

X. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation Exercises

Graduation exercises, ceremonies with caps and gowns, and diplomas shall be limited to high schools and are **not** to be used for kindergarten, grade five, or middle school.

Texas Education Code § 28.025 provides that a person may receive a diploma:

- after the student completes the curriculum requirements identified by the State Board of Education and meets testing requirements stated in § 39.025(a),
- when the student successfully completes an individualized education, program developed under TEC §29.005, or
- when a person qualifies for a high school diploma as a veteran under TEC §28.025. In the Houston Independent School District, regular education students who have completed all academic requirements and have passed all parts of the required state assessments will be permitted to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Students with disabilities served in special education who have completed all of their graduation requirements as designated by their IEP and in accordance with state law are eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Special education students must be offered the opportunity to receive a Certificate of Attendance after completing four years in high school in accordance with TEC§28.025(f). This certificate is not equivalent to a diploma and does not prohibit a student from earning a diploma at a later date. Special education students who have not completed graduation requirements may opt to participate in the graduation ceremony of their cohort class or wait to participate in the ceremony following their completion of graduation requirements. Those students opting to participate in the cohort ceremony without completing graduation requirements are only awarded a Certificate of Attendance, not a diploma. They are not recorded as graduates until actual completion of graduation requirements.

Regular education students receiving certificates of completion because they have not yet met testing requirements **may not** participate in graduation ceremonies. Students planning to complete graduation requirements in summer school may not participate in spring graduation ceremonies. Principals may present an HISD Certificate of Achievement to foreign exchange students at graduation ceremonies but should not list them as graduates unless they have completed all graduation requirements.

Each school issuing diplomas conducts graduation ceremonies under the direction of HISD School Administration at the end of the spring semester, at the end of the summer session, and at the end of the fall semester. Those students completing graduation requirements at the end of the fall semester may participate in the spring graduation ceremonies. Students who complete graduation requirements at an alternative school that does not issue diplomas may participate in graduation ceremonies at their home campus. Students who meet graduation requirements after their cohort has graduated and who previously have not participated in a graduation ceremony may participate in a ceremony with the permission of the principal at the school of last enrollment.

Graduation Requirements

The graduation requirements for a particular student are those that are in effect when the student first enters the ninth (9th) grade.

- ◆ Under no circumstance may graduation requirements be waived.
- ◆ A student must complete the academic course requirements and must pass the applicable state-developed graduation assessment before the student can graduate.
- ◆ TEC § 28.002 prohibits a school district from varying the curriculum of a course in the required curriculum based on whether a student is on the minimum, recognized, or advanced high school program.

The Foundation High School Program is required for all students entering grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year and thereafter. All students shall be automatically enrolled in the Distinguished Level of Achievement plan of the Foundation High School Program, and parental approval shall be required to leave the plan to graduate under a different available plan.

A student may graduate under the Foundation High School Program without earning an endorsement if, after the student's sophomore year:

- (1) the student and the student's parent or person standing in parental relation to the student are advised by a school counselor of the specific benefits of graduating from high school with one or more endorsements; and
- (2) the student's parent or person standing in parental relation to the student files with a school counselor written permission, on a form adopted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), allowing the student to graduate under the Foundation High School Program without earning an endorsement, TAC 74.11(d).

All graduates including students with disabilities who meet graduation requirements are awarded the same type of diploma. A school district shall clearly indicate the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program, an endorsement, and a performance acknowledgment on the transcript or academic achievement record (AAR) of a student who satisfies the applicable requirements. TAC74.11 (b)

Note: It is recommended that students be referred for special education services no later than the first semester of the senior year. Referral after that date may require an additional year(s) of implementation of the IEP.

Senate Bill 149 and Individual Graduation Committees

New to Texas law, as set forth in Senate Bill 149, a school district or open-enrollment charter school is required to establish an Individual Graduation Committee (IGC) for each student who fails to pass not more than **two** End of Course assessments to determine whether the student may satisfy high school graduation requirements through alternative methods that show a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills taught and retested in the subject. Under the Texas law, to receive a diploma, a student must successfully complete all of the required courses, all state assessments or qualify for a high school diploma based on an Individual Graduation Committee review. The committee will review student assessment and accelerated instructional history; review student coursework, grades, and attendance; prescribe additional graduation requirements; and or alternate assessment for satisfying high school graduation requirements. All students graduating via IGC decision are mandated to complete additional requirements. The additional requirements shall include additional remediation and for each failed EOC exam, the completion of a project or the preparation of a portfolio. The IGC must convene and their decision is to be captured in PEIMS. Moreover, the IGC decision to graduate must be unanimous. Senate bill 149 has been extended to September 1, 2023.

The IGC is composed of the following members:

- ◆ Principal or designee

- ◆ Teacher of the EOC course for which the student failed

- ◆ Department Chair or Lead Teacher

- ◆ Parent/Guardian, designee or student if over 18

- ◆ LPAC Representative (if applicable)

- ◆ Student with Disabilities Representative (if applicable)

For more information, go to:

<https://houstonisd.sharepoint.com/sites/DEPTS/CD/SitePages/SB%20149%20Support.aspx?csf=1&e=IWBizd&web=1&cid=7b011545-b49e-4323-8c9d-2ddc744ea165>

Graduation Seals

- ◆ A State of Texas graduation seal will be placed on each student's transcript to designate which academic program the student completed. A notation of "Completion of IEP" may not be used in place of one of the three SBOE approved graduation programs.
- ◆ A school may not affix a seal for a specific graduation program to a student's transcript unless that student has satisfied all designated requirements for that program. A registrar may wait to affix a Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) seal, pending receipt of a score of three or higher on an Advanced Placement exam after the student's date of graduation but before year end processing. The DAP ONLY applies to students who entered 9th grade prior to 2014-2015 school year.
- ◆ The seal affixed to the transcript must reflect the graduation program for which the student is eligible at the time of graduation. Additional postgraduate course work may not be used to upgrade a graduation program seal.
- ◆ Endorsements and performance acknowledgements earned under the Foundation High School Program will be affixed to the Academic Achievement Program according to the law.

Certificate of Completion

If a student has completed all academic requirements for graduation but has not passed all parts of the required state assessments, the student may be issued a certificate of course work completion. This student may **not** participate in graduation ceremonies. If a **Certificate of Completion** is issued, that fact will be designated on the transcript. This certificate is not equivalent to a diploma and does not prohibit a student from earning a diploma if he successfully completes assessment requirements at a later date.

GED

A student who has received a GED certificate or Certificate of High School Equivalency but has not completed either the academic graduation requirements and/or has not passed all parts of the exit-level exams required for graduation is not classified as a graduate and may neither participate in graduation ceremonies nor receive a diploma. A student who has received a high school equivalency certificate is entitled to enroll in a public school as authorized by Section 25.001 and is entitled to the benefits of the Foundation School Program under section 42.003 in the same manner as any other student who has not received a high school diploma. (29.087 (h) Such students may re-enroll in school to complete regular graduation requirements if they meet the age requirements for eligibility.

HISD Graduation Requirement Waivers

Some schools have approved HISD waivers to expand graduation requirements above the state-mandated requirements to correspond with specific programs offered in those schools.

These expanded requirements may include designated hours of service, related activities, or internship; therefore, a student who satisfies all state mandated graduation requirements but falls short of HISD's expanded requirements in effect at the school in which the student is enrolled, will have two options:

- ◆ Accepting a generic HISD diploma, or
- ◆ return to the school at which he is enrolled until such time that the expanded graduation requirements of that school are completed, and the student receives a diploma from that school.
- ◆ Schools must have an appeals process for a student who meets all HISD and TEA graduation requirements but does not meet the expanded waiver requirements of the school.

Information on Diplomas

Beginning with diplomas issued at the end of the 2014-2015 school year, the endorsements earned, distinguished level of achievement and performance acknowledgements are not required to be affixed on high school diplomas.

Veteran Diplomas

TEC §28.0251 allows a school district to issue, posthumously or not, a high school diploma to a person who was honorably discharged from the U.S. armed forces, was scheduled to graduate after 1940 and before 1975 or after 1989 left high school before after completing grade 6 or higher but before graduating to serve in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, the Iraq War the war in Afghanistan or any other war declared by the United States.

POSTHUMOUS HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS (TEC 28.0254)

On request of the student's parent, a school district shall issue a high school diploma posthumously to each student who died while enrolled in the district at grade level 12, provided that the student was academically on track at the time of death to receive a diploma at the end of the school year in which the student died. For purposes of this subsection, "school year" includes any summer session following the spring semester. The high school diploma may not be issued before the graduation date of the class in which the student was enrolled at the time of death.

A school district is not required to issue a high school diploma to a student described above if the student at any time before the student's death was convicted of a felony offense under Title 5 or 6, Penal Code, or adjudicated as having engaged in conduct constituting a felony offense under Title 5 or 6, Penal Code. TEC 28.0254

PERSONAL GRADUATION PLAN FOR FOUNDATION STUDENTS

A PGP must identify a course of study that promotes college or workforce readiness and career placement and advancement. It must also facilitate the student's transition from secondary to post-secondary education.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Middle school students must be provided opportunities to explore and learn about career options in different industries, and programs within different campuses that allow students to focus on a specific discipline throughout high school.

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, **eighth graders** will select an endorsement during the spring semester.

The middle school principal shall designate a school counselor or certified administrator to initiate Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) with students. The designee will ensure that endorsement options have been thoroughly explained to all students prior to completing the PGP form.

