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Students must satisfy state and local academic standards and complete a minimum number of credits to graduate from a public high school.<sup>1</sup> No state assessments are required for graduation. This publication outlines the state requirements for graduation from public high school, but schools may adopt graduation requirements that exceed the state requirements.

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## Credits

A credit is a school district determination that a student has successfully completed an academic year of study or mastered the applicable subject matter. Students must complete:

- at least 21.5 credits in language arts, math, science, social studies, art, and electives;
- sufficient credits to satisfy the state standards in physical education and health; and
- a course in personal finance in grade 10, 11, or 12.

The table below summarizes the credit requirements.

Subject	Credit
Language arts	4 credits
Math	3 credits
Science	3 credits, including 1 credit to satisfy earth and space science standards, 1 credit to satisfy all life science standards, and 1 credit to satisfy chemistry or physics standards.
Social studies	3.5 credits, including credit for a course in government and citizenship in either grade 11 or 12, <sup>2</sup> and a combination of other credits encompassing at least U.S. history, geography, government and citizenship, world history, and economics.
Arts	1 credit
Electives	At least 7 elective credits
Physical education	Credit value is determined at the local level
Health	Credit value is determined at the local level
Personal finance	Course must be completed in grade 10, 11, or 12. Credit value is determined at the local level. <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Public school" or "school," as used in this publication, means school districts and charter schools. This publication does not address nonpublic schools.

<sup>2</sup> This requirement applies to students beginning in grade 9 in the 2025-2026 school year and later. Students may instead complete an advanced placement, international baccalaureate, or other rigorous course on government and citizenship under [Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021](#), subdivision 1a.

<sup>3</sup> This requirement applies to students beginning in grade 9 in the 2024-2025 school year and later.

State law also establishes some credit equivalences that students can use to meet the state requirements. For example, a computer science credit may fulfill a math credit requirement if the credit meets state math standards.

## Academic Standards

Academic standards are summary descriptions of student learning in a content area. Students enrolled in Minnesota public schools must show that they understand state academic standards in the following academic areas: language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, health, and the arts. In addition to these state standards, schools must adopt local standards in career and technology education (CTE) and world languages. Although high schools administer state standardized tests known as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in language arts, math, and science that are aligned with the state standards, students are not required to pass the MCAs to graduate. Instead, schools must teach all the standards and determine whether students have met them. For more information on standards, see the House Research Department publication *Academic Standards*, December 2025.



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