

Table 157.—State requirements for high school graduation, in Carnegie units: 1993, 1996, and 1998

State	1993	1996	1998								First graduating class to which these requirements apply	Notes	
	All courses	All courses	All courses	Subject areas									Other courses
				English/language arts	Social studies	Mathematics	Science	Physical education/health	Electives				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Alabama	22	24	24	4	4	4	4	1.5	5.5	1 (.5 units of fine arts; .5 units of computer applications).	2000	Math requirement includes algebra I and geometry. Physical education requirement consists of 1 unit of PE and .5 units of health. Science includes 1 unit of biology and 1 unit of physical science. Demonstration of computer literacy through related coursework is required. ²	
Alaska	21	21	21	4	3	2	2	1	9	—	—	^{2,3}	
Arizona	20	20	20	4	2.5	2	2	0	8	1.5 (.5 units of free enterprise, 1 unit of fine arts or vocational education).	1996	Language arts requirement must include .5 units of speech/debate. Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of world history/geography and 1.5 units of U.S./Arizona history and constitutions. ^{1,2}	
Arkansas													
Basic	—	—	—	4	3	3	3	1	6	1 (.5 units of oral communication, .5 units of fine arts).	—	Science requirement includes 1 unit of life science and 1 unit of physical science. PE requirement includes .5 units of health and safety and .5 units of PE. ¹	
Technical preparatory	20	21	21	4	3	3	3	1	0	7 (.5 units of oral communication, .5 units of fine arts, and 6 units of sequential and related vocational credit).	1997	Science requirement includes 1 unit of life science and 1 unit of physical science. PE requirement includes .5 units of health and safety and .5 units of PE. ¹	
College preparatory	—	21	21	4	3	3	3	1	4	4 (.5 units of oral communication; .5 units of fine arts; 2 units of foreign language).	1988	Science requirements includes 1 unit of life science and 1 unit of physical science. PE requirement includes .5 units of health and safety and .5 units of PE. ^{1,2}	
Standard (2002)	—	—	21	4	3	3	3	1	6	1 (.5 units of oral communication, .5 units of fine arts).	2002	Math requirement includes 1 unit of algebra or equivalent and 1 unit of geometry or equivalent. Science requirement includes 1 unit of biology or equivalent and 1 unit of physical science. This curriculum will eliminate previous diploma types.	
California	13	13	13	3	3	2	2	2	(³)	1 (includes foreign language or American Sign Language or visual and performing arts).	—	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of U.S. history and geography; 1 unit of world history, culture and geography; .5 units of American government and .5 units of economics. Science includes biological and physical sciences.	
Colorado	—	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	—	^{1,3}	
Connecticut	20	20	20	4	3	3	2	1	6	1 (1 unit of arts or vocational education).	—	Fifty hours of community service may be used for .5 units towards graduation requirements.	
Delaware													
Standard (1997, 1998)	19	19	19	4	3	2	2	1.5	6.5	1 (1 unit of computer literacy).	1997	PE requirement includes .5 units of health and 1 unit of PE.	
Standard (1999)	—	20	20	4	3	2	2	1.5	6.5	1 (1 unit of computer literacy; students must become computer literate through formal class or related coursework).	1999	PE requirement includes .5 units of health and 1 unit of PE.	
Standard (2000)	—	22	22	4	3	3	3	1.5	0	7.5 (1 unit of computer literacy; students must become computer literate through formal class or related coursework; 3 units of Career Pathway ⁴ ; 3.5 units of additional coursework).	2000	PE requirement includes .5 units of health and 1 unit of PE. ²	
Standard (2001)	—	22	22	4	3	3	3	1.5	0	7.5 (1 unit of computer literacy; students must become computer literate through formal class or related coursework; 3 units of Career Pathway ⁴ ; 1 unit of visual and performing arts; 2.5 units of additional coursework).	2001	Physical education requirement includes .5 units of health and 1 unit of PE. ²	

