

**Series 5000 – Instructional Programs**

**Section 5500 – Academic Achievement**

**Policy 5504 – Graduation Requirements for Adolescent Education**

This policy establishes the Harrison County Board of Education requirements for graduation from high school. These requirements are based upon the number of units of credit attained for satisfactory completion of content standards and objectives. The Harrison County Board of Education has the authority to increase graduation requirements beyond the state requirements.

**5504.1 – Definitions**

5504.1.1 Standard Graduation Requirements – the number of required and elective units of credit which must be earned by a student in order to graduate from high school with a standard diploma. A student must also attend at least four years in grades 9-12 unless an attendance exception is granted.

5504.1.2 Modified Graduation Requirements – the alternative learning goals specified in the individualized educational program (IEP) which must be developed by an IEP Team for an eligible student with a disability in order to graduate from high school with a modified diploma. A student must also attend at least four years unless an attendance exception is granted. (Section 5.6.2 of Policy 2510)

5504.1.3 Unit of Credit – credit awarded for the attainment of content standards and objectives from a required or elective area of study that is equivalent to 8100 minutes of classroom instruction.

5504.1.4 Standard Diplomas – diplomas awarded to students, including exceptional students, who satisfactorily complete all state and county standard graduation requirements.

5504.1.5 Modified Diplomas – diplomas awarded to eligible students with a disability who satisfactorily complete modified graduation requirements based on their IEPs.

5504.1.6 Content Standards and Objectives – broad descriptions of what students should know and be able to do in the content area at the end of a K-12 sequence of study. These content standards and objectives have been approved by either the West Virginia Department of Education or the Harrison County Board of Education.

5504.1.7 Alternative Learning Goals – learning goals that are reasonable and attainable for an eligible student with a disability and are determined by the IEP committee. These alternative learning goals do not have to be from the required and elective areas of study for standard graduation requirements.

## 5504.2 – Requirements for Graduation

5504.2.1 Standard Graduation Requirements – the number of required and elective units of credit that must be earned by a student in order to graduate from high school. A standard diploma is the document that is awarded to a student to verify completion of these graduation requirements.

5504.2.2 The total number of units of credit needed for graduation is 28. This policy outlines specific units of credit for graduation.

### Graduation Requirements

#### Graduation Class of 2009

Course Name	Pathways		
	Professional	Skilled	Entry
English	4	4	4
Social Studies	4	4	4
Math	4	4	3
Science	4	3	3
Physical Ed.	1	1	1
Health	1	1	1
Fine Arts	1	1	1
Foreign Language	2	0	0
Concentration*	0	3	4
Electives	7	7	7
<b>Total</b>	28	28	28
Experiential Learning – 30 hour requirement for graduation (completed during 11 <sup>th</sup> or 12 <sup>th</sup> grade years)			

#### Graduation Classes of 2010 and 2011

Course Name	Pathways		
	Professional	Skilled	Entry
English	4	4	4
Social Studies	4	4	4
Math	4	4	4
Science	4	3	3
Physical Ed.	1	1	1
Health	1	1	1
Fine Arts	1	1	1
Foreign Language	2	0	0
Concentration*	0	3	4
Electives	7	7	6
<b>Total</b>	28	28	28
Experiential Learning – 30 hour requirement for graduation (completed during 11 <sup>th</sup> or 12 <sup>th</sup> grade years)			

## Graduation Class of 2012

Course Name	Pathways	
	Professional	Skilled
English	4	4
Social Studies	4	4
Math	4	4
Science	4	3
Physical Ed.	1	1
Health	1	1
Fine Arts	1	1
Foreign Language	2	0
Concentration*	1	4
Electives	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>
Experiential Learning – required completion prior to graduation		

\*Concentration courses are identified courses that relate to the major/cluster chosen on the 5-year plan.

### SEQUENCE OF REQUIRED COURSES

Courses listed are in the order in which they will be taken.

#### 1. English

##### A. Classes of 2009-2012 - All Pathways

English 9  
English 10  
English 11  
English 12

#### 2. Social Studies

##### A. Classes of 2009-2011 - All Pathways

United States Studies to 1900  
World Studies to 1900  
20 and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries  
Civics/Government

##### B. Class of 2012 - All Pathways

World Studies to 1900  
United States Studies to 1900  
20 and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries  
Civics for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

#### 3. Science

##### A. Classes of 2009-2011

###### **Skilled and Entry Pathways**

CATS 9 and two (2) credits above the CATS 9 Level

###### **Professional Pathway**

CATS 9 and three (3) credits above the CATS 9 Level

##### B. Class of 2012

###### **Skilled Pathway**

Physical Science  
Biology or Conceptual Biology  
Chemistry or Conceptual Chemistry

**Professional Pathway**

Physical Science  
Biology or Conceptual Biology  
Chemistry or Conceptual Chemistry  
4<sup>th</sup> Credit must be above Physical Science

**4. Mathematics**

**A. Classes of 2009 - 2011**

**Entry Pathway - graduation class of 2009**

2 of the 3 credits being Algebra I and above

**Entry Pathway – graduation class of 2010**

Four mathematics credits are required with at least 2 of the 4 credits being Algebra I and above

**Skilled and Professional Pathways – graduation classes of 2009-2011**

Four mathematics credits are required with at least 3 of the 4 credits must be Algebra I and above.

