

ADOPTED: 1/11/10 REVISED: 12/14/15, 9/26/16, 1/22/18 & 2/11/19

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to satisfy the high school graduation requirements within Berlin Public Schools, a student must have satisfactorily completed his or her prescribed courses of study, completed a senior capstone project, demonstrated proficiency in basic skills identified by the Berlin Board of Education as established performance standards in literacy, mathematics, and science, and satisfied the legally mandated number and distribution of credits required to graduate from high school.

1. Required Coursework and Credits for Graduation

The Berlin Board of Education conforms with state law regarding credits for graduation from high school. In order to graduate from Berlin High School, students must earn credits and meet the credit distribution, as outlined below.

Credit distribution of required courses through the Class of 2022:

English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
Social Studies	3.5 credits
<i>Must include: US History 1 credit</i>	
<i>Civics 1 credit</i>	
Science	4 credits
<i>Must include: Biology 1 credit</i>	
Physical Education	2 credits
<i>Must include: Health .25 credit</i>	
Capstone Project	1 credit
Electives	8.5 credits
<i>Must include 1 credit in the arts</i>	
<i><u>or</u> vocational education</i>	

Total required credits: 27 credits

	Dept.	Course Requirements	Class of 2023 and Beyond
Cluster 1: Humanities (9 credits required)	English (4 credits required)	English 9 or Advanced English 9	1.0
		American Lit or Advanced American Studies	1.0
		Additional English Courses	2.0
	Social Studies (3 credits required)	US History	1.0
		Civics or AP Government	1.0
		Social Studies Electives	1.0

SERIES: 6000 INSTRUCTION
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	Fine Arts	Any combination of Art, Music or Theater courses	1.0
	Additional Humanities elective (English, Social Studies, World Language [beyond required 1.0 credit], Art, Music, or Theater)		1.0
Cluster 2: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (9 credits required)	Science (3 credits required)	Biology Physical Science course Additional Science courses	1.0 1.0 1.0
	Mathematics (3 credits required)	Any Mathematics courses	3.0
	Additional STEM electives (Science, Mathematics, Technology Education)		3.0
Cluster 3: Health and Physical Education	Health and Wellness I and II Physical Education courses		1.0 1.0
Cluster 4: World Language	World Language course		1.0
Cluster 5: Career & College Readiness	Personal Finance Any course from Business, Family and Consumer Sciences, or Technology Education		0.5 0.5
Capstone	Completion of the Capstone project requirement		1.0
Elective Courses	Any additional coursework taken or listed as an elective credit		4.0
	TOTAL		27.0

A credit is defined as the equivalent of one forty minute class period for each school day of a school year. One-half credit is granted for a course with a forty minute class period each school day for one semester or 90 days. A credit or part of a credit may also be awarded through a demonstration of mastery, based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the CT State Board of Education. High School graduation credit will be granted to students upon the successful completion of online coursework in accordance with the Board’s online coursework policy.

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2. Course Enrollment

All students are required to enroll in the course equivalent of seven (7) credits each year for four years. Under extraordinary circumstances, the high school principal may exempt students from this requirement.

A student who presents written documentation from a physician or advanced practice registered nurse stating that participation in physical education is not advisable because of the physical condition of the student shall be excused from the physical education requirement. In such a case, another subject must be substituted.

Any student who is deaf or hearing impaired may be exempted from any world language graduation requirement if his or her parent or guardian requests such exemption in writing.

In the event that a student transfers to Berlin High School during the senior year, the student must successfully complete a minimum of one semester in order to be eligible for a Berlin High School diploma.

3. Senior Capstone Project

The senior capstone project is a graduation requirement that allows students the opportunity to demonstrate attainment of the Berlin Learner Outcomes. Grade 12 students pose questions, conduct investigations and develop original projects. Students demonstrate learning through informal and formal presentations of their findings to give insight into what they learned about the topic and themselves throughout their investigations.

4. District Performance Standards of Required Basic Skills

In addition to the credit requirements listed above in section 1, students must also demonstrate required basic skills by meeting the following performance standards in literacy, mathematics, and science.