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				English/language arts	Social studies	Mathematics	Science	Physical education/health	Electives				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
District of Columbia	23.5	23.5	23.5	4	3.5	3	3	1.5	3.5	5 (2 units of foreign language; 1 unit of life skills/social values; 1 unit of career/vocational; 5 units of arts; 5 units of music).	1996	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of U.S. history, 1 unit of world history, .5 units of U.S. government, .5 units if world geography and .5 units of D.C. history/government. Math requirement includes algebra. Science requirement includes 1 unit of laboratory science. PE includes health.	
Florida	24	24	24	4	2.5	3	3	1	9	1.5 (.5 units of economics; 1 unit of art or exploratory career education).	—	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of American history, 1 unit of world history and .5 units of American government. Two science units must have a laboratory component. The PE requirement includes .5 units of life management skills and .5 units of PE. One math credit must be in algebra 1 or higher. School boards may award .5 units for 75 hours of community service. Students must achieve a 2.0 GPA to graduate. ^{1,2}	
Georgia													
Vocational	21	21	21	4	3	3	3	1	2	5 (4 vocational diploma units and 1 unit of computer technology).	—	Math requirement includes 1 algebra unit. ^{1,2}	
College preparatory	21	21	21	4	3	3	3	1	4	3 (2 units of foreign language; 1 unit of computer technology and/or fine arts and/or vocational education and/or JROTC and/or foreign language).	—	Math requirement includes 1 algebra unit. ^{1,2}	
Hawaii													
Standard	22	22	22	4	4	3	3	2	6	—	1997	PE includes 1 unit of PE, .5 units of health and .5 units of guidance. ²	
Recognition diploma	—	24	24	4	4	3	3	2	6	2 (2 units of foreign language, performing/fine arts, or vocational education).	1997	PE includes 1 unit of PE, .5 units of health and .5 units of guidance. To qualify for this diploma, students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. ²	
Idaho													
Standard	21	21	21	4	2	2	2	1.5	6	3.5 (.5 units of reading; .5 units of speech or debate; 2 units of humanities).	1997	Science requirement includes 1 unit of laboratory science. PE requirement consists of 1 unit of PE and .5 units of health. The social science requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. History and 1 unit of American government. State requires either a C average in core subjects, demonstrated competency on statewide achievement test and direct writing assessment in the 11th grade or validation of student achievement through an approved, locally developed, core competency plan.	
Standard (2000)	—	—	21.5	4	2.5	2	2	1.5	6	3.5 (.5 units of reading; .5 units of speech or debate; 2 units of humanities).	2004	Science requirement includes 1 unit of laboratory science. PE requirement consists of 1 unit of PE and .5 units of health. The social science requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history, 1 unit of American government, and .5 units of economics. State requires either a C average in core subjects, demonstrated competency on statewide achievement tests and direct writing assessment in the 11th grade or validation of student achievement through an approved, locally developed, core competency plan.	
Illinois	16	16	16	3	2	2	1	4.5	2.25	1.25 (1 unit of music, art, foreign language or vocational and .25 units of consumer education).	1995	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history and .5 units of American government. Science requirement may include 1 unit of computer technology. PE requirement consists of 4 units of PE and .5 units of health. Students may test out of consumer education requirement. Passing end of course exam in American history and government is required to graduate.	