**B. Class of 2012**

**Skilled Pathway**

Algebra I or Algebra Support & Algebra I  
Geometry or Applied Geometry  
Conceptual Mathematics  
College Transition Mathematics or Algebra II

**Professional Pathway**

Algebra I  
Geometry  
Algebra II  
Trigonometry  
Pre-Calculus, or Mathematics College Courses, or AP Mathematics Courses or  
College Transition Mathematics Course

\*Students in the professional pathway and college bound students in the skilled pathway, who do not achieve the State assessment College readiness benchmark for mathematics, shall be required to take a college transition mathematics course during their senior year.

\*It is the intent that students will take mathematics annually but must take at least three (3) mathematics classes in grades 9-12.

**5. Foreign Language – Professional Pathway Only**

**A. Classes of 2009-2012**

2 credits in the same foreign language

**6. Physical Education and Health**

**A. Classes of 2009-2012 – All Pathways**

Physical Education  
Health

**7. Fine Arts**

**A. Classes of 2009-2012 – All Pathways**

1 credit of a Fine Art

8 - Experiential Learning is required and must be in an area related to the student's career cluster as reflected in the student's Five Year Plan.

9 - Elective credits are the additional offerings which meet a student's specific needs, interests, and abilities.

**5504.3 Credits Required for Grade Placement** – The following scale of earned units of credit shall be used by the Harrison County high schools to determine the grade placement of students:

Sophomore 6  
Junior 13  
Senior 20

The credits required for grade placement must include completion of English, science, math, and social studies from the previous grade.

**5504.4 Modified Graduation Requirements** – Modified graduation requirements are designed for an eligible student with a disability who has been determined by a special education IEP committee to be unable to meet state and county standard graduation requirements. All students will be required to complete a program of study or a modified program of study as recommended by a school committee chaired by the principal. Students will need at least four years to complete these requirements, as specified in their IEP and five-year plan.

**5504.5 Planned Educational Programs** – Harrison County Schools offer programs of study to meet the needs of all adolescent students. These programs place an emphasis on preparing students to meet their potential beyond high school. Students shall be encouraged to follow a flexible, planned educational program and accumulate units above the 28 credits required for graduation. The student's planned program shall be subject to periodic revision and designed to enhance the opportunity for success in chosen endeavors after graduation from high school.

**5504.6 Alternatives to the Unit of Credit** – Based upon school and individual student needs, county boards of education, with the approval of the West Virginia Board or Department of Education as indicated, shall develop alternative methods to obtain a unit of credit.

5504.6.1 Accepting Credit Earned Before Grade 9 – Any student who completes a high school level course prior to grade 9 shall receive credit earned for that course. The student's permanent record for grades 9-12 shall indicate completion of the area of study. The grades for the courses will be used in calculating the GPA. These courses will also count in the total units needed for graduation.

5504.6.2 Experimental Programs – Experimental programs shall be approved by the Harrison County Board of Education and the West Virginia Board of Education. Each program shall be evaluated annually and a report filed with the West Virginia Department of Education.

5504.6.3 Summer School – All summer school programs shall be submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval before being offered. Schools may include credits earned from approved summer schools provided the instructional program, including length of time allocated for completion of a unit of credit or fraction thereof, is equivalent to that required of the regular school term.

5504.6.4 Testing Out – Students may receive credit for courses by achieving passing scores on tests that have been developed and based on, but not limited to, the content standards and objectives associated with the various courses, as reflected in the Harrison County Testing Out Policy.

## **5504.7 Class Rank**

5504.7.1 All students in a class, except foreign exchange students, shall be included in the determination of rank-in-class. The **final class rank** will be determined at the completion of the **eighth semester** of the graduation class.

5504.7.2 In cases where schools are asked to submit the names of the student graduates with the highest GPA (e.g. Robert C. Byrd Scholarship or other similar programs), determination will be based upon the student's GPA at the conclusion of the seventh semester. Some scholarships may be awarded to only one student per school. In the event of a tie in class rank, the ACT or conversion of the SAT will be used to determine the recipient.

