-6453.

Stand-Alone Health and Health Integration - Effective 2013

Middle School (Grades 6, 7 or 8)

Meeting grad requirement & offering high school credit

- District must apply for waiver from Department of Education (see waiver in Appendix).
- Credit appears on high school transcript with letter grade.

Meeting grad requirement but not offering high school credit

- District must report via Department of Education's Personnel Record Form.
- For Health Integration only, district must document at local level how it plans to meet key Health standards.
- District must provide recognition of completion on student transcript. No grade earned; no credit assigned; doesn't count toward student GPA.

High School

Stand-Alone Health
Meeting grad requirement & offering credit

- District transcripts course and credit as with any other course taken for credit.

Health Integration
Meeting grad requirement & offering credit

- District must report via Department of Education's Personnel Record Form.
- District must document at local level how it plans to meet key Health standards.
- District must issue a grade that will be transcripted and included in the GPA calculation. If district chooses to offer on pass/fail basis, it must be noted on the transcript. If district chooses to offer on pass/fail basis, it must be noted on the transcript; it's up to the district to determine if it would be calculated in the GPA.

Health Integration
Meeting grad requirement but not offering credit

- District must report via Department of Education's Personnel Record Form.
- District must document at local level how it plans to meet key Health standards.
- District must provide recognition of completion on student transcript. No grade earned; no credit assigned; doesn't count toward student GPA.

MENU OF COURSES: CTE, CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE/ SERVICE LEARNING, WORLD LANGUAGES

Beginning with students who entered 9th grade in fall 2013, academic core content credit may be earned by completing an approved Career and Technical Education course. Approval to offer credit must be obtained through an application process with the Department of Education. The application must include: course syllabus; standards-based curriculum; teacher certification; and assessment of standards by methods including end-of-course exams, authentic assessment, project-based learning or rubrics. For more information, visit http://doe.sd.gov/octe/corecontentcredit.aspx.

Students are required to earn at least one credit from the Menu of Courses, in any combination:

- Approved Career and Technical Education courses
- Capstone Experience or Service Learning
- World Languages

Do schools need to offer all options from the Menu of Courses?

Yes. Districts may utilize the South Dakota Virtual School (SDVS).

Does a school district have to offer both Capstone Experience and Service Learning?

No. The local district must offer one of the two, but could choose to offer both.

What constitutes approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses?

The Department of Education approves CTE programs. An approved program must offer two units within the same career cluster. See the list of approved courses online at http://doe.sd.gov/octe/gradrequirements.aspx. To learn more, please contact the Division of Career and Technical Education at (605) 773-3423.

What about the requirement for a district to offer Computer Science?

This is no longer a requirement. Many Computer Science classes are CTE courses within the Information Technology career cluster. To get your Computer Science classes approved as CTE courses, your district would need to apply to the Department of Education. Contact the Division of Career and Technical Education at (605) 773-3423.

What is a Capstone Experience?
A Capstone Experience is a culminating high school experience designed to integrate knowledge, skills and concepts gained from a student's previous years of learning. A Capstone Experience may be any of the following: senior experience, entrepreneurship experience or youth internship.

Senior experience: Requires students to complete a research project, design and develop a product, assemble a portfolio and complete an oral presentation before a panel.

Entrepreneurship experience: Requires students to research a new business opportunity, develop a business plan, assemble a portfolio and complete an oral presentation before a panel.

Youth internship: Allows students to gain hands-on experience at a business, develop employability skills, learn technical skills and complete a portfolio.

What is Service Learning?
Service Learning allows students to identify a community need or issue, apply academic and career skills to youth-led service experiences and develop community partnerships.

What constitutes a credit for a Capstone Experience?
The Department of Education has established a framework for each of the three Capstone Experiences and Service Learning noted above. In order to issue a credit for a Capstone Experience, the district must follow the program criteria. See http://doe.sd.gov/octe/capstone.aspx.

How do I transcript a Capstone Experience or Service Learning?
Credit granted for Capstone Experience or Service Learning must be transcripted. If a district chooses to offer Capstone Experience or Service Learning on a pass/fail basis, it must be noted on the transcript. However, it is up to the district to determine if it would be calculated into the GPA.

When did the Capstone Experience and Service Learning requirement go into effect?
Schools were required to offer a Capstone Experience or Service Learning as of Sept. 1, 2013. This affects students who entered 9th grade in 2013.

Who is certified to teach or facilitate a Capstone Experience?
Anyone with a valid South Dakota teaching certificate is certified to teach or facilitate a Capstone Experience. Contact the Department of Education at (605) 773-3423 to learn about professional development related to Capstone Experience.

APPENDIX

Algebra II or Geometry Exclusion Documentation (sample) 23
Chemistry or Physics Exclusion Documentation (sample) 24
Application for a Waiver from an Administrative Rule 25-27

Algebra II or Geometry Exclusion Documentation

File with Student's Permanent Record

Parent or Guardian Name _____

Student Name _____

Student Grade Level_____

I have met with _____ to discuss the option of
(school counselor or administrator)

my son or daughter taking the following course _____

instead of _____ to meet the graduation requirements

adopted by the South Dakota Board of Education in November 2009.

