Purpose:
In pursuit of its mission to ensure that all students succeed in college, careers, and life, the Board of Education has established the following graduation requirements for students who enter the ninth grade for the first time in the 2017-18 school year and thereafter. DPS graduation requirements are aligned with the district’s college and career readiness goals, the district’s vision of a graduate, and provide students with multiple pathways to prepare for post-secondary success.

The DPS diploma is a diploma of possibility. It ensures our students are prepared to enter credit-bearing courses in Colorado post-secondary education institutions, military career training, and the workforce without the need for remediation.

The DPS diploma is based on three key components: 1) academic content knowledge; 2) 21st century skills; and 3) college and career planning. The Colorado Academic Standards form the basis of instruction and incorporate academic content knowledge and skills. Thus, by students demonstrating successful proficiency of the Colorado Academic Standards which are taught in their courses, they are demonstrating both content knowledge and the skills needed to succeed in the 21st Century. This is further emphasized by students demonstrating mastery specifically in English and math through a range of options outlined in this policy.

In addition, no later than ninth grade all students will complete Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAPs). Successful completion and use of these plans is a key component of students demonstrating readiness for college, careers, and life.

Guiding Principles:
- **Equity**: We believe all students can graduate from high school ready for college and career. By supporting each learner’s individual needs in meeting rigorous graduation requirements, DPS will close historic opportunity gaps.
- **Significance**: A diploma from DPS will ensure that a student has demonstrated mastery of core standards and is ready for college and career with no need for remediation. A DPS diploma will be meaningful, signifying a rigorous bar was achieved.
- **Mastery & Completion of Relevant Learning Experiences**: Graduation will be based on demonstration of mastery of English and math plus successful completion of relevant learning experiences which include the development of 21st Century Skills to prepare students for success in college, careers, and life. As students pursue graduation, learning is the constant, and time is the variable.
- **Flexibility**: By holding mastery of standards and completion of learning experiences constant, DPS will empower communities, schools, and students to choose from multiple, equally rigorous pathways to graduation.
- **Transparency**: DPS will provide students, teachers, and parents with progress measures of what students know and can do and where a student is on the path to graduation.
- **Whole Child**: DPS encourages each student to pursue individual passions and interests through personalized approaches to meeting graduation expectations. DPS will ensure learning environments are safe, equitable and inclusive, enabling all students to develop positive relationships and make responsible decisions throughout their academic careers.
The following criteria shall entitle a student to a high school diploma from Denver Public Schools:

1. **Successful completion of 24 units of credit** (in the prescribed categories listed below, including and in addition to successful completion of any school or program-specific requirements which have been approved by the District). A Unit of Credit is defined as the amount of credit earned toward graduation following demonstration of district identified competencies. Successful completion is defined as a passing grade or score.
   
   a. **Achievement in the Colorado Academic Standards** as demonstrated by mastery of appropriate grade-level courses or competencies;  
   
   b. **Minimum Requirements for a High School Diploma:**
      
      - English: 4 units
      - Math: 4 units
      - Science: 3 units
      - Social Studies: 3 units (to include .5 unit of Civics)
      - Approved Electives: 10 units*

   *The district values student exposure to quality, standards-based learning experiences in physical education, world languages, the arts, and Career Technical Education. As part of the electives, the district strongly recommends students complete at least one unit of standards-based learning in physical education and at least one unit of standards-based learning in the arts. The High School Procedures Guide includes a variety of course options for students to meet these recommendations.

   Note: Students with ICAPs directing them toward 4-year higher education institutions must verify with their school counselor/advisor that they are on-track to complete the requisite world language or other specific courses necessary to meet higher education admission requirements for the institutions of their choice (e.g., Colorado Higher Education Admission Requirements);

2. **Demonstration of College and Career Readiness in English and Math** through one or more of the approved options in the DPS Approved Menu of Options as illustrated below; and

3. **Completion of the requirements and goals as listed on a student’s Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) and/or Individualized Education Plan (IEP)** which may include modified content standards.

### Demonstration of College and Career Readiness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DPS Approved Menu of Options</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCUPLACER</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American College Testing (ACT)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT WorkKeys - National Career Readiness Certificate</td>
<td>Bronze or higher</td>
<td>Bronze or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Placement (AP)</td>
<td>3 or higher</td>
<td>3 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB Exam)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrent Enrollment (CE)</td>
<td>(C) or higher in an eligible CE course</td>
<td>(C) or higher in an eligible CE course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Capstone</td>
<td>District Approved</td>
<td>District Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Certificate</td>
<td>District Approved</td>
<td>District Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Baccalaureate (IB)</td>
<td>4 or higher</td>
<td>4 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboratively-developed, standards-based performance assessment</td>
<td>State-wide scoring criteria</td>
<td>State-wide scoring criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The menu is subject to change and revision from the state. When changes are made, the district will update its policy to ensure adherence to the state’s guidelines.
Units of Credit earned from Outside Institutions, Home-Based Programs, or Independent Study:

- Students entering from outside the district or a home-based program must meet the district’s requirements to receive a high school diploma. The principal or principal’s designee shall determine whether credit toward course unit requirements shall be granted for course content/units taken outside the district.

- The district shall accept the transcripts from a home-based educational program. In order to determine whether the course content/units and grades earned are consistent with district requirements and standards, the district shall require submission of the student’s work or other proof of academic performance for each course unit for which credit toward graduation is sought. In addition, the district may administer testing to the student to verify the accuracy of the student’s transcripts.

- Students who wish to obtain credit from outside institutions or programs, work experience, independent study, work based study, community service, capstone or certification programs, must meet the unit competencies appropriate to the credit type.

Years of Attendance:
The Board of Education believes that most students benefit from four years of high school experience. However, in some cases students require differentiated lengths of time to meet the graduation requirements. Therefore, in accordance with the High School Procedures Guide, a student may graduate early provided the student has met all district graduation requirements. In addition, the district will support students who may require more time to meet graduation requirements up to age 21, as well as allow students to remain enrolled to pursue ASCENT [Reference IKE, IKE-R].

Students with Individualized Education Plans:
Students with disabilities will be provided access to all graduation pathways and will have the opportunity to earn a diploma. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will describe the course of study, the specially designed instruction, the accommodations and the modifications that will enable the student to demonstrate proficiency of the standards and achieve their post-secondary goals.