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	All courses	All courses	All courses	Subject areas								
				English/language arts	Social studies	Mathematics	Science	Physical education/health	Electives	Other courses		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Indiana Standard	19.5	19.5	19.5	4	2	2	2	1.5	8	—	1989	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history and .5 units of U.S. government. PE requirement is 1 unit of PE and .5 units of health and safety. Students must successfully complete a course concerning the constitutions of the U.S. and Indiana to graduate. ^{1,2}
Iowa	—	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	—	All students must participate in PE unless they qualify under certain exceptions. Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history and .5 units of American government. ^{1,3}
Kansas	21	21	21	4	3	2	2	1	9	—	—	Language arts requirement includes 3 units in English. Social studies requirement includes 1 unit in American history and .5 units in American government. The PE requirement may include .5 units in health. Students are required to pass a course in Kansas history or government between grades 7–12. ¹
Kentucky	20	20	22	4	3	3	3	1	7	1 (1 unit of visual and performing arts).	—	Writing portfolio is required in 12th grade but is not tied to graduation. Social studies units incorporate U.S. history, economics, government, world geography and world civilization. Math requirements include algebra 1 and geometry. PE requirement consists of .5 units of PE and .5 units of health. ²
Louisiana Standard	23	23	23	4	3	3	3	2	8	—	—	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of American history, 1 unit of world history/geography/civilization, .5 units of civics and .5 units of free enterprise. Math requirement includes algebra. Science requirement includes biology. PE requirement is 1.5 units of PE and .5 units of health. ^{1,2}
Regents program	24	24	24	4	4	4	3	2	4	3 (2 units of foreign language and 1 unit of fine arts).	—	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of American history, 1 unit of world history/geography/civilization, .5 units of civics and .5 units of free enterprise. Math requirement includes algebra. Science requirement includes biology. PE requirement is 1.5 units of PE and .5 units of health. ^{1,2}
Maine	16	16	16	4	2	2	2	1.5	3.5	1 (1 unit of fine arts).	1989	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of American history and government. Science requirement includes 1 year of laboratory study. Students must pass computer proficiency standards. PE requirement consists of 1 unit of PE and .5 units of health. ¹
Maryland	21	21	21	4	3	3	3	1	3	4 (1 unit of fine arts; 1 unit of technology education, 2 units of foreign language or advanced technology).	1997	75 clock hours of student community service is required for graduation. ^{2,3}
Massachusetts	—	(³)	(³)	(³)	1	(³)	(³)	4	(³)	(³)	—	American history is required. ^{1,2,3}
Michigan	—	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	1 (1 unit of civics).	—	A competency exam is optional for students wanting a state-endorsed diploma. ³
Minnesota	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2000	A "profile of learning" program requires students to complete 24 to 28 standards in broad academic areas prior to graduation. ^{1,2}
Mississippi	18	18	20	4	3	3	3	0.5	4.5	2 (1 unit of art, .5 units of computer education and .5 units of keyboarding).	2002	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of U.S. history, 1 unit of world history, .5 units of U.S. government and .5 units of Mississippi studies. PE requirement is in health. ²
Missouri	22	22	22	3	2	2	2	1	10	2 (1 unit of practical arts; 1 unit of fine arts).	—	Social studies requirement includes .5 units of U.S. and state government. Students must pass an end-of-course exam in the principles of the constitutions of the U.S. and Missouri prior to graduation.
Montana	20	20	20	4	2	2	2	1	7	2 (1 unit of fine arts; 1 unit of vocational/practical arts).	1989	PE requirement is in health.

