

Georgia Graduation Requirements

(Changes will affect current elementary and middle school students)



On September 13, 2007, the Georgia Board of Education unanimously passed new Graduation Requirements that go into effect starting with first-time ninth-graders in 2008–09.

Why is the graduation rule being changed?

- The rule is being revised in conjunction with the implementation of the new Georgia Performance Standards in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and in other electives.
- The new curriculum and the new graduation requirements will help students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college and the workplace.

When will the changes go into effect?

- The new requirements will go into effect for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time in the 2008–09 school year and subsequent years.

What are major changes in the new rule?

- Georgia’s “tiered” diploma system has been eliminated. Currently, there are four tiers, each with different requirements: College Preparatory (CP), College Preparatory with Distinction (CP+), Technology/Career (TC) and Technology/Career with Distinction (TC+).
- The new rule has one common set of requirements for all students with various options for meeting those requirements, including advanced courses such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, postsecondary options and career-oriented courses offered under our Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) programs.
- It is important that all students—regardless of their postsecondary plans—pursue a schedule that includes rigorous core classes.

How will these changes affect students who are currently in high school?

- The new rule will not affect students who enrolled in the ninth grade before 2008. Students who enrolled before 2008 will remain under the current graduation rule requirements.

How are the new graduation requirements different from Georgia’s current set of graduation requirements?

- All students will be required to complete a total of 23 units for graduation. All students will take:
 - 4 units of English
 - 4 units of Science
 - 4 units of Mathematics
 - 3 units of Social Studies (Note: GCPS recommends 4 units of Social Studies.)
 - At least 3 units of Career/Technical/Agricultural and/or Foreign Language and/or Fine Arts courses
 - At least 4 additional electives
 - 1 health/physical education course

How will the new graduation rule affect future Gwinnett high schoolers?

- GCPS will change its graduation requirements to comply with the new state rule.
- For the most part, an incoming 9th grader’s schedule will look a lot like previous Gwinnett high schoolers’ schedules as GCPS will continue to offer its current sequence of courses.
- Students entering 9th grade next school year who are interested in technical education programs offered at Maxwell or Grayson will still be able to take advantage of these cutting-edge programs. GCPS will make adjustments to the programs in school year 2011–12 so that a student may continue to take courses at Grayson and Maxwell as a senior while they take the required courses.
- Students with disabilities will be eligible to earn a regular diploma by meeting the requirements outlined in the graduation rule and in their Individualized Educational Program. The special education diploma is still an option. However, parents and students should know that the special education diploma often does not meet requirements for many types of employment, entry into the military, or admission to postsecondary institutions.
- Advanced classes will continue to be offered to students, including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and joint enrollment. GCPS will continue to encourage students to participate in these more challenging courses.



<p style="text-align: center;">Current Rule (applies to all students in high school prior to the fall of 2008)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">New Rule (affects all students entering high school in fall of 2008 and subsequent years)</p>
<p>4 tiers, each with different requirements; College Preparatory (CP) and College Preparatory with Distinction (CP+), Technology/Career (TC) and Technology/Career with Distinction (TC+)</p>	<p>1 common set of requirements for all students</p>
<p>22 Total units required for CP and TC 24 total units required for CP+ and TC+</p>	<p>23 total units required for all students</p>
<p>4 units of English Language Arts required for all students</p>	<p>4 units of English Language Arts required for all students</p>
<p>4 units of Mathematics required for CP and CP+; 3 units required for TC and TC+</p>	<p>4 units of Mathematics required for all students</p>
<p>3 units of Science required for all students</p>	<p>4 units of Science required for all students (the 4th science unit may be used to meet both the science and elective requirements)</p>
<p>3 units of Social Studies required for all students</p>	<p>3 units of Social Studies required for all students, all courses are specifically identified</p>
<p>1 unit of Health and Physical Education required for all students</p>	<p>1 unit of Health and Physical Education required for all students; 3 units of JROTC may be used to meet the requirement</p>
<p>1 unit of Computer Technology and/or Fine Arts and/or Technology Career Preparatory and/or Foreign Language required for all students 2 units of Foreign Language required for CP and CP+ students</p>	<p>A total of 3 units required from CTAE and/or Foreign Language and/or Fine Arts for all students (<i>Students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution must take two units of the same foreign language</i>)</p>
<p>5-6 additional elective units depending on tier (CP, CP+, TC, and TC+)</p>	<p>4 additional elective units for all students</p>