GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

NEPN/NSBA Code: IKF

Before entering high school, students need to know the standards for attaining a high school diploma in order to plan an appropriate, sequential, educational program to meet that goal.

Regional School Unit 78 has adopted a proficiency-based system of learning consistent with Maine law, which means that after January 1, 2018, the awarding of a diploma will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas and Guiding Principles and the Learning Results rather than the accumulation of credits.

To be awarded a high school diploma from the Regional School Unit 78 school, students graduating in the Class of 2018 and beyond must demonstrate proficiency in the content areas identified in Maine's system of Learning Results, meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results, and fulfill all additional graduation requirements set by the Board.

Students graduating in the Classes of 2014-2017 must meet the credit and other graduation requirements specified in this policy.

A student who would have graduated with the Class of 2017 and have been awarded a diploma at commencement but for his/her failure to earn sufficient credits or meet other requirements set by Board policy will have until December 31, 2017 to fulfill the graduation requirements applicable to the Class of 2017.

The Superintendent, through the high school principal or other designee, shall be responsible for making accurate information concerning diploma requirements available to incoming students and their parents prior to the start of their ninth grade school year. A copy of this policy will be disseminated to all incoming ninth grade students at the time of course selection. This policy will also be included in every edition of the high school student handbook.

The Board has approved the following schedule of minimum requirements for graduation, which includes minimum requirements specified by the State of Maine. The Board is aware that current law and regulations are subject to change.

The Board expects the Superintendent/designee to inform students and parents as soon as practicable of any additional State-imposed standards that must be met before students may be awarded a high school diploma.

I. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASSES OF 2014, 2015, 2016 OR 2017

Students who anticipate graduating in the Classes of 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017 must meet the following minimum requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

A. The student must successfully complete a total of 22 credits. Of these credits, 12 ½ (twelve and one-half) must be those specified by the State of Maine. They are:

1. English/language arts – 4 credits;

2. Mathematics – 2 credits;

3. Social studies and history, including one year of American history and government – 2 credits;

4. Science, including at least one year of laboratory study – 2 years;

5. Fine arts, which may include art, music, forensics or drama – 1 credit;

6. Health – 1/2 credit; and

7. Physical education – 1 credit.

B. The student must demonstrate computer skills according to the school unit's standards for computer literacy, proficiency, and performance.

C. In addition to the State requirements, the student must meet the following additional credit requirements established by the Board:

1. Math – 2 additional credit;

2. Science – 2 additional credit;

3. Social Studies – 2 credit;

4. Career Prep/ College Prep– 0.5 credit;

D. The remaining credits may be selected by the student based on his/her interest, satisfaction of course prerequisites, and requirements of the field that he/she plans to enter upon graduation.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF EARNING CREDITS

A student who is deficient in these requirements or wishes to meet these requirements through alternative means may earn and apply credits in accordance with the provisions of this section.

A student who wishes to meet a credit requirement through an alternative method must have prior written approval as specified in this section.

A student who makes up deficiencies may participate in the next regular graduation ceremony following successful completion of all graduation requirements.

A. A student may earn up to two credits through the Franklin County Adult Education Program. The student must have prior written approval from the Director of Adult Education, Guidance Counselor, and Principal.

B. A student may earn credits through distance learning/virtual courses provided 1) the course is approved in advance by the Guidance Counselor and Principal and 2) progress is monitored by a member of the High School's professional staff.

C. Advanced courses or courses not available at Rangeley Lakes Regional School may be taken at other secondary schools or at approved postsecondary institutions with the approval of the Guidance Counselor and Principal.

D. A student may earn credits through independent study approved by the Guidance Counselor and Principal and monitored by the teacher(s) of the subject(s) to which the independent study is related.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Students who achieve proficiency in meeting the content standards of the Learning Results as specified in the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP), will be awarded diplomas.

II. DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN THE CLASS OF 2018 AND BEYOND

In accordance with Maine law and Regional School Unit 78 's proficiency-based system of learning, after January 1, 2018, the awarding of a diploma from Regional School Unit 78 school will be contingent on the demonstration of proficiency in the content areas of Maine's System of Learning Results and meeting the cross-content performance standards of the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results, rather than only the accumulation of credits. The student must also fulfill any other requirements specified in this policy including learning experiences to fulfill the demonstration of standards requirements.

Students who anticipate graduating in the Classes of 2018 and beyond must meet the following requirements in order to be awarded a high school diploma.

A. Demonstrate proficiency in meeting standards in the following content areas of the Learning Results. Meeting the standards entails demonstrating proficiency for each standard within each content area.