All eighth-grade students will complete the demographic information and enter the selected endorsement they would like to pursue in high school. The selected information from the PGP will be entered into PowerSchool's *TX FHSP Endorsement* panel and uploaded into the district designated platform.

The selected endorsement will be verified by the high school counselor or administrator upon the student's entry into 9th grade. Once the endorsement is verified the personal graduation plan should be initiated and completed before the end of the students' initial 9th grade year is finalized.

HIGH SCHOOLS

Students entering grade 9 in the 2014–2015 school year and beyond shall have a Personal Graduation Plan on file for the Foundation High School Program.

The high school principal shall designate a school counselor or certified administrator to review Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) options with each student entering grade 9. The campus counselor or certified administrator together with the student and parent or guardian must review the included options for the Distinguished Level of Achievement, endorsements, post-secondary opportunities, automatic college admission and eligibility for financial aid. Before the conclusion of the school year, the student and the student's parent or guardian must confirm and sign a PGP for the student in blue or black ink. The PGP must be completed in its entirety. The date initiated or amended date on the PGP must match the date in PowerSchool's *TX FHSP Endorsement* panel. The **completed** PGP will need to be entered into PowerSchool under the PGP compliance panel.

A completed PGP will consist of the following items:

- The following demographic information must be included: Student's first name, last name, student ID number, year entered high school.
- Date Initiated
- The endorsement(s) the student has selected to pursue while in high school and a list of the course the student will complete to earn each endorsement.
- Post-secondary career areas the student is interested in pursuing after high school
- Student's signature, parent or guardian's signature, and counselor or certified administrator's signature
- The following statement must be above the signature lines. *"The importance of a high school graduation plan that includes the one or more endorsements, the distinguished level of achievement, and the importance of postsecondary education, automatic college admission, and eligibility for financial aid have been explained to me."* (Applies for student who have entered high school 2018-2019 and beyond)

The plan may be revised according to the student's interest and the availability of particular programming at the campus. The initial conversation with the parent or guardian of the student's PGP must be dated and documented on the reverse side of the PGP in the parent documentation section. A student may amend the student's personal graduation plan after the initial confirmation of the plan.

A district shall permit a student to enroll in courses under more than one endorsement before the student's junior year and to choose, at any time to earn an endorsement other than the endorsement the student previously indicated. If a student amends his/her personal graduation plan, the school shall send written notice to the student's parents regarding the change. Parents must be notified within 10 calendar days of an endorsement change. Each year, the campus and the student shall refer to the plan while developing the student's course schedule. The plan and the course selection sheet shall be kept on file by the school counselor or administrator.

PGP FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

IN DISTRICT STUDENTS

Students who are transferring from a campus from within HISD will have the existing PGP form included in the withdrawal paperwork for the receiving campus. The campus withdrawing the student must advise the student and parent of the current progress of the student's PGP and endorsement(s) before the withdrawal of the student is completed.

OUT OF DISTRICT STUDENTS

Students who are transferring from a campus from outside of HISD will be advised by a counselor or certified administrator along with their parent or guardian to have a PGP completed at the point of enrollment. The completed information must be entered into PowerSchool's *TX FHSP Endorsement* panel and uploaded into the district designated platform.

SAMPLE HIGH SCHOOL PERSONAL GRADUATION PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ENTERED 2017-2018 AND BEFORE. THIS FORM WILL ONLY BE USED FOR 10TH – 12TH GRADE STUDENTS

Student ID _____ **Houston ISD Personal Graduation Plan (PGP)** _____ Student Name _____

Student Signature: _____

Date Initiated: _____ Amended: _____

Counselor/Administrator Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Graduation Plan: _____

Graduation Target: _____

Discipline	TEA Foundation Plan (credit requirements)	HISD Foundation Plan (credit requirements)	Distinguished Level of Achievement (credit requirements)
English	4	4	4
Math	3	3	4
Science	3	3	4
Social Studies	3	4	4
Languages Other Than English	2	2	2
Fine Arts	1	1	1
Physical Education	1	1	1
Other Electives	5	3.5	5.5
Health		0.5	0.5
Total Credits	22	22	26

The Four Year Plan is intended to give you and your parent(s) a guide to use as you progress through high school. You will want to review the plan each year to make sure you are taking the required courses for graduation. Make sure that you are taking the academic courses that support your postsecondary plans.

Endorsement (s): <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Humanities <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services <input type="checkbox"/> STEM	My Post High School plans will take me to: (Check as many as apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Two Year College <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Training <input type="checkbox"/> Four Year College <input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Other
My Graduation Plan Type Is: <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguished Level of Achievement	My Career Interest: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> (see IEP) _____ Foundation _____ w/ Endorsement	

	Middle Grades	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
English:		English 1 or Eng. SOL 1	English 2 or Eng. SOL 2	English 3	English 4 (or other advanced ELA from TEA list)
Mathematics:		Algebra 1	Geometry	Algebra 2	Advanced Math from TEA list
Science:		Biology	Chemistry (or other advanced science from TEA list)	Physics (or other advanced science from TEA list)	Advanced Science from TEA list
Social Studies:		World Geography	World History	US History	Government (0.5) Economics (0.5)
Languages other than English:		Language 1 st year*	Language 2 nd year*		
Fine Arts:		Fine Arts (1.0)*			
Physical Education:		Physical Education (1.0)*			
Other Electives:		Other Electives*			
Health:		Health (0.5)*			
Options for Endorsements: Arts & Humanities Business & Industry Multidisciplinary Studies Public Services STEM		_____ (Endorsement Course #1)	_____ (Endorsement Course #2)	_____ (Endorsement Course #3)	_____ (Endorsement Course #4)

*course may be taken at any grade level

SAMPLE HIGH SCHOOL PERSONAL GRADUATION PLAN FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 9TH GRADE IN 2018-2019 AND BEYOND.

HISD Distinguished Level of Achievement (DLA) Requirements for Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) For Students Entering 9th Grade in or after 2014-2015



Student ID _____ First Name: _____ Last Name _____
 Campus: _____ 9th Grade Entry Year _____ Date Initiated _____ Date Amended _____

Endorsement selections include: Arts & Humanities (AH), Business & Industry (BI), STEM (S), Public Service (PS), and Multi-Disciplinary Studies.

English: 4 Whole Credits			LOTE: 2 Whole Credits		
English 1 or SOL 1			1 st Year		
English 2 or SOL 2			2 nd Year		
English 3			Bective		
Advanced English			Bective		

Math: 4 Whole Credits			OR Math: 4 Whole Credits		
Algebra 1			Algebra 1		
Geometry			Geometry		
Algebra 2			Math Models		
Advanced Math			Algebra 2		

No Math Models after Algebra 2

Science: 4 Whole Credits			Social Studies: 4 Whole Credits		
Biology			World Geography		
Chemistry			World History		
Physics			US History		
Advanced Science			Government		
IPC does NOT count as Advanced Science IPC can NOT be taken after Chemistry			Economics		

PE Health: 1 PE, 0.5 Health

PE (elective)			Fine Arts: 1 Whole Credit		
Health			Fine Arts		

CTE AND/OR Other Electives: 5.5 Total Credits Combined Career & Technical Education			Other Electives		

Student has ARD/IEP to support exit.

Yes	No
Yes	No

Student has submitted an Opt-Out of Endorsement form signed by parent or guardian.

My Graduation Plan Type is:		
Foundation 22	Distinguished 26	See IEP

My Post-High School plans are to: (Select all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Two Year College <input type="checkbox"/> Four Year College <input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Post-Secondary Testing: (Select all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> PSAT <input type="checkbox"/> TSI <input type="checkbox"/> SAT <input type="checkbox"/> ACT <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
My Career Interest: _____	

Endorsement 1: 4 Whole Credits Select one: AH BI S PS		

Endorsement 2: 4 Whole Credits Select one: AH BI S PS		

Multi-Disciplinary Studies Endorsement: 4 Whole Credits		

Career & Technical Education Pathway Sequence		
Grade	Pathway Courses	Completion
MS		A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>
9TH		A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>
10TH		A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>
11TH		A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>
12TH		A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>

ALL courses in the CTE pathway sequence should be listed

The importance of a High School graduation plan that includes one or more endorsements and the distinguished level of achievement and the importance of Post-Secondary Education, automatic college admission and eligibility for financial aid have been explained to me.

Student Signature _____ Parent Signature _____ Counselor/ Administrator Signature _____

It is the policy of the Houston Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, handicap or disability, ancestry, national origin, marital status, race, religion, sex, veteran status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity and/ or gender expression in its educational or employment programs and activities.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PERSONAL GRADUATION PLAN (Rtl)

A middle school principal shall designate a guidance counselor, teacher, or other appropriate individual to develop and administer a PGP for students enrolled in grades 6–8 who failed a State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exam; or is not likely to receive a high school diploma before the fifth school year following the student's enrollment in grade 9 as determined by the District.

A middle school PGP must identify educational goals for the student; include diagnostic information, appropriate monitoring and intervention, and other evaluation strategies; include an intensive instruction program described in Education Code 28.0213 [see EHBC and EHBAB]; address participation of the student's parent or guardian, including consideration of the parent's or guardian's educational expectations for the student; and provide innovative methods to promote the student's advancement, including flexible scheduling, alternative learning environments, online instruction, and other interventions that are proven to accelerate the learning process and have been scientifically validated to improve learning and cognitive ability.