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Nebraska	—	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	1991	Nebraska requires a minimum of 200 high school credit hours (at least 80% in core curriculum subjects). ³	
Nevada	22.5	22.5	22.5	4	2	2	2	2.5	8.5	1.5 (1 unit of arts and humanities; .5 units of computer literacy).	—	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of American government and 1 unit of American history. PE requirement includes .5 units of health and 2 units of PE. Computer literacy requirement may be waived by demonstration of competency. ^{1,2}	
New Hampshire	19.75	19.75	19.75	4	2	2	2	1.25	7	1.5 (.5 units of art; .5 units of computer education; .5 units of business/economics).	1989	The social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. and New Hampshire history and government. Science requirement is 1 unit of physical science and 1 unit of biological science. PE requirement includes .25 units of health and 1 unit of PE. Computer education requirement may be met through examination or course prior to high school.	
New Jersey	21.5	21.5	22	4	3	3	2	4	4.5	1.5 (1 unit of fine, practical, or performing arts; .5 units of consumer education).	—	Social studies requirement includes 2 units of U.S. history and 1 unit of world history/cultures. Science requirement must be either natural or physical science. ^{1,2}	
New Mexico	23	23	23	4	3	3	2	1	9	1 (1 unit of communication skills).	—	Social studies requirement consists of government and economics, world and U.S. history and geography. Science requirement includes 1 lab component. ²	
New York Local	18.5	20.5	20.5	4	4	2	2	2.5	5	1 (1 unit of art or music).	1989	PE requirement includes .5 units of health. Only the health unit may be counted towards total graduation credit. ^{2,3}	
Regents diploma	18.5	18.5	20.5	4	4	2	2	2.5	5	1 (1 unit of art or music).	—	Requirements for a Regent's diploma include more difficult course sequencing and additional exams. A minimum sequence of three units of a second language is required for the Regent's diploma. PE requirement includes .5 units of health. Only the health unit may be counted towards total graduation credit. ^{2,3}	
North Carolina	20	20	20	4	3	3	3	1	6	—	1987	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of government and economics, 1 unit of U.S. history and 1 unit of world studies. Math requirement includes 1 unit of algebra 1. Science requirement includes 1 unit of biology and 1 unit of physical science. ²	
North Dakota	17	17	17	4	3	2	2	1	5	—	1994	The social studies requirement includes 1 unit of world history and 1 unit of U.S. history, both with strong geography components. The math requirement may include business math. ^{1,3}	
Ohio	18	18	18	3	2	2	1	1	9	(total units in a subject area other than language arts/English must be taken to complete a "minor").	1988	Social science requirement includes .5 units of U.S. history and .5 units of U.S. government. PE requirement consists of .5 units of PE and .5 units of health. ^{1,2}	
Standard (2001)	—	—	21	4	3	3	2	1	8	—	2006	Social science requirement includes .5 units of U.S. government. PE requirement consists of .5 units of PE and .5 units of health. Science requirement includes 1 unit of biology and 1 unit of physical science. ^{1,2}	
Standard (2003)	—	—	21	4	3	3	3	1	7	—	2008	Social science requirement includes .5 units of U.S. government. PE requirement consists of .5 units of PE and .5 units of health. Science requirement includes 1 unit of biology and 1 unit of physical science. ^{1,2}	
Oklahoma	20	21	21	4	2	3	2	0	8	2 (1 unit of visual arts; 1 unit of general music).	2000	Social studies requirement includes U.S. and Oklahoma history. ¹	
Oregon	—	—	22	3	3	2	2	2	9	1 (1 unit of applied arts, fine arts, or foreign language).	—	PE requirement includes 1 unit of PE and 1 unit of health. ¹	

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Pennsylvania	21	21	21	4	3	3	3	1	5	2 (2 units of arts/humanities, or computer science).	1993	Students must achieve 52 state academic performance standards and locally developed student learning outcomes. Students must also complete a project in one or more areas of concentrated studies. Pennsylvania is phasing out the required units in individual subject system. Graduation requirements are now based on a local district submission of a strategic plan, fulfillment of the state performance standards, and local student-learning outcomes.	
Rhode Island Standard	16	16	16	4	2	2	2	0	6	—	1989	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history and government.	
College preparatory	18	18	18	4	2	3	2	0	4	3 (2 units of foreign language; .5 units of computer literacy; .5 units of arts).	—	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history and government. The science requirement must consist of laboratory sciences.	
South Carolina Technical/college preparatory	20	20	20	4	3	3	2	1	7	—	2000	The social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history, .5 units of U.S. government, and .5 units of economics. PE requirement may be met with JROTC. Students in technical track must complete an occupational program consisting of four sequential units of instruction in a career major. ²	
Class of 2001	—	—	24	4	3	4	3	1	7	2 (1 unit of computer science and 1 unit of foreign language if college preparatory, 1 vocational unit if technical prep).	2001	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history, .5 units of U.S. government, and .5 units of economics. PE requirement may be met with JROTC. ²	
South Dakota	20	20	20	4	3	2	2	0	8	1 (.5 units of computer studies; .5 units of fine arts).	1996	Language Arts/English requirement includes 1.5 units of writing, .5 units of American literature, .5 units of literature, and .5 units of speech. Social studies requirement includes .5 units of U.S. history, .5 units of U.S. government, and .5 units of geography. Both science units must include a laboratory component. Students may complete the computer studies requirement through demonstrated mastery of course content.	
Tennessee Technical preparatory	—	—	—	4	3	3	3	1	2	4 (program of study focusing on a particular technical area).	1994	Math requirement includes algebra. Science includes biology. ²	
University preparatory	—	—	—	4	3	3	3	1	3	3 (2 in foreign language; 1 fine art).	—	Math requirement includes algebra. Science includes biology. ²	
Texas	21	22	22	4	2.5	3	2	2	5.5	3 (1 unit of world history/geography studies or an approved science course, .5 units of economics, .5 units of speech, and 1 unit of technology applications).	1997	PE requirement includes .5 units of health and 1.5 units of PE. Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of world history or world geography, 1 unit of U.S. history, and .5 units of U.S. government. Math requirement must include algebra 1. Science requirement must include 1 unit from biology 1, chemistry 1, or physics 1. ²	
Utah	24	24	24	3	3	2	2	2	9.5	2.5 (1.5 units of art; 1 unit of applied technology applications).	1997	Required elective areas are divided into college entry or applied technology clusters. ^{1,3}	
Vermont	14.5	14.5	14.5	4	3	2	2	1.5	—	2 (1 unit of art and the selection of 1 additional unit of science or math).	1997	Social studies requirement includes 1 unit of U.S. history and 1 unit of world history. Science requirement consists of 1 unit of physical science and 1 unit of natural science. The state requires a total of 5 units combined in science and math. Statewide academic examinations are administered in math, science, English and social studies in order to qualify for a "governor's diploma."	
Standard	21	21	22	4	3	3	3	2	6	1 (1 unit of fine or practical arts).	—	Science requirement is in laboratory courses. ²	
Advanced studies	23	23	24	4	4	4	4	2	2	4 (3 units of foreign language; 1 unit of fine or practical arts).	—	Science requirement is in laboratory courses. ²	