1) Literacy Basic Skills Standard

- a) Achieve a grade of 70 or better in three (3.0) BHS English courses OR
- b) Achieve the College and Career Readiness Benchmark for the PSAT/NMSQT taken during the junior year OR
- c) Achieve the College and Career Readiness Benchmark for the SAT OR
- d) Portfolio review and assessment of student work

2) Mathematics Basic Skills Standard

- a) Achieve a grade of 70 or better in two (2.0) BHS Mathematics courses OR
- b) Achieve the College and Career Readiness Benchmark for the PSAT/NMSQT taken during the junior year OR
- c) Achieve the College and Career Readiness Benchmark for the SAT OR
- d) Portfolio review and assessment of student work

3) Science Basic Skills Standard

- a) Achieve a grade of 70 or better in two (2.0) BHS Science courses OR

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- b) Achieve a score of 3 or better on the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) assessment taken in the junior year
- c) Portfolio review and assessment of student work

5. General Provisions

Additional Support: Students who have not met the performance standards of basic skills by the end of the first marking period of senior year shall be assigned basic skills tutor support beginning in the second marking period. Assessments will be conducted during the second, third, and fourth marking periods for any seniors who have not met the performance standards of basic skills during the previous marking period.

Exemptions: Students with special needs and 504 students will be expected to meet district performance standards of basic skills for graduation as described in this policy unless exempted as indicated in their Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan. English Language Learners (ELL) may be exempted if they have not achieved a determined language proficiency level by the end of their first semester junior year. Students who transfer into Berlin High School **during their senior year** must meet Berlin's performance standards of basic skills in order to graduate from Berlin High School unless such students have been exempted at the sole discretion of the Berlin High School principal. In considering any exemptions to the graduation requirements set forth in this policy, the Berlin High School principal may choose to review a student's prior academic profile and state/national assessment data.

Notification to Teachers, Students, and Parents: Frequent, ongoing communication between and among teachers, students, and parents is essential in creating home-school support for students to meet the required performance standards, particularly during senior year.

6. Alternative Programs

In certain situations, and with the approval of the principal, a student may complete the senior year elsewhere and still be awarded a Berlin High School diploma.

In order for a student to be eligible to receive a diploma while attending a different institution during the senior year, the student must meet the following requirements:

- Have earned a total of twenty-one credits prior to the senior year.
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 80 at the end of the junior year.
- Provide two letters of recommendation from Berlin High School teachers.
- Apply in writing to the high school principal by the end of Semester 1 of the junior year; application must include a detailed description of the program to which the student is planning to attend.
- The program must be an accredited educational program.

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- Complete the senior capstone project prior to completion of the senior year.
- Receive approval from the high school principal prior to the start of the program.

A Berlin High School diploma will be issued after the principal conducts a review of credits earned in the approved program. The principal reserves the right to establish/expand/revise compliance reporting dates for any approved alternative senior year program at any time as part of this review process.

7. Graduation During Period of Expulsion

A student may graduate, i.e., be issued his/her diploma, during an expulsion period if the Board determines that the student has completed the necessary credits and met all other criteria required by the Board for graduation. This is separate from participation in the graduation ceremony, which would not be allowed during a period of expulsion.

8. Academic Advancement Program

Notwithstanding the graduation requirements in this policy, students shall be permitted to graduate from high school upon the successful completion of the academic advancement program established by the State Board of Education.

9. Transfer Students/Home-schooled Students

Students transferring to Berlin High School shall have courses and credits earned at their previous school or schools transferred to the Berlin High School transcript. To be considered valedictorian and salutatorian, the student must complete his/her final two years of formal education at Berlin High School.

Home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Berlin High School must attend Berlin High School for two years of education, one of which must be their final year. The principal shall evaluate the student's prior educational experiences and determine what, if any, credits to meet graduation requirements have been earned. A student may be required to take a Berlin High School exam, provide a portfolio of evidence of learning, or otherwise demonstrate mastery of content to be awarded credit. After enrolling in Berlin High School, these students must satisfy all additional distribution and credit requirements in appropriate subject areas, as determined by the school counselor and the principal. The decision of the principal shall be final.

10. Graduation Ceremony

In order to participate in the formal graduation ceremony, students must meet all the course credit requirements, have successfully completed the senior capstone project, and have met the district performance standards of basic skills by the date of graduation, as specified in sections 1, 3, and 4, respectively, of this policy. Parents and adult students will be informed in writing by the high school principal or designee during the second semester, but no later than April 1, of the individual status of each student relative to graduation requirements, including the necessity of successfully completing any courses in which the student may be currently enrolled.

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Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-5c

Public Act 17-42, An Act Concerning Revisions to the High School Graduation Requirements

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-5c

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-14n

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-16b

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221a

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223a