For students receiving special education services, an individualized education program developed under TEC §29.005 may be used as the student's Personal Graduation Plan. A special education student's IEP is the authority plan and no alternative academic plan should be developed.

A PGP must be developed for students in grades 6 – 8 who fail any section of STAAR/STAAR EOC and those students not likely to complete high school in four years. The on-line PGP, accessible to HISD personnel who are authorized users of the Student Information System, provides student advocates (i.e., teachers, counselors, deans or other principal designee) with an updated view of students' academic performance, while allowing for intervention strategies in areas such as attendance, and accelerated/alternative academic options. The PGP must be updated and monitored regularly by the assigned student advocate who works closely with the student and who must provide parents or caregivers with information on the student's academic performance throughout the year.

For information and/or questions regarding the PGP (Rtl) or to set up PGP (Rtl) training on a campus contact the Interventions Department at (713) 556-7122.

GRADUATION PLANS

Explanation of the Foundation High School Program

Texas lawmakers passed education legislation designed to put all students on a path to college and meaningful careers. House Bill 5 reduces the number of tests students must take and provides greater flexibility for high school student to choose courses that match their interests and career goals.

The Foundation High School Program contains up to four parts:

- A 22-credit foundation program which is the core of the new Texas high school diploma
- Five endorsement options that allow students to focus on a related series of courses (26 total credits with endorsements)
- A higher performance category called Distinguished Level of Achievement
- Performance Acknowledgments that note outstanding achievement

Pursuant to the requirements of House Bill 5, the State Board of Education adopted changes to the high school graduation requirements in January 2014. The new requirements were effective beginning with students who entered grade 9 during the 2014-2015 school year.

The Houston Independent School Board, in an effort to meet the new state graduation requirements, adopted the Texas Foundation High School Program. In addition to the statutory requirement of enrolling all ninth-grade students into an endorsement plan under the Foundation High School Program, students in HISD will be expected to complete the Distinguished Level of Achievement. Under the HISD Distinguished Level of Achievement Foundation High School Program, students are required to earn one half credit in Health and two credits to include World Geography and World History as a part of their requirements. In addition, Algebra II is a mathematics requirement under the HISD Foundation High School Program and the Distinguished Level of Achievement High School Program.

Foundation High School Program

Course	TEA Foundation HS Program 9th Grade: 2014-15 and beyond	HISD Foundation HS Program 9th Grade: 2014-2015 and beyond	Distinguished Level of Achievement 9th Grade: 2014-15 and beyond
	Credits	Credits	Credits
English	4	4	4
Mathematics	3	3	4
World History	1 (W HIST OR W GEO)	1	1
World Geography		1	1
US History	1	1	1
US Government	0.5	0.5	0.5
Economics	0.5	0.5	0.5
Science	3	3	4
Health	N/A	0.5	0.5
Physical Education	1	1	1
Second Language (LOTE)	2	2	2
Fine Arts (Speech may not substitute)	1	1	1
Electives	<u>5.0</u>	<u>3.5</u>	<u>5.5</u>
	22	22	26

Explanation of the Foundation High School Program with Endorsements

For the first time, students will be able to earn one or more endorsements as part of their graduation requirements. Endorsements consist of a related series of courses that are grouped together by interest or skill set. They provide students with in-depth knowledge of a subject area. Students must select an endorsement in the ninth grade. A student may graduate under the foundations high school program without earning an endorsement if, after the student's sophomore year, the student has earned at least 12 credits and the student and parent are advised of the benefits of graduating with one or more endorsements and must complete an opt-out form. A district shall permit a student to enroll in courses under more than one endorsement before the student's junior year and to choose at any time to earn an endorsement other than the endorsement the student previously indicated. Districts and charters are not required to offer all endorsements. If only one endorsement is offered, it must be multidisciplinary studies. Students earn an endorsement by completing the curriculum requirements for the endorsement, including 4th credit of math and science and 2 additional elective credits.

Upon completion of an endorsement, students are required to have earned at least 26 credits. The 26 credits will include the 22 credit Foundation High School Program and:

- 1 Advanced Math or CTE Math
- 1 Advanced Science or CTE Science
- 2 Electives

Students can choose from 5 endorsement areas and programs of study (paths):

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses related to STEM
- Computer Science
- Mathematics
- Science
- Combination of no more than two of the categories listed above

Business and Industry (one of the following or a combination of areas)

- Agriculture
- Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Technology and Communications
- Audio/Video
- Information Technology
- Business Management and Administration
- Finance • Manufacturing
- Transportation or Distribution and Logistics
- Marketing

- Technology Applications
- English electives in public speaking, debate, advanced broadcast journalism advanced journalism including newspaper, yearbook and Literary magazine.

Public Service (one of the following)

- Human Services
- Health Science
- Education and Training
- Law
- Public Safety
- Government and Public Administration
- Corrections and Security
- Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC)
- Career Prep I or II and a project-based research in Chapter 127

Arts and Humanities Completion of the Foundations HS Program and one of the following-

- 2 levels each in two languages other than English (LOTE)
- 5 Social Studies credits
- 4 levels in the same LOTE
- 4 levels of American Sign Language (ASL)
- Courses from one or two areas (music, theater, art, dance) in fine arts
- English electives not included in Business and Industry selected from 74 (4)(F)

Multidisciplinary Studies Completion of the Foundations HS Program and one of the following-

- 4 advanced courses from other endorsement areas
- 4 credits in each foundation subject area, including English IV and chemistry and/or physics
- 4 credits in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or dual credit selected from English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, LOTE or fine arts

Explanation of the Distinguished Level of Achievement

Most jobs require education and training beyond a high school diploma. To best prepare students for the transition to post-high school education or quality workforce training, selecting and successfully completing the right classes is essential. The choices made in high school will determine their future options. The Distinguished Level of Achievement will ensure the best preparation for students' future.

Benefits

The Distinguished Level of Achievement opens a world of educational and employment opportunities beyond high school. The Distinguished Level of Achievement will:

- Allow students to compete for Top 6 % - 10% automatic admissions eligibility at most Texas public universities.
- Ensure students are a more competitive applicant at the most selective colleges and universities.
- Allows an opportunity to earn an endorsement in an area of interest
- Have more college and university options
- Have more financial aid options
- Better preparation for college-level coursework at community/technical colleges and universities
- Opportunity for immediate enrollment in classes related to your chosen field of study
- Strong foundation to successfully complete an industry workforce credential or college degree

HISD Distinguished Level of Achievement

9th Grade: 2014-15 and after

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credits</u>
English	4
Mathematics	4
World History	1
World Geography	1
US History	1
US Government	0.5
Economics	0.5
Science	4
Health	0.5
Physical Education Second	1
Language (LOTE)	2
Fine Arts (Speech may not substitute)	1
Electives	<u>5.5</u>
	26

Explanation of Performance Acknowledgements for the Foundation High School Program

Students may earn an additional acknowledgment on their Academic Achievement Record because of outstanding performance in areas such as dual credit courses and bilingualism and biliteracy; on Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, PSAT, ACT's Plan, the SAT or ACT exams; or by earning a nationally- or internationally-recognized business or industry certification. A school district shall clearly indicate the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program, an endorsement, and a performance acknowledgment on the transcript or academic achievement record (AAR) of a student who satisfies the applicable requirements.

74.11 (b)

Performance acknowledgements for outstanding performance in:

- Dual Credit courses by earning:
 - Twelve college hours through dual credit or locally articulated credit with a 3.0 unweighted graded average; or
 - An associate degree while in high school.
- Bilingualism and biliteracy by:
 - Demonstrating proficiency in two or more languages by
 - Completing all ELA requirements with an ELA average of 80+; plus one of the following:
 - Completing 3 credits in the same language other than English (LOTE) with an average of 80+; or
 - Completing Level IV or higher of a LOTE with an average of 80+; or
 - Completion of at least three LOTE credits with an average of 80+; or
 - Demonstrating proficiency in LOTE with an AP exam score of 3+, or
 - an IB exam score of 4+, or
 - a national assessment of language proficiency score of "intermediate high" or better.
 - Under this section, English language learners must have exited a bilingual or ESL program and have scored "advanced high" on TELPAS.
- Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams by earning:
 - AP score of 3+; or
 - IB score of 4+.
- PSAT, SAT, ACT, and/or ACT-PLAN exams by earning on the:
 - PSAT: Commended Scholar, National Merit Semifinalist, National Merit Finalist, National Hispanic Recognition, or SAT: or
 - ACT: a composite score of 28 (excluding the writing sub-score); or
 - ACT-PLAN: a college readiness benchmark score on at least two of the four subject areas.