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Washington	19	19	19	3	2.5	2	2	2	5.5	2 (1 unit of occupational education; 1 unit of fine/visual or performing arts).	1991	Social studies requirement consists of 1 unit of U.S. history and government, .5 units of Washington state history and government, and 1 unit of world history. Science requires 1 laboratory course. Assessment tests are given to 11th graders to assess strengths and weaknesses. Beginning with the 2000–2001 school year, passing assessment examinations result in issuance of a certificate of mastery which is required for graduation. ¹	
West Virginia Standard (1989)	21	21	21	4	3	2	2	2	7	1 (1 unit of foreign language, performing arts, or applied arts).	—	PE requirement consists of 1 unit of PE and 1 unit of health.	
Standard (2004)	—	—	24	4	3	3	3	2	4	5 (4 units of career majors and 1 unit of visual arts, music, dance, or theater).	2004	Math requirement includes algebra and 1 higher math. Science includes coordinated and thematic science and 1 higher science. Students must also graduate with “work based learning” requirements which are determined by local boards. ³	
Wisconsin	13	21.5	21.5	4	3	2	2	2	(³)	—	1989	PE consists of 1.5 units of PE and .5 units of health. Health can be completed in 7–12 grade. Language arts requirement must include writing composition. State encourages school boards to require 8.5 elective units selected from combinations of vocational education, foreign languages, fine arts and other courses. ^{1,3}	
Wyoming	—	—	13	4	3	3	3	0	(³)	—	—	Social studies requirement includes history and American government. Electives are determined by local school boards. Legislation in 1997 requires the state board of education to establish, through testing or other means, a requirement for each student to demonstrate mastery of the common core of knowledge and skills in order to earn a high school diploma. The means and process to establish this requirement have not been implemented.	

¹ State allows dual credit for college coursework.

² Minimum competency test is required.

³ Local boards determine some or all requirements.

⁴ A Career Pathway is a planned program of sequenced or specialized courses designed to develop knowledge and skills in a particular career area. Students may use the Additional Academic Coursework (visual and performing arts, foreign language and/or vocational technical education coursework, including Junior ROTC) as an option, to pursue individual academic interests. The credits in these two categories will eventually replace the elective credits.

—Data not available or not applicable.

NOTE.—Local school districts frequently have other graduation requirements in addition to state requirements.

SOURCE: Education Commission of the States, Clearinghouse Notes, “High School Graduation Requirements” November 1996 and November 1998; Education Commission of the States, Clearinghouse Notes, “Choice of Schools: State Actions” June 1999. (This table was prepared August 1999.)