English Language Arts

Mathematics

Science and Technology

Social Studies

Health Education and Physical Education

Visual and Performing Arts

World Languages

Career and Education Development (embedded in the other content areas)

B. Meet the cross-content performance standards set forth in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

A student graduating from Rangeley Lakes Regional School is expected to be a:

Clear and effective communicator;

Self-directed and life-long learner;

Creative and analytical problem solver;

Responsible and involved citizen; and an

Integrative and informed thinker.

C. Complete an integrative research or service learning project through which he/she will demonstrate in-depth research, presentation, and technology application skills and evidence of proficiency in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

D. Complete an application to a post-secondary educational institution, training program or other experience that provides an opportunity for further growth.

E. The student must also complete the following non-academic requirements: Community Service- 10 Hours during their high school program of studies.

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO THE AWARDING OF A PROFICIENCY-BASED DIPLOMA

Regional School Unit 78's high school educational program is designed to enable students to satisfy graduation requirements in four years through a sequence of learning experiences/courses providing opportunities to gain and demonstrate proficiency in all of the content areas of the Learning Results and in the cross-content Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

Students following a traditional pathway will:

A. Engage in educational experiences in the content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science / Technology in <u>each year</u> of their high school program.

B. Engage in at least three educational experiences in the content area of social studies during their high school program.

C. Engage in at least one educational experience in the content area of visual and performing arts during their high school program.

D. Engage in at least one educational experiences in world languages during their high school program

E. Engage in at least one health and physical education experiences during

their high school program.

F. Engage in educational experiences that integrate career and education development into other content areas of the Learning Results.

Students following a traditional pathway must be enrolled in the equivalent of five full year learning experiences/courses or integrated equivalents in each of their high school years.

Students may also opt to pursue a high school diploma through multiple additional pathways including:

Early college/dual enrollment courses

Career and technical education programming

Online/virtual learning

Apprenticeships, internships and/or field work

Community service

Exchange programs

Independent study

Alternative education/"At Risk" programming

Adult education

Each pathway must provide a quality learning experience comparable in rigor to the school unit's own educational experience (course) offerings.

In order to pursue one or more of the multiple/alternative pathways, a student must have a Personal Learning Plan detailing how the pathway will provide exposure to the content standards of the Learning Results and how the student will demonstrate proficiency in meeting the standards. The personal learning plan must be approved by the Guidance Counselor and Principal.

STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Students who achieve proficiency in the content standards of the Learning Results and Guiding Principles, as specified in the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) will be awarded diplomas.

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE AWARDING OF A DIPLOMA FROM RANGELEY LAKES REGIONAL SCHOOL

This section applies to all students, in all graduation classes.

A. Transfer Students

For students who transfer to Rangeley Lakes Regional School from another state or from an educational program that is not required to be aligned with the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the Rangeley Lakes Regional School Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience towards meeting graduation requirements.

B. Home-schooled Students

For home-schooled students wishing to receive a diploma from Rangeley Lakes Regional School, the Rangeley Lakes Regional School Principal shall determine the value of the student's prior educational experience toward meeting graduation credit requirements. A home-schooled student must have attended Rangeley Lakes Regional School full time for a minimum of 2 semesters in order to receive a Rangeley Lakes Regional School diploma.

C. Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A student who leaves Rangeley Lakes Regional School to attend an accredited, degree-granting institution of higher education may upon satisfactory completion of the freshman year be awarded a high school diploma, provided that the student has notified the principal at the time of the early admission.

D. Early Awarding of Diplomas

A student who has met the State's and the Board's diploma requirements in fewer than four years of high school may be awarded a diploma.

E. Extended Study

Students are eligible for extended years of study to complete the requirements of a diploma if they have not reached the age of 20 at the start of the school year. Students eligible for extended years of study may be referred to adult education or other resources suitable to young learners. Extended study for students with disabilities shall be specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

F. Participation in Graduation Ceremony

A student must complete all Board requirements for a high school diploma in order to participate in graduation exercises.

G. Honors and Awards at Graduation

In order to be eligible for honors or awards based wholly or in part on academic achievement (e.g., valedictorian, salutatorian, class speaker"), a student must have been enrolled full time at Rangeley Lakes Regional School at least two semesters in the year preceding the semester of graduation. Students who do not meet this enrollment requirement will not be "ranked" for the purpose of determining eligibility for graduation honors, awards, or scholarships.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. § 4722
Ch. 127 § 7 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options
IK – Student Achievement
IKFA - Early Graduation

Adopted:February 25, 2014