Business/Industry Certifications or Licenses, as indicated by obtaining a:

- Nationally or internationally recognized business or industry certification; or
- Government-required credential to practice a profession.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR STUDENTS BEGINNING 9TH-GRADE in 2014-2015 and beyond

DISCIPLINE	TEA FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (26 Credits)
English Language Arts* Proficiency	<p>Four Credits</p> <p>English I, II, and III</p> <p>The fourth credit of English may be satisfied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English IV, • Independent Study in English • Research/Technical Writing, • Creative/Imaginative Writing, • Literary Genres, • Adv Broadcast Journalism 3, • Adv Journalism: Newspaper 3, • Adv Journalism: Yearbook 3, • AP English Literature and Composition, • IB Language Studies A1 HL. • CTE Business English • Humanities • Public Speaking 3 • Comm App (½ credit + ½ add'l ELA) • Oral Interpretation 3 • Debate 3 • Independent Study in Speech • Independent Study in Journalism • A locally developed ELA course (w/apprenticeship & certification) • A locally developed college prep ELA course <p>These substitutions also apply to EL students.</p> <p>El immigrants may substitute English 1 SOL for English 1 & English 2. There is no substitute for English III. Students may not substitute or exchange AP English Literature and Composition for English III.</p>	<p>Four credits</p> <p>English I, II and III</p> <p>The fourth credit of English may be satisfied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English IV, • Independent Study in English • Research/Technical Writing, • Creative/Imaginative Writing, • Literary Genres, • Adv Broadcast Journalism 3, • Adv Journalism: Newspaper 3, • Adv Journalism: Yearbook 3, • AP English Literature and Composition, • IB Language Studies A1 HL. • CTE Business English • Humanities • Public Speaking 3 • Comm APP (½ credit + ½ add'l ELA) • Oral Interpretation 3 • Debate 3 • Independent Study in Speech • Independent Study in Journalism • A locally developed ELA course (w/apprenticeship & certification) • A locally developed college prep ELA course <p>These substitutions also apply to EL students.</p> <p>El immigrants may substitute English 1 SOL for English 1 & English 2. There is no substitute for English III. Students may not substitute or exchange AP English Literature and Composition for English III.</p>	<p>Four credits</p> <p>English I, II and III</p> <p>The fourth credit of English may be satisfied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English IV, • Independent Study in English • Research/Technical Writing, • Creative/Imaginative Writing, • Literary Genres, • Adv Broadcast Journalism 3, • Adv Journalism: Newspaper 3, • Adv Journalism: Yearbook 3, • AP English Literature and Composition, • IB Language Studies A1 HL. • CTE Business English • Humanities • Public Speaking 3 • Comm App (½ credit + ½ add'l ELA) • Oral Interpretation 3 • Debate 3 • Independent Study in Speech • Independent Study in Journalism • A locally developed ELA course (w/apprenticeship & certification) • A locally developed college prep ELA course <p>These substitutions also apply to EL students.</p> <p>El immigrants may substitute English 1 SOL for English 1 & English 2. There is no substitute for English III. Students may not substitute or exchange AP English Literature and Composition for English III.</p>

College Board advanced placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate areas.

School Guidelines, 2021-2022
 Graduation Requirements

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR STUDENTS BEGINNING 9TH-GRADE in 2014-2015 and beyond

DISCIPLINE	TEA FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (26 Credits)
<p>Mathematics* Proficiency</p> <p>¹ If taken prior to Algebra 2</p> <p>Math Models may not be used as a 4th math.</p>	<p>Three credits to include</p> <p>Algebra I and Geometry</p> <p>Additional credit selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses, subject to prerequisite requirements, from the following courses:</p> <p>Algebra II Pre-calculus; Independent Study in Mathematics Advanced Quantitative Reasoning Discrete Mathematics Statistics Algebraic Reasoning AP Statistics; AP Calculus AB; AP Calculus BC; AP Computer Science A; IB Mathematical Studies Standard Level; IB Mathematics SL; IB Mathematics Higher Level; IB Further Mathematics SL; Engineering Mathematics (CTE); Statistics and Business Decision Making (CTE) Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (CTE)¹; Digital Electronic (CTE) Math for Medical Professionals Robotics Program. & Des. Robotics II Mathematical Models with Applications¹ Discrete Math for Comp Sci, Advanced dual credit course Financial Mathematics Applied Math for Tech. Prof. Accounting II Manufacturing Engineer. Tech. II Locally developed math course w/apprenticeship & certification Locally developed coll. prep math</p>	<p>Three credits</p> <p>Three of the credits must consist of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II</p>	<p>Four credits</p> <p>The credits must consist of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.</p> <p>Additional credit selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses, subject to prerequisite requirements, from the following courses:</p> <p>Pre-calculus; Independent Study in Math Advanced Quantitative Reasoning Discrete Mathematics Statistics Algebraic Reasoning AP Statistics; AP Calculus AB; AP Calculus BC; AP Computer Science; IB Mathematical Studies Standard Level; IB Mathematics SL; IB Mathematics HL; IB Further Mathematics Standard Level; AP Computer Science A IB Computer Science HL Engineering Mathematics (CTE); Statistics and Business Decision Making (CTE) Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (CTE)¹; Digital Electronic (CTE) Robotics Programming & Design Mathematical Models with Applications¹ Discrete Math for Computer Science Advanced dual credit course Locally developed math course w/apprenticeship & certification Locally developed college prep math course</p>

DISCIPLINE	TEA FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (26 Credits)
<p>Science* Proficiency</p> <p>Credit may not be earned for both Physics and Principles of Technology to satisfy science credit requirements.</p> <p>Arts and Humanities endorsement may substitute ELA, Social Studies, LOTE, or Fine Arts course for the Science course with parent permission.</p>	<p>Three credits One credit must consist of Biology, AP Biology or IB Biology.</p> <p>One credit must be selected from: IPC; Chemistry; AP Chemistry; IB Chemistry; Physics; Principles of Technology; AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based; and IB Physics</p> <p>The additional credits may be selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses subject to prerequisite requirements :Chemistry; Physics; Aquatic Science; Astronomy; Earth and Space Science; Environmental Systems; AP Biology; AP Chemistry; AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based; AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based; AP Physics C; AP Environmental Science; IB Biology; IB Chemistry; IB Physics; IB Environmental Systems; Advanced Animal Science (CTE); Advanced Plant and Soil Science (CTE); Anatomy and Physiology (CTE);</p>	<p>Three credits One credit must consist of Biology, AP Biology or IB Biology.</p> <p>One credit must be selected from: IPC; Chemistry; AP Chemistry; IB Chemistry; Physics; Principles of Technology; AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based; and IB Physics</p> <p>The additional credits may be selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses subject to prerequisite requirements Chemistry; Physics; Aquatic Science; Astronomy; Earth and Space Science; Environmental Systems; AP Biology; AP Chemistry; AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based; AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based; AP Physics C; AP Environmental Science; IB Biology; IB Chemistry; IB Physics; IB Environmental Systems; Advanced Animal Science (CTE); Advanced Plant and Soil Science (CTE); Anatomy and Physiology (CTE);</p>	<p>Four credits One credit must consist of Biology, or an AP or IB Biology course.</p> <p>One credit must be selected from: IPC; Chemistry; AP Chemistry; IB Chemistry; Physics; Principles of Technology; AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based; and IB Physics</p> <p>The additional credits may be selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses subject to prerequisite requirements Chemistry; Physics; Aquatic Science; Astronomy; Earth and Space Science; Environmental Systems; AP Biology; AP Chemistry; AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based; AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based; AP Physics C; AP Environmental Science; IB Biology; IB Chemistry; IB Physics; IB Environmental Systems; Advanced Animal Science (CTE); Advanced Plant and Soil Science (CTE);</p>

College Board advanced placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate areas.

DISCIPLINE	TEA FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (26 Credits)
Science* Proficiency (continued)	Medical Microbiology (CTE); Pathophysiology (CTE); Food Science (CTE); Forensic Science (CTE); Biotechnology I (CTE); Biotechnology II (CTE); Principles of Technology; Scientific Research and Design (CTE); Engineering Design and Problem Solving (CTE); Engineering Science; Advanced dual credit course A locally developed science course (w/apprenticeship & certification))	Medical Microbiology (CTE); Pathophysiology (CTE); Food Science (CTE); Forensic Science (CTE); Biotechnology I (CTE); Biotechnology II (CTE); Principles of Technology; Scientific Research and Design (CTE); Engineering Design and Problem Solving (CTE); Engineering Science Advanced dual credit course A locally developed science course (w/apprenticeship & certification)	Anatomy and Physiology (CTE) Medical Microbiology (CTE); Pathophysiology (CTE); Food Science (CTE); Forensic Science (CTE); Biotechnology I (CTE); Biotechnology II (CTE) Principles of Technology; Scientific Research and Design (CTE); Engineering Design and Problem Solving (CTE); Engineering Science Advanced dual credit course A locally developed science course (w/apprenticeship & certification)
Social Studies * Proficiency	Three credits taken in prescribed sequence Two credits must consist of US History (one credit), US Government (one-half credit) and Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System (one-half credit). The final credit may be selected from World History and World Geography.	Four credits taken in prescribed sequence World Geography Studies - one credit (Grade 9) World History Studies - one credit (Grade 10) US History Since Reconstruction - one credit (Grade 11) US Government - one-half credit (Grade 12) Economics one-half credit (Grade 12)	Four credits taken in prescribed sequence World Geography Studies - one credit (Grade 9) World History Studies - one credit (Grade 10) US History Since Reconstruction - one credit (Grade 11) US Government - one-half credit (Grade 12) Economics one-half credit (Grade 12)

College Board advanced placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate areas.