5504.7.3 At the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> semester students will be ranked in the following classifications:

3.95 - 4.0+	Summa cum laude
3.75 - 3.94	Magna cum laude
3.5 - 3.74	Cum laude

## **5504.8 Attendance Requirement in Grades 9-12 and Early Graduation**

5504.8.1 To attain full benefit from the educational programs offered in the schools of Harrison County, all students shall be scheduled for the full instructional day for all four years. Exceptions may be made by county boards of education to accommodate placement into advanced educational programs or for other compelling circumstances. This policy cannot supersede IDEA or any section of 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Harrison County Schools encourages students to stay in school for the entire four years.

5504.8.2 Exceptions to the Attendance Requirement - The Harrison County Board of Education has the authority to make exceptions to the attendance requirement. However, before the Board of Education can approve a student request to be excused from one or more instructional periods or be issued a diploma before completing four years of attendance in grades 9-12, the exception request must be based upon one of the following criteria:

5504.8.2.1 to attend college, university, or magnet program;

5504.8.2.2 to attend other approved post secondary programs;

5504.8.2.3 compelling circumstances, such as:

- (1) regular class already graduated
- (2) family responsibility
- (3) financial need
- (4) other individual circumstances approved by the Harrison County Board of Education.

5504.8.2.4 All requests for exceptions to the attendance requirement based upon compelling circumstances shall be investigated by a county attendance person and approved by the Harrison County Board of Education. Senior students requesting exception to the attendance requirement must submit a completed application to the school principal. The

school principal shall investigate and approve such request before forwarding the request to the county superintendent of schools.

5504.8.3 Time spent in a homebound instructional program counts toward the four year requirement.

5504.8.4 Students entering Harrison County Schools from homeschooling may receive credit towards graduation as per homeschooling policy requirements as outlined in WV Code 18-8-1.

5504.8.5 Students who have already attended four years in grades 9-12 need only be scheduled for classes needed to meet graduation requirements.

### **5504.9 Evaluating Credits for Transfer Students**

5504.9.1 From Other States – Students who transfer to West Virginia from schools approved by other state systems may not always have completed the required credits needed for graduation. In most instances, there will be credit for an area of study that is quite similar to one of the required units, and credit can be awarded for the work completed. If the student who transfers can be scheduled into any additional courses needed to complete the Harrison County Schools requirements, this should be done. In the cases of seniors and some juniors, such scheduling may not be feasible or possible. In such cases the school may appeal to the State Superintendent of Schools for permission to use a substitute for the requirements or to waive the requirement.

5504.9.2 From Other West Virginia Counties – Students who transfer from another West Virginia county requiring fewer than 28 credits for graduation shall have their credits evaluated to determine if one or more county requirements will be waived by the Harrison County Board of Education.

### **5504.10 Students Who Do Not Complete Requirements in Four Years**

5504.10.1 Continuous Enrollment – If a student has been enrolled continuously for four years in grades 9-12 but has not accumulated the required number of units, the student shall be expected to meet the graduation requirements that were in effect upon entrance into ninth grade. Since the student has attended four full years, attendance for the full day would not be required.

5504.10.2 Re-enrollment - If a student has re-enrolled after dropping out of school, the requirements depend upon the length of time the student has been out of school. If out of school less than one year, the student would be expected to complete the graduation requirements that were in effect upon entrance into ninth grade. If out of school one year or more, current graduation requirements must be met.

## **5504.11 Commencement Activities**

5504.11.1 To participate in any senior activity that requires the wearing of a cap and gown so designated by the school, the senior student must have met or will be meeting all graduation requirements by the date of graduation.

5504.11.2 To maintain the dignity of the graduation ceremony, students must be dressed according to the school's graduation dress code. Violation of the standard graduation dress code will result in the graduating senior(s) being excluded from any ceremony involving the cap and gown.

5504.11.3 All financial obligations to Harrison County Schools and the local high school must be paid in cash one week prior to commencement exercises or the student will not be permitted to participate in any commencement activities.

5504.11.4 Any student who has been suspended for ten days or more from school during the senior year shall not be permitted to attend and/or participate in any graduation ceremonies.

5504.11.5 The student may make a request to the school's administration to obtain an exception to the financial or suspension clauses (5504.11.3 and/or 5504.11.4). The school's administrative decision is final.

5504.11.6 Speakers for graduation will be determined by the local high school.

## **5504.12 Management Information Systems**

5504.12.1 Attendance – Harrison County shall submit an annual report, by school, of exceptions to the attendance requirement contained in this policy, to the West Virginia Department of Education by June 15 of each fiscal year. This report shall include the birth date, grade, sex, compelling circumstances, exception made, and effective date.

5504.12.2 Alternatives to the Unit of Credit – Each school that includes any grades from 9-12 must include in its annual classification report a summary of alternatives accepted for units of credit.

Approved by the Harrison County Board of Education

Effective Date: May 6, 2008