

IKF - GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The graduation requirements of the Cape Elizabeth School Department (CESD) are designed to ensure that students demonstrate proficiency to the content standards and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results prior to earning a diploma.

Students demonstrate proficiency by earning credit for courses and other approved learning experiences whose curricula are aligned to the content standards and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results.

Before entering high school, students need to know the standards for attaining a high school diploma in order to plan an appropriate, sequential, educational program to meet that goal. The Superintendent, through the high school principal or other designee, shall be responsible for making accurate information concerning diploma requirements available to incoming students and their parents prior to the start of their ninth grade school year, and as soon as practicable when there is any change in State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma. A copy of this policy will be disseminated to all incoming ninth grade students at the time of course selection and will also be included in every edition of the high school student handbook.

The school unit's instructional program is aligned with the content standards of Maine's system of Learning Results. A diploma from Cape Elizabeth High School signifies that the graduate has completed the requirements described in Maine law and Board policy, and is ready to enter a postsecondary educational program or career as a clear and effective communicator, a self-directed and life-long learner, a creative and practical problem solver, a responsible and involved citizen and an informed and integrative thinker. The Board has approved the following schedule of minimum requirements for graduation, which includes requirements specified by the State of Maine. The Board expects the Superintendent/designee to inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any additional State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a diploma.

I. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

I. Students must earn 230 credits, as follows:

1. English Language Arts – 40 credits;
2. Mathematics – 30 credits;
3. Science – 30 credits, including at least ten credits of laboratory study:
 - a. Starting with the Class of 2029, the Science requirement will be: 30 credits, including 10 credits in physics or chemistry, 10 credits in biology, and 10 credits in earth or environmental science; of the 30 credits, at least 10 credits of laboratory study;
4. Social Studies – 30 credits, including American history, World history, government, civics, and personal finance:
 - a. Starting with the Class of 2029, the Social Studies requirement will be: 35 credits, including American history, World history, government, civics, and personal finance;
5. Visual and Performing Arts – 10 credits;
6. Industrial and Computer Technology – 5 credits;

7. Arts or Technology – 5 credits;
8. Health – 5 credits;
9. Physical Education – 10 credits;
10. Electives – 65 credits.
 - a. Starting with the Class of 2029, 60 Elective credits will be required.

II. MULTIPLE PATHWAYS: ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDIT

Students may choose to meet these requirements through learning experiences/multiple pathways other than Cape Elizabeth's course offerings. These learning experiences may include:

1. Early college/Dual enrollment courses;
2. Career and Technical education programming;
3. Online/virtual learning;
4. Apprenticeships, internships, and/or fieldwork;
5. Community service;
6. Study abroad programs;
7. Independent study;
8. Alternative education;
9. Adult education.

Each pathway must provide a quality learning experience that ensures students meet the Maine Learning Results.

II. STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

All secondary students must achieve the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction of the system of Learning Results and graduation requirements established pursuant to Maine law. A student with a disability, as defined in 20-A MRSA Section 7001(1-B) who satisfies the local diploma requirements in the manner specified by the student's IEP must be awarded a high school diploma.

III. STUDENTS IN DUAL ENROLLMENT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A secondary student who has satisfactorily completed their junior and senior years in a dual enrollment career and technical education program formed pursuant to 20-A MRSA Section 6971-6975 may be eligible to receive a high school diploma from Cape Elizabeth High School, although the student may not meet the graduation requirements of 20-A MRSA Section 4722.

IV. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A CAPE ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Cape Elizabeth High School from an educational program that is not aligned with the content standards and Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results, the principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting CESD's graduation requirements.

B. Home-schooled Students

For home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Cape Elizabeth High School, the principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting CESD's graduation requirements. Home-schooled students must be enrolled at Cape Elizabeth High School for their entire senior year in order to receive a diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

Students who leave Cape Elizabeth High School to attend an accredited degree-granting institution of higher education may, upon satisfactory completion of their freshman year, be awarded a diploma even if they have not met the graduation requirements specified for their class herein, provided that the students has notified the principal at the time of their early admission.

D. Early Awarding of Diplomas

Students who have met CESD's graduation requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma with the approval of the principal.

E. Extended Study

Students are eligible for extended years of study to complete the requirements of a diploma if they have not reached the age of 21 at the start of the school year. Students eligible for extended years of study may remain at Cape Elizabeth High School or be referred to other programs and resources that best meet students' needs. Extended study for Multilingual/English learners or students with disabilities shall be specified in their Individual Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP) or IEP, respectively.

F. Participation in Graduation Ceremonies

Students must have met all graduation requirements in order to participate in graduation ceremonies.

G. Honors, Awards, and Scholarships at Graduation

For students in Classes 2024 and 2025 - in order to be eligible for valedictorian status at graduation, a student must have attended Cape Elizabeth High School for at least three semesters prior to graduation. If a student in attendance at Cape Elizabeth High School for less than three semesters prior to graduation qualifies for the "top ten percent," the number of students qualifying for that status will be expanded by one for each student meeting this description. Students in attendance for less than three semesters are otherwise eligible, without condition, for all honors, awards, and scholarships.

For students in Classes 2026 and 2027 - in order to be eligible for valedictorian status at graduation, a student must have attended Cape Elizabeth High School for at least three semesters prior to graduation.

Beginning with the Class of 2028, in order to be eligible for honors or awards based wholly or in part on academic achievement, a student must be considered fully enrolled at Cape Elizabeth High School.

Legal Reference:

- 20-A MRSA § 4502(8), 4722, 6209
- Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules)

Cross Reference:

- [IHDCA](#) - Post Secondary Enrollment Options
- [IKE – Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration of Students](#)
- [IKFA – Early Graduation](#)
- [IKFC – Awarding of High School Course Credit Prior to Grade 9](#)

Adopted:

- November 8, 1994

Revised:

- November 12, 1996
- May 13, 2003
- November 14, 2006
- June 10, 2008
- December 11, 2012
- March 10, 2015
- September 12, 2017
- May 12, 2020
- May 14, 2024
- May 13, 2025

Revision #7

Created 26 October 2021 19:52:10 by Troy Patterson

Updated 22 May 2025 18:40:21 by Andrea Fuller