<p>Languages Other Than English *</p> <p>Computer Science credits must be earned before 9-1-16.</p>	<p>Two credits</p> <p>The credits may be selected from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any two levels in the same language; or two credits in computer programming languages selected from Computer Science I, II, and III, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Computer Science A, IB Computer Science HL, or IB Computer Science SL. <p>Special Provisions for 504 students and students with disabilities can be found 19 TAC Chapter 74.</p>	<p>Two credits</p> <p>The credits may be selected from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any two levels in the same language; or two credits in computer programming languages selected from Computer Science I, II, and III, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Computer Science A, IB Computer Science HL, or IB Computer Science SL. <p>Special Provisions for 504 students and students with disabilities can be found 19 TAC Chapter 74.</p>	<p>Two credits</p> <p>The credits may be selected from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any two levels in the same language; or two credits in computer programming languages selected from Computer Science I, II, and III, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Computer Science A, IB Computer Science HL, or IB Computer Science SL. <p>Special Provisions for 504 students and students with disabilities can be found 19 TAC Chapter 74.</p>
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College Board advanced placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate areas.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
 FOR STUDENTS BEGINNING 9TH-GRADE in 2014-2015 and beyond**

DISCIPLINE	TEA FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (26 Credits)
Languages Other Than English (continued)	One credit in a foreign language and one credit in: Special Topics in Language & Culture, LOTE, or computer programming languages, if student is unlikely to be successful in 2 nd year language.	One credit in a foreign language and one credit in: Special Topics in Language & Culture, LOTE, or computer programming languages, if student is unlikely to be successful in 2 nd year language.	One credit in a foreign language and one credit in: Special Topics in Language & Culture, LOTE, or computer programming languages, if student is unlikely to be successful in 2 nd year language.
Physical Education	One credit Foundations of Personal Fitness Adventure/Outdoor Education Aerobic Activities Team or Individual Sports Other TEKS course w/100 minutes per week of physical activity Athletics JROTC Other Commissioner and district approved physical activity programs Drill Team Marching Band Cheerleading Other core elective if student cannot participate per ARD/504	One credit Foundations of Personal Fitness Adventure/Outdoor Education Aerobic Activities Team or Individual Sports Other TEKS course w/100 minutes per week of physical activity Athletics JROTC Other Commissioner and district approved physical activity programs Drill Team Marching Band Cheerleading Other core elective if student cannot participate per ARD/504	One credit Foundations of Personal Fitness Adventure/Outdoor Education Aerobic Activities Team or Individual Sports Other TEKS course w/100 minutes per week of physical activity Athletics JROTC Other Commissioner and district approved physical activity programs Drill Team Marching Band Cheerleading Other core elective if student cannot participate per ARD/504
Health Education		One-half credit Principals of Health Science (one credit)	One-half credit Principals of Health Science (one credit)

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**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
 FOR STUDENTS BEGINNING 9TH-GRADE in 2014-2015 and beyond**

DISCIPLINE	TEA FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (22 Credits)	HISD DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (26 Credits)
<i>Fine Arts</i>	<p><i>One sequential credit taken in prescribed sequence (cannot be mixed)</i></p> <p>Art, Level I, II, III, or IV; Dance, Level I, II, III, or IV; Music, Level I, II, III, or IV; Theatre, Level I, II, III, or IV Principals and Elements of Floral Design (CTE); Digital Art and Animation; 3-D Modeling and Animation Board and TEA approved community-based program</p> <p>(Speech and Debate may not substitute.)</p> <p>AP, IB, or dual credit college fine arts courses may substitute.</p>	<p><i>One sequential credit taken in prescribed sequence (cannot be mixed)</i></p> <p>Art, Level I, II, III, or IV; Dance, Level I, II, III, or IV; Music, Level I, II, III, or IV; Theatre, Level I, II, III, or IV Principals and Elements of Floral Design (CTE); Digital Art and Animation; 3-D Modeling and Animation Board and TEA approved community-based program</p> <p>(Speech and Debate may not substitute.)</p> <p>AP, IB, or dual credit college fine arts courses may substitute.</p>	<p><i>One sequential credit taken in prescribed sequence (cannot be mixed)</i></p> <p>Art, Level I, II, III, or IV; Dance, Level I, II, III, or IV; Music, Level I, II, III, or IV; Theatre, Level I, II, III, or IV Principals and Elements of Floral Design (CTE); Digital Art and Animation; 3-D Modeling and Animation Board and TEA approved community-based program</p> <p>(Speech and Debate may not substitute.)</p> <p>AP, IB, or dual credit college fine arts courses may substitute.</p>
<i>Electives</i>	<p><i>Five credits</i></p> <p>These are elective credits to be selected from: the list of courses approved by the SBOE for Grades 9- 12 as specified in TAC §74.1; state-approved innovative courses, Junior Reserve Office Training Corps (JROTC) (one to four credits); or Driver Education (one-half credit) – transferred from another school district.</p>	<p><i>Three and one-half credits</i></p> <p>These are elective credits to be selected from: the list of courses approved by the SBOE for Grades 9- 12 as specified in TAC §74.1; state-approved innovative courses, Junior Reserve Office Training Corps (JROTC) (one to four credits); or Driver Education (one-half credit) – transferred from another school district.</p>	<p><i>Five and one-half credits</i></p> <p>These credits include the completion of endorse requirements.</p>

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Technology Applications Course Sequence Option

Students may also satisfy their technology applications proficiency through the completion of three credits (for students participating in a coherent sequence of career and technical education courses or who are enrolled in a Tech Prep High School plan of study) consisting of two or more state-approved Career and Technical Education courses in TAC Chapters 127 and 130. Districts shall ensure that Career and Technical Education courses, including innovative courses, in a coherent sequence used to meet the technology applications credit are appropriate to collectively teach the knowledge and skills found in any of the approved technology applications courses. Students pursuing the technology applications option described in this subparagraph must demonstrate proficiency in the technology applications prior to the beginning of Grade 11.

TECH PREP/ “2+2 OR 4+2” PROGRAMS

Tech Prep education program is a combined secondary and post-secondary program which may begin with grade 9 of high school and continue through two years of post-secondary education which: Tech Prep Programs are developed, implemented, and maintained in partnership among the CTE department, secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, business and industry and approved by Texas Education Agency and Texas Higher Coordinating Board which leads to post-secondary education and/or employment in an occupational field.

The Tech Prep Program is also compatible with the Recommended High School Program. Students completing a TEA-approved Tech Prep Program would meet the criteria for the Recommended High School Program as long as the program meets the English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, health, fine arts, and computing proficiencies, and provides the equivalent of a 24-credit program (or 26- credit program for 9th graders entering in 2007-2008). It could also satisfy the requirements of the Distinguished Achievement Program if applicable advanced measures are completed.

General Educational Developmental Test / High School Equivalency Program (HSEP)

TEC §29.087 severely limits the students eligible to participate in a High School Equivalency Program (HSEP). HISD currently does not operate in-school GED programs.

Further information on GED and the High School Equivalency Program is available at:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/hsep>

XXIII. EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE CONTRACT CAMPUSESTEC §7.006 requires that the commissioner of education and the commissioner of higher education ensure that records of TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board are coordinated and maintained in standardized compatible formats to permit exchange of information between agencies so that a student’s academic performance may be assessed throughout the student’s educational career.

REGISTRAR/COUNSELOR/DEAN TEAM CONCEPT

- 1.) Principals are directly responsible for all records in their school and must ensure that all data is secure, correct and accurate. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the principal to determine individual responsibilities of all campus personnel and to develop and implement all processes and procedures necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the school.
- 2.) All school personnel must follow an effective data flow process to ensure that all changes or adjustments to student schedules or grades receive the required approvals and are distributed to all appropriate personnel in a timely manner.
- 3.) Effective and frequent communication between deans/counselors and registrars is essential to accurate recordkeeping thereby promoting academic success. Immediate distribution of test scores for: correspondence, credit-by-exam, distance learning, and summer school grades; the exceeding of excessive absence limits; and any other data impacting grades or credit is critical.
- 4.) The AAR is the **official** permanent record of a student's academic achievement. All course credits must be included in the electronic historical file of SIS.
- 5.) The graduation requirements, which a student must satisfy in order to graduate, are those which were in effect at the time the student first entered the 9th grade.
- 6.) Registrars are directly responsible for the validity and accuracy of the AAR, posting grades to the historical record in PowerSchool in a timely manner to ensure scheduling accuracy, the determination of rank in class, and the certification of graduates.
- 7.) It is the responsibility of deans/counselors to use all available resources to ensure all students are appropriately scheduled into valid credit courses that satisfy graduation requirements and comply with all state rules and regulations.
- 8.) There must be a verification process to ensure that courses, grades, and credit on the documents used by deans/counselors to check or verify courses, grades, and credit are identical to those on the AAR.
- 9.) All schedule revisions or adjustments should be approved and completed by deans/counselors.
- 10.) The Data Clerk and the Attendance Clerk, at the direction of the Principal, must also work closely with registrars, deans, and counselors to see that all necessary information impacting attendance and grading are entered into PowerSchool in a timely manner. Each principal should specify a process for facilitating communication among building personnel.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNSELORS/DEANS TO ADDRESS COMPLIANCE ISSUES