Parent or Guardian Signature _____

School Official Signature _____

Date _____

Note: The courses that the student is planning to take should be reflected in his or her personal learning plan.

Chemistry or Physics Exclusion Documentation

File with Student's Permanent Record

Parent or Guardian Name _____

Student Name _____

Student Grade Level_____

I have met with _____ to discuss the option of
(school counselor or administrator)

my son or daughter taking the following course _____

instead of _____ to meet the graduation requirements

adopted by the South Dakota Board of Education in November 2009.

Parent or Guardian Signature _____

School Official Signature _____

Date _____

Note: The courses that the student is planning to take should be reflected in his or her personal learning plan.

APPLICATION for a Waiver from an Administrative Rule

Courses offered Before Grade Nine for High School Credit

_____ School District hereby applies for a waiver from certain South Dakota administrative rules that govern school accreditation, using the procedures outlined in § 24:43:08.

It is the intent of the _____ School District to implement the strategies for continued school improvement as outlined herein, and to annually report on the implementation of the of those strategies as described in § 24:43:08:08.

The _____ Board of Education has held a public hearing and approved this application. It is understood that the school district must continue to comply with all other administrative rules, including chapter 24:43:11.

The school district will continue to submit all required accreditation reports, plans, and certifications to the South Dakota Department of Education on time.

_____ _____

Signature of Supt. of Schools/Chief Educational Officer **Date**

_____ _____

Signature of Board of Education President **Date**

For Department Use Only

Received: _____ Reviewed: _____

Reviewer: _____

Recommendation: _____

Department of Education Secretary's Action: ____ Approve ____ Deny

Department of Secretary's Signature: _____

Effective Date of Waiver **:** _____

Report Due Date: _____

Section I – Application Details

Applying School District: _____

Participating Attendance Centers: _____

_____

Local Public Hearing Date: _____

Local Board Approval Date: _____

Date Submitted to the Department of Education:_____

Section II - Waiver Schedule

Intended Date for Waiver Implementation: _____

(This date is always July 1 for fall implementation unless the district requests and explains the reasons for an alternate date.)

Proposed Years of Waiver: _____
(Maximum of 5 school terms, which begin July 1 of each year.)

Section III - Administrative Rules to be Waived

List the administrative rule number and title for which this waiver is being requested. Administrative rules are available online at http://legis.state.sd.us/index.aspx

For a waiver for high school credit before grade nine, the district will want to waive administrative rule 24:43:11:01.

_____

Section IV – Course(s) for Which Exemption is Being Proposed

_____

Section V - Reasons for Waiver Request

Explain the reasons the district is requesting a waiver from administrative rule. The district must explain why the plans outlined in this application will better meet local learning goals, enhance educational opportunities, promote equity, or increase accountability.

Section VI - Verification of Administrative Rule Intent

Explain how the intent of the administrative rule for which the waiver is being requested will be met if the waiver is granted.

Please note that the teachers of courses for which waivers are approved must be high school certified, in the content area and the waived courses must remain at high school-level rigor.

List teacher providing instruction for each course included on application:

Name	Course
_____	_____
_____	_____

_____

If at any time during the timeframe this waiver is valid a teacher listed here is no longer the teacher of record, the district must notify the Department of Education with the name of the newly assigned educator.

Section VII – Assurance of Rigor (Where applicable)

Describe the school district's plan for offering continuing educational opportunities in the waivered content area, where applicable.

Section VIII- Evaluation

DOE Waiver Evaluation Policy:

At the conclusion of the waivered course, all students that wish to receive high school credit for the coursework completed must pass an end of course exam. The following guidelines should be noted:

1) If the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) has an exam available in the waivered course area, the State exam should be used.
2) * If an exam is not available from the State, the district may create an exam, standards-based when applicable. The exam must be approved by the State before it may be administered.
3) A test security agreement must be signed by all district personnel who have access to the exam and must be returned to the SD DOE prior to the test dates(s). A security agreement must be filed each year, and for each exam that is given. The test agreement must be mailed and not faxed or emailed.
4) The student must pass the exam with at least 80% proficiency.
5) The exam may be administered up to two times, per district policy.
6) The DOE must receive a roster of participants, including the students' name, grade in school, district attendance center, and percentage on the best attempt of the completed exam before the start of the proceeding school year.

Check all that apply:

_____ State exam will be used

_____ Local exam has been approved by SDDOE Date approved: _____
(Approved local exam subject to 30% refreshment on a two-year cycle, as per ARSD 24:43:11:13. Failure to refresh this local exam by the designated deadline will default to state test approval for the balance of the waiver term)

* For information regarding the creation of a district end of course exam, please refer to the South Dakota Department of Education End of Course Procedure Manual. http://doe.sd.gov/oats/documents/EOCManual.pdf

Local exam ARSD 24:43:11:13, effective 12/28/2010:
http://legis.state.sd.us/rules/DisplayRule.aspx?Rule=24:43:11:13

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