- Comply with individual responsibilities, determined by the principal, for each dean/counselor: grade level or alpha assignments, special assignments, and whether or not they remain with students during their grade progression from year- to-year or are assigned to a specific grade level and remain with that grade level. (Establish accountability accordingly.)
- Supervise the completion of all course selection documents to ensure that a student is not signing up for courses for which credit has been awarded and that all courses required for graduation are accounted for in their proper sequence.
- Communicate with the registrar, prior to course scheduling, to verify that grades impacting graduation have been posted to the student's historical file for all grade levels.
- Review the Master Schedule, after preparation by the administration, to identify potential problems related to valid course assignments and the accommodation of student requests.
- Participate in ARD/IEP Committee meetings or receive students IEP to ensure that student's schedule matches the courses listed in the IEPs established by the ARD/IEP Committee.
- Comply with verification process, as determined by the principal, for the enrollment and scheduling of new students, for individual schedule changes with an emphasis on signed verification that student has enrolled or checked out of designated classes, and that all schedule adjustments have been distributed to appropriate classes and entered on the computer.
- Participate, as determined by the principal, in review of academic rosters and report cards to identify and address missing classes and missing grades.
- Develop a personal graduation plan for all students by the end of the students 9th grade year outlining the courses required for graduation. Plans must be updated annually and must include student and parent participation, student and parent signatures and date initiated. Contact student and parent whenever course selection and/or recommendation changes are made by amending the PGP. The personal graduation plan was a mandate by HB5 in 2014 and is required for all students on the Foundation High School Program.
- Each high school is required by state law to post appropriate signs in each dean/counselor's office, principal's office, and administrative building regarding automatic college admission for students ranked in the top 10% of their class.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGISTRARS TO ADDRESS COMPLIANCE ISSUES

- Check Academic Achievement Records/SIS Historical files to determine that:
 - Each student has an Academic Achievement Record (AAR),
 - Courses and grades are posted and up to date,
 - State-administered criterion-referenced test results are recorded, and
 - All posted courses are valid with appropriate credit values.
- Check Academic Achievement Records for students who have graduated to ascertain that the AARs have been signed by the registrar and have been stamped with the appropriate state graduation seal.
- Participate, as determined by the principal, in the review of academic rosters and report cards to identify and address missing classes and missing grades.
- Verify existence of all grade change approval forms, signed by the principal, and enter/post approved grade changes in the grade files or SIS Historical File by the end of the next grading cycle.
- Post correspondence, credit by exam, distance learning, and summer school grades to SIS Historical Files within acceptable time frames and distribute copies to counselors and other appropriate personnel.
- Comply with procedures for the requesting and retrieval of grades for transfer students, the recording of these grades, and the distribution of grades to all appropriate school personnel involved in the data flow process.
- Comply with all requests for records within the prescribed time frames. (All appropriate records, not just transcripts, must be sent.)
- Requests for transcripts or student records should be recorded and filed with documentation as to the date and location to which they were sent.
- Ensure that only appropriate courses, credit values, quality points and honors designations are considered in:
 - Determining GPA (Grade 9-12 only)
 - Determining Class Rank
 - Certifying Students for Graduation
 - Certifying Students for Summer School Graduation
 - Reclassifying Students Based on Credit Totals and Cohort year and comply with designated timelines for each process.

- Ensure that teachers **electronic grade books on disks with printouts signed and dated by the teacher** are filed and available for review and that the grade book contains appropriate documentation on absentees and grade legends and codes.
- Ensure the security of the Academic Achievement Records (AAR) while providing access to these records by teachers, deans/counselors, or other school personnel.
- Disseminate top 15% eligibility information to juniors and seniors.
- Provide a junior class ranking on the AAR. The junior class ranking shall be determined upon completion of six semesters and for the campus of attendance during the end of the junior year. The junior ranking will be computed and made available during the last week of June at the campus of attendance during semester six.

DUTIES OF REGISTRAR FOR GRADUATION PREPARATION

Validate Seniors for Graduation

- Upon request of the office of Academic Services, the registrar shall send to that department a list of all potential graduates, designating the semester in which requirements will be completed.
- In order to facilitate this procedure, it is recommended that prior to the opening of school, the registrar or the senior counselor list all the students who could not possibly accumulate enough credits to graduate that year and move these students to a junior homeroom. At the same time, records need to be checked for juniors who are accelerating (i.e., may graduate in 3 years).
- A student **may not** receive a diploma or participate in graduation ceremonies (commencement exercises) unless that student has completed all academic course and credit requirements and has passed the exit-level state-administered criterion referenced test.
- A principal or registrar **may not** certify a student for graduation if that student has not completed **ALL** graduation requirements mandated by the state or HISD or determined by the ARD/IEP Committee in a special education student's IEP. Graduation requirements **may not** be waived.
- All student class work related to "offsite" courses (e.g. dual credit, Virtual School, Graduation Lab correspondence, etc.) must have been completed and credit verified before any credit(s) from those courses may be used to satisfy specific graduation requirements. The same principles apply to summer school graduation.

- A school **may not** arbitrarily change the title of a course on a student’s transcript in order to satisfy graduation requirements or for any other purpose.
- A school **may not** adjust credit values of any course. All credit values **must** match the credit designation displayed in the HISD Master Course Catalog.
- A school **may not** award “Dual Credit” to a student that has not taken or passed the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) unless that student is TSI exempt because of STAAR, SAT, or ACT scores.
- Districts are required to consider course credit earned in a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) as credit earned in a district school.

Ranking of Students in Grades 9 - 12

Each year, the graduating seniors (including summer school graduates) of every HISD high school are ranked according to their individual grade point averages to provide information requested by colleges, universities, businesses, etc. on admission or employment applications. Also each year, class rank of graduating senior students shall be calculated on the basis of their grade point average (GPA) at the end of the first semester preceding graduation. Effective for incoming grade 9 students as of the 2017–18 school year, the GPA shall only include semester averages of courses taken and completed in grades 9–12 for credit, except for some special education courses that may not be used in calculating class rank.

Beginning freshman year of high school in the 2019-2020 academic year, **all students in grades 9 - 12** will receive a class rank based on their grade point average (GPA) only including semester averages taken and completed in grades 9 – 12 for credit, except for some special education courses that may not be used in calculation. The semester and cumulative GPA for freshmen, sophomores and juniors will be calculated at the end of each respective semester. Preliminary student rankings shall be calculated at the end of each spring semester and will be inclusive of all eligible coursework completed and posted on the AAR up until that point.

- Numerous colleges or university entrance requirements and scholarship qualifications are based upon the quartile rank of the student as determined during the ranking process. Students who rank in the top ten percent of their class qualify for “automatic admission” to some Texas state universities and colleges. **Official ranking** of graduates shall be computed at the end of the first semester preceding their graduation. Students in schools with a 9-week accelerated block schedule will be ranked after the second 9-week term. All students classified in Grade 12 should receive written documentation of their

official, final spring ranking within the 1st six weeks of the final semester. Registrars are strongly encouraged to complete senior ranks one week prior to the District due date and manually calculate the top 15% of the class.

- The acceleration of the college admissions process in recent years through **early decision** and **early action plans** make it essential for high school seniors to be provided an **unofficial, preliminary fall ranking** well in advance of their official, final spring ranking. The unofficial preliminary fall ranking shall be computed upon completion of six semesters (including summer school) and for the campus of attendance during the fall semester of the senior year. All students classified in Grade 12 should receive written documentation of their unofficial, preliminary fall ranking no later than the first Friday in October.
- Mid-year reports requested by colleges as part of students' college applications shall be submitted to college institutions no later than the third Friday of January. The mid-year report is inclusive of all grades up to this point and the October rank.
- Students who will graduate during the current school year and are enrolled in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), Alternative Education Program (AEP), HISD charter or any contract school that does not have graduation exercises and issue diplomas must be ranked by their home school based on their GPA. In order to ensure that rank-in-class procedures are carried out in compliance with district policy, it is the responsibility of personnel at the alternative and HISD charter schools to forward all grades earned by students in these schools to the registrar of the student's home campus immediately after the issuance of grades for the fall semester.

Home campus registrars must calculate the student's GPA based on the student's total high school transcript, including all grades from the Alternative campus, and assign the student an appropriate rank within the home school's graduating class. These students may participate in commencement exercises and are also eligible for inclusion in the calculation of the top ten percent of the graduating class if their GPA justifies it. Such a student is **not** eligible to be valedictorian or salutatorian since the student is not officially enrolled in the home school.

If a student's GPA is calculated to be number one in the class, an asterisk should be placed by the student's name stating that the student does not meet eligibility requirements for valedictorian. In this scenario, the student and parents should be notified prior to the official ranking.

- Any loss of credit resulting from a student's failure to meet HISD attendance requirements has no bearing on the person's GPA or rank. **The student's GPA, rank and quartile rank must be recorded on the student's transcript.**
- Class rank shall be determined by semester averages of all courses recognized for credit. In accordance with state law and district guidelines, some special

education courses are not included in determining class rank.

- Quartile rankings will be established by dividing by four the total number of students in the senior class who are eligible for ranking. For example, a school with 500 students would have 125 students in each quartile. The exact number of students in each quartile could change if there are several students with the same GPA at the cut-off.

Example: Graduating class -- 500 students 125th student has a 3.1951 GPA
126th student also has a 3.1951 GPA 127th student also has a
3.1951 GPA

All students would be ranked as number 125; therefore, the first quartile would actually consist of 127 total students.

The second quartile would begin with rank number 128 and consist of only 123 students.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Eligibility for Seniors Graduating in 2019-2020 Only

To be eligible for the **Valedictorian or Salutatorian honors or the Highest Ranking Senior Certificate** beginning in the 2016 - 2017 academic year at a particular school, a student must have been enrolled in the school from the first day of the junior academic school year per HISD Board Policy EIC(Local) effective as of 8/22/2016. Determination of which student is named "highest ranking graduate" at each high school is a decision which rest strictly with HISD. All incoming **juniors** are required to meet the school guideline's requirement to qualify for valedictorian or salutatorian honors.

The student with the highest-grade point average, whether in regular or magnet programs, shall receive valedictorian honors; the student with the second highest grade point average shall be salutatorian. Both students must have been enrolled in the high school from the first day of the junior academic school year.

To be eligible for such recognition, a student must:

- Have been enrolled in the same HISD high school from which he/she is graduating from the first day of school in his/her junior academic year.
- Be scheduled to graduate in May or June at the end of his/her regular senior academic year.

The above rules do not apply to students classified under Migrant, Homeless or Foster Care coding. Students in those exceptional circumstances shall be eligible for valedictorian and salutatorian honors without any term of enrollment or residency requirements. Students completing all graduation requirements and state assessments (no opportunity for IGC) in three years are eligible to receive Valedictorian or Salutatorian honors.

Example of Class Ranking for a High School:

	Name of Student	Average	Rank
1.	Smith, Mary Ann	4.1012	1
2.	Jones, Cary Glenn	4.0122	2
3.	Buck, Ruby	4.0056	3
4.	Cox, Carol	4.0000	4
5.	Doe, Jane	4.0000	4
6.	Wright, Dolores	3.8654	6

Honor Students

- The top 5 percent of the graduating class shall be designated as graduating with "Highest Honors."
- The next 10 percent of each graduating class will be designated as graduating with "Honors." This will complete the top 15% of the class.
- When figuring the number of students to be included in the top five percent and ten percent of the graduating class, any fraction should be rounded up to the next highest number. This rule also applies when figuring quartiles.

Example: A school with 114 graduating seniors would have six students in the top five percent and twelve students in the next ten percent.

$$\begin{array}{r} 114 \\ \times .05 \\ \hline 5.70 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 114 \\ \times .10 \\ \hline 11.40 \end{array}$$

- The calculation of the top 15 percent of each graduating class shall be based upon the total number of students eligible for general classrank.

Example: A school with 500 students would have 25 in the upper 5 percent and 50 in the next 10 percent. This would be the upper 15 percent of the class.

$$\begin{array}{r} 500 \\ \times .05 \\ \hline 25.00 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 500 \\ \times .10 \\ \hline 50.00 \end{array}$$

The first quartile (25%) would include these 75 students plus the next 50 for a total of 125 in the first quartile.

GPA's for Ranking of Graduates

- The grade point values for classes will be based on a four-point system. For Advanced classes, an additional grade-point value will be given. Colleges and universities refer to this as a 4.0 weighted system.
- GPA's should be computed to the fifth decimal place and rounded off to the fourth decimal place.
- The following point values apply in the ranking of graduates:

General Classes		Advanced Classes		Modified	
A (90-100)	= 4	A (90-100)	= 5	A (90-100)	= 3
B (80-89)	= 3	B (80-89)	= 4	B (80-89)	= 2
C (75-79)	= 2	C (75-79)	= 3	C (75-79)	= 1.5
D (70-74)	= 1	D (70-74)	= 2	D (70-74)	= 1
F (Below 70)	= 0	F (Below 70)	= 0	F (Below 70)	= 0

- Advanced Classes are PreAP, PreIB, AP, IB, Dual Credit, OnRamps and Local Honors.
- Modified Classes are courses in the HISD Master Course Catalog.
- Multiple-period courses or Career Preparation programs for which credit is received shall be calculated in the same manner as a single period multiplied by the number of periods per day that the class meets or represents.
- If a student repeats a course, either to make up a failure or to improve his grade, both courses and grades will be recorded on the Academic Achievement Record. Credit is awarded only once – the first time that a passing grade is achieved. In determining the student's GPA for class ranking, the courses and grades are computed as if each were a separate and different course. For example, if a student has taken Biology 1A twice with grades of 72 and 85, a total of 2 courses and 4 grade points are used to compute the GPA.

EXAMPLE A:

Alg 1A	60	0.00 Credits		
Alg 1A	77	0.50 Credits	Total grade points	= 2
Total courses		= 2		
GPA		= 1.000		

EXAMPLE B:

Alg 1A	72	0.50 Credits		
Alg 1A	95	0.00 Credits	Total grade points	= 5
Total courses		= 2		
GPA		= 2.5000		

EXAMPLE C:

Biol 1A	85	0.50 Credits		
Biol 1A	72	0.00 Credits	Total grade points	= 4
Total courses		= 2		
GPA		= 2.000		

- A student who has a course(s) with a grade of **50W** will have the course(s) included when his GPA is figured.

Summary of Rules for Ranking of Students (All Seniors Graduating)

- Students are ranked based on all courses recognized for credit by TEA or HISD. These courses have a value of 0.50 or more indicated in the HISD Master Course Catalog. Any loss of credit resulting from a student's failure to meet HISD's attendance requirement has no bearing on the individual's GPA or rank.
- Local credit courses must be included in figuring class ranking. These courses will appear in the HISD Master Course Catalog with a designation of "Local Credit."
- Grades earned in high school credit courses taken in grades 7 and 8 are no longer used to determine GPA and class rank. Effective for incoming grade 9 students as of the 2017–18 school year, the GPA shall only include semester averages of courses taken and completed in grades 9–12 for credit, except for some special education courses that may not be used in calculating class rank.
- Grades earned through Correspondence Courses and Credit by Exam --- and which are recorded on the Academic Achievement Record/SIS Historical File --- will be included when figuring a student's GPA and class rank. Grades below 70 on CBE are not recorded on the AAR.
- Special Education courses are not included in determining class rank. All students with disabilities shall be included in determining the total number of graduating seniors.
- To be eligible for the **Valedictorian** and **Salutatorian** honors at a particular school, a student must have been enrolled in that school from the first day of the student's junior academic school year. HISD Board Policy EIC(Local)
- To be eligible for school honors based on academic achievement, i.e., School Board Award, etc., a student must earn his/her last five credits at the school in which the awards are presented --- at least two of which must be completed before the time of final ranking. HISD Board Policy EIC(Local)-X
- To be considered an honor graduate (highest honors or honors), it is required that a student shall have completed at least one semester in an HISD high school immediately prior to the time of the final ranking.

- Only those students who qualify for the spring commencement exercises will be eligible for the academic honors of valedictorian or salutatorian. A summer school graduate, even though ranked with the general senior class, will not be eligible for these two honor designations.
- Valedictorian, Salutatorian, Top 15% Ranking and Highest Honor Certificate Eligibility for Incoming 9th and 10th Graders in 2019-2020 and Beyond
- Effective for incoming 9th and 10th graders to be ranked within the top 15%, a student must be enrolled in the school from which he or she is graduating from, the first day of the junior academic year with the exception of students classified as migrant, homeless, in foster care, or with a parent who was relocated due to military service after the first day of the junior academic year. Students who do not fall in these categories but with exceptional circumstances may appeal to the District Registrar in the Office of Counseling and Compliance for consideration no later than 10 calendar days after the rankings have been issued. The decision of the Registrar's Office is final.
- Determination of which student is named "highest ranking graduate" at each high school is a decision which rests strictly with the District. All incoming juniors are required to meet the School Guidelines' requirement to qualify for valedictorian, salutatorian honors and highest-ranking senior certificate.
- Ranking is based on the final GPA calculated in February of the students' senior year. In the case of a tie, no high school can award more than two highest ranking graduate certificates and tuition waivers. If more than two students tie for highest ranking graduate, then the district registrar will calculate the average of all grades on the AAR, that were earned in high school, for each student in the tie. The two students with the highest grade average will be awarded the highest-ranking certificate and tuition waiver.

Diplomas

- To receive a diploma a student must complete the academic course requirements and must pass the exit-level state-administered criterion referenced test.
- To receive a diploma from an HISD school, a student must enroll in that school during the first 15 days of the last semester of his/her senior year (or the first six days of the last semester if enrolled in a school with the accelerated 9-week block schedule), earn at least two credits, and pass the exit-level state-administered criterion referenced test.

A student who does not meet these criteria should receive a diploma and class ranking from either the school where the student was previously enrolled or the campus where the student is able to satisfy the diploma criteria.

This policy applies **only** to transfers **within** the district. If at any time during the senior year, a student legally transfers into an HISD school from any other district or state charter school and completes graduation requirements at the HISD school, that student will receive a diploma from the HISD school in which the student is enrolled. If the student enrolls after the official class rank has been calculated, the student should be given a supplemental rank according to their GPA.

- Some HISD charter schools, DAEP's, AEP's, contract schools, and other special programs provide educational services for high school seniors but do not issue diplomas. Students enrolled at these schools will officially graduate from their "home" campus or the last school attended if an official transfer was approved. "Home" campus is defined as the HISD campus **last attended** by the student prior to enrollment in or referral to the charter school, AEP, DAEP, or contracted school. Only if the last HISD campus was an elementary or middle school, will the "home" campus be determined by the student's residence.
- Students who complete graduation requirements in HISD charter schools or contract programs that do not issue diplomas and who have **never been enrolled in a HISD** school, will receive a generic diploma. Registrars should request generic diplomas for these students from the approved HISD vendor.
- Students who have not received final grades in all required courses are ineligible to participate in commencement ceremonies. This includes students who are waiting for final grades earned in correspondence courses, Virtual School, Night High School, Houston Community College, Graduation Labs and Credit by Exam,

as well as grades for any final exams that have not been administered. **Only students who have completed all graduation requirements are eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies.**

- Since 2007, by state law, a student with disabilities is allowed to participate in a graduation ceremony after completing four years of high school, even if the student has not yet completed graduation requirements contained in the student's IEP. SB673 permits students with disabilities to receive a **Certificate of Attendance** at the graduation ceremony and return to school to complete the graduation requirements in the IEP. **The student can participate in only one graduation ceremony.** Therefore, the student may choose to complete graduation requirements in the IEP before participating in a graduation ceremony.
- A certificate of coursework completion may be issued to a student who successfully completes the curriculum requirements identified by the SBOE but who fails to perform satisfactorily on the state-administered criterion referenced test. If a certificate of completion is issued, a notation (but not a seal) will be made on the transcript.
Once the student has successfully passed all parts of state-administered criterion referenced test, the student may return the Certificate of Completion and receive a diploma.

A student who receives a Certificate of Completion will not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

- Students temporarily residing abroad and out-of-school youths and adults must earn a minimum of 12 state-required units of credit in residence if they wish to apply for an HISD diploma. If graduation requirements are completed at an institution that awards high school diplomas, then the diploma should be awarded by the institution where the student completed his high school requirements. However, if the student meets the in-residence credit requirements, and wishes to receive a diploma from HISD, the diploma issued to him would be a generic diploma (no high school name will be listed).

Application for a High School Diploma for Certain Veterans

TEC 28.0251 authorizes a school district to issue, posthumously or not, a high school diploma to veterans who were honorably discharged from the U.S. armed forces:

- ✓ scheduled to graduate after 1940 but before 1975, or after 1989
- ✓ who left high school after completing grade 6 or higher, but before graduation
- ✓ to serve in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War, the Iraq War or the war in Afghanistan

19 TAC 61.1061(c) defines acceptable evidence of eligibility for a diploma under TEC, §28.0251, as:

- (1) a completed, signed, and dated application form; and
- (2) a copy of the discharge notification (DD form 214, enlisted record and report of

separation, or discharge certificate) from the appropriate branch of the United States armed forces indicating dates of military service.

The completed "Application for a High School Diploma for Certain Veterans" form and required documentation should be submitted to HISD's Center for Inactive Student Records. This form is available at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>.

Registrar's Duties After Ranking of Graduates:

- Notify each student in writing of his rank, quartile, and GPA.
- Prepare diploma list, list of highest honor and honor graduates, and send to the office of School Administration on the requested date.
- Validate seniors upon completion of graduation requirements and notify those who fail to meet requirements.

Registrar's Duties After Graduation

- Photocopy, TReX, emailed or mail the final transcripts to colleges. An official transcript shall be provided by the campus registrar or by the principal's designee. A student may have official transcripts sent to the college, university, or business of his/her choice free of charge. For each transcript sent after that, a \$1 fee may be charged. In addition, an official signed copy of a transcript may be given to the parent (of an enrolled student) or an adult student in a sealed envelope.
- During the summer months, registrars or the Principal's designee will make available the final transcript for students and parents.
The Texas Public Information Act requires that an **unaltered copy** of a student's records must be issued upon request to that student's parent or guardian or to the student himself if he is 18 years old. The requesting party may be charged a \$1 fee for each copy after first copy issued of an official personal transcript. (See "Rights of Access to the Academic Achievement Record")
- Print date of graduation, number in class, quartile, rank, GPA, Graduation Program Type, CPR and Officer Training information on each graduate's Academic Achievement Record.
- Print date student passed each section of the exit-level state-administered criterion referenced test
- Include a notation on the student's transcript if he received a certificate of coursework completion instead of a diploma.
- Sign each AAR in the top right-hand corner on the signature line to certify that a student has met all graduation requirements.
- File the records for the current graduates in a master graduate file by year of graduation.

THE TEXAS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RECORD

The Texas Education Agency has published “Academic Achievement Record, 2012 Minimum Standards” available at www.tea.state.tx.us/taa/stanalign071508a.html. The Academic Achievement Record (AAR) is the official and permanent record of a student’s academic performance during high school (grades 9-12) and high school courses completed prior to high school. (TEC §28.025(c))

Entries on the AAR of actual courses taken, grades earned, credit awarded, and codes denoting special explanations must be consistent with teachers’ records and the student’s individual education plan (IEP), when applicable. Entries may not be altered or removed except to correct errors. Error corrections must be fully explained in the student’s permanent record. Failure to maintain the AAR accurately or any attempt to alter the document with intent to use it for fraudulent purposes is a misdemeanor. (TEC §25.001(h))

An AAR must be completed for all students enrolled in a high school program. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 will continue to have their grades recorded on the middle school Permanent Record Card.

As of May 16, 2008, requested AARs must be transferred through the TREx system (TEC§7.010). The TREx system permits the electronic transfer of student records between Texas public school districts as well as the electronic transfer of high school transcripts to Texas public college and universities that use the UT SPEEDE server services. An AAR requested by entities not required to participate in the TREx system may be mailed, faxed, or delivered via other appropriate means.

TEC §56.302 authorizes the student financial assistance program known as the Toward Excellence, Access, and Success (Texas) grant and provided grants to enable students to attend public and private institutions of higher education in Texas. TEC 56.308(b)(2) also requires school districts to ensure that each student’s AAR or diploma indicate whether the student has completed or is on schedule to complete the Recommended, Distinguished Achievement or Foundations high school programs. This information must be included on the student transcript by the end of the student’s junior year.

The AAR 2012 Minimum Standards provides flexibility for local districts. There are no requirements concerning the format, medium, or method of delivery; however, the standard content must be complete and unaltered.

Rights of Access to the Academic Achievement Record:

- The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Section 1232g; Family Educational Privacy Rights; and the Texas Attorney General Open Records Decision Number 152, Obligation to Make Available Copies of Student Education Records, January 28, 1977, mandate that students and their parents have an undeniable right to the AAR. It is illegal to withhold the transcript because the student or the family owes money to the school or for any other reason. The student/family has a right to an exact, unaltered replica of the original file document including any signatures, embossed stamps, school seals, or other certifying documentation already affixed to the AAR.

A school must not alter the AAR in any way when providing a copy to a student/family. Do not stamp "Unofficial Copy" on the AAR when providing a copy to the student/family.

All parents, not just custodial parents, have the right to see records unless a binding legal document such as a state law or divorce decree says otherwise. Therefore, a request for records accompanied by a signed release of records statement from either parent must be honored provided that there is no court injunction that prohibits such action.

Universities or other entities that request official copies of the AAR directly from school districts are responsible for obtaining authority from students for release of such records. Students may also request direct mailings of official copies to colleges or to prospective employers. An official AAR provided by the school district may be differentiated from the copy given to the student or family. The words "Official Copy" imply that the AAR is transmitted directly from the school to the authorized requesting institution without the possibility of alteration. A transcript copy should be marked or stamped "Official Copy" only at the time of its authorized release to another institution or student-approved recipient, excluding parents. This stamp or manual entry is never put on the original file document and is not placed on the copy provided to the student or family. The principal, registrar, or their designee may also print or type his or her name and title and sign and date the AAR. An embossed school seal may also be used on official copies of the AAR along with the "Official Copy" entry.

(TEC §31.104d) The AAR may be withheld from a university of entity other than the student\guardian or another public school district\charter school if a student owes the district money related to instructional materials provided through a district instructional materials allotment.

- Districts must ensure that copies of transcripts are made available to schools to which students transfer. **The transfer of the copy of the AAR may not be withheld for any reason.** The copy of the transcript must be forwarded to the receiving district within 30 days of a student's enrollment in that district.

The transcript is important for a student's appropriate placement and continued education as well as for various reports and entries on the state-administered criterion referenced test forms. The right of access to the transcript is protected by law. (TEC §25.002)

The TEA also has adopted common course titles which must appear on the AAR (PEIMS Code Table C022).

Academic Achievement Historical File

Since the student information system has the capability to update grades for previous years and summer school, registrars must create and maintain an academic achievement historical file of student grades for each student. With accurate grades on file, the computer has the capacity to generate GPAs, rank seniors, provide credit checks, generate electronic transcripts, and numerous other tasks now performed manually.

Each school should have a complete historical file.

CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS

- The HISD will no longer issue the Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) student status, Form I-20, for the attendance of foreign students because of a conflict between federal law and Texas law over the federal requirement that students applying for an F-1 Visa pay tuition and new requirements that each school be certified individually to enroll foreign students.
- Students from foreign countries who are under the sponsorship of an authorized student exchange program and have entered the United States with a J-1 Visa shall be allowed to enroll for one school year and shall be issued an HISD *Certificate of Achievement*. This document along with a report card is required by their home countries to prove their attendance in HISD. This document is not to be construed to be a diploma or proof of graduation.
- These procedures apply only to those students attending HISD under the sponsorship of an officially approved foreign exchange program.
- Authorized programs are those included in *The Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Program*, published by the Council of
- Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), and the programs specifically approved by the HISD Board of Education (see list below). More information on CSIET is available at www.csiet.org.

Programs specifically approved by the HISD Board of Education include the following:

American Field Service Students (AFS), www.afs.org
Approved 1961

Youth for Understanding (YFU), www.yfu.org
Approved 1972

American Institute for Foreign Studies (AIFS)
www.aifs.org

American-Scandinavia Student Exchange, www.asse.com
Approved 1977

Japan-American Cultural Exchange, Approved 1977

World Learning www.worldlearning.org Approved 1985
as The Experiment in International Learning **American Intercultural Student Exchange, www.aise.com**

Approved 1985

Academic Year in America (AYA), www.aifs.com/aya
Approved March 1, 1990