

I. STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

CONTENT STANDARDS (KNOWLEDGE)

The School District's student performance standards are aligned with the Georgia Department of Education's Student Performance Standards and reflect the School Board's commitment to high expectations for all students. These standards require mastery of content knowledge in the academic areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, foreign languages, health education/physical education and career/technology education. The foundations on which all other content knowledge is built are reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics.

II. GENERAL CURRICULA

- A. All schools and programs will fulfill the student performance standards set forth in State Education Rules and local policy that reflect the Major System Priorities of the School Board. Accountability and benchmark procedures which address high expectations in student performance standards will be implemented by all administrative, instructional and support staff through the Instructional Program Accountability Policy.
- B. All students will be offered courses, which are rigorous, relevant and consistent with Georgia law and Georgia Department of Education Student Performance Standards.
- C. Each school containing any grade K-12 will provide education on alcohol, illegal and legal drug abuse annually at each grade level. Furthermore, all schools will develop and implement an accurate, comprehensive health and physical education program that will be grade and age appropriate as referenced in Policy IDBB.
- D. Each school will develop procedures to allow parents and legal guardians to exercise the option of excluding their child from sex education and Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) prevention instructional programs.
 - 1. Sex education and STD education will be a part of a comprehensive health program.
 - 2. Prior to the parent/guardian making a choice to allow his/her child to take the specified unit of instruction, he/she will be told what instruction is to be provided and will have the opportunity to review all instructional materials to be used, print and non-print. Any parent or legal guardian of a child to whom a course of study in sex education is to be taught will have the right to elect, in writing, that such child not receive such course of study. Additionally, all parents/guardians will be required to give written permission for such child to receive such course of study.

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3. The School District will establish a committee to review periodically sex/STD education instructional materials and make recommendations concerning age/grade level use. Recommendations made by the committee will be approved by the School Board prior to implementation.
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- E. All schools, kindergarten through grade twelve, will provide instruction that addresses core values and provides instruction in character education as adopted by the Georgia Board of Education.
 - F. Classroom instruction will focus on ensuring that all students demonstrate mastery of student performance standards and core curricular competencies at the appropriate level. All students will be annually assessed in this regard. Any student who does not meet grade level standards will be provided support by way of a Response to Intervention (RTI) Plan. Research-based strategies and interventions will be used for remediation, which will include progress monitoring and reporting individual student progress in moving toward district standards.
 - G. District curriculum staff will continually update the student performance standards and core curricular competencies. It is the responsibility of teachers and the principal/designee to ensure that the instruction is consistent with the content standards. A teacher(s) desiring to teach a new or experimental course may submit an outline of the course to the principal, who will follow district procedures for obtaining approval for new courses.
 - H. All schools will implement a developmental guidance program that includes a career awareness/planning component designed to enable all students to acquire marketable skills and the knowledge needed for transition into work and post secondary education.
 - I. The School Board authorizes homebound education in compliance with State and Federal Guidelines.
 - J. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan developed by the appropriate committee may modify the instructional program or length of school day for an eligible student if it is determined that the modification would be appropriate for the student. A decision to modify the program or length of school day will be documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

- K. A comprehensive system will be planned, developed and implemented to measure and verify proficiency of student performance standards and core curricular competencies, based on documented demonstrations of mastery. Such verification will consist of, but not be limited to, the following:
1. **Elementary School and Middle School**
 - a. Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)
 - b. State Assessment(s)
 - c. ACCESS for English Learner students
 - d. Other Approved Measures (e.g., prescribed reading and mathematics mastery tests, teacher-made tests and portfolio assessments)
 2. **High School**
 - a. State Assessment(s)
 - b. Other Approved Measures (e.g., prescribed reading and mathematics mastery tests, teacher-made tests and portfolio assessments).
- L. Each school will maintain records of annual student report cards.
- M. All student report cards, cumulative folders, RTI folders must be transferred intra district from the sending school to the receiving school within 10 days.

III. PRE-KINDERGARTEN/ELEMENTARY PUPIL PROGRESSION

A. Reporting

1. Report Cards/Interim Progress Reports

- a. The reporting of student progress to parents will follow School District procedures and will be in accordance with Georgia law, Georgia Board of Education rules, and School Board policies, rules and regulations.
- b. Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Such reports will be distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the School District calendar. If a student withdraws and does not qualify for a report card under this provision, he/she will be issued a withdrawal form listing current grades in each subject area.

- c. No later than midway between grading periods, an interim progress report will be sent to all parents/guardians of students in grades 1-5.
- d. Student attendance for the grading period will be recorded on the report card.
- e. Elementary report cards will be signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to the teacher.

2. Grading System - Kindergarten

- a. It is required that kindergarten student performance be evaluated and reported based on mastery of standards in language arts, mathematics, and writing/fine motor skills. Following are the symbols used to describe evidence of mastery:

Academic Skills Code:

NA	=	Not Yet Assessed
ND	=	Not Demonstrated
EM	=	Emerging
PR	=	Progressing
MS	=	Meets Standard
EX	=	Exceeds Standard

No check indicates skill has not been introduced

- b. Progress in other areas is assessed and reported using the following symbols:

AC	=	Area of Concern
DE	=	Developing
CD	=	Consistently Demonstrating

3. Grading System - Grades One and Two

Grade one and grade two student performance is evaluated and reported based on mastery of standards in academic courses, participation courses, personal growth and development, and conduct using the following symbols:

O	=	Outstanding
S	=	Satisfactory
N	=	Needs Improvement
U	=	Unsatisfactory

4. Grading System - Grades Three through Five

- a. In reporting student performance in grades three through six, the symbols “A”, “B”, “C”, “D” and “F” are used in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, science, health, social studies and Accelerated Intellectual Movement (AIM-Gifted Resource Enrichment). These symbols represent the equivalent numerical grades as shown below:

A	=	90-100
B	=	80- 89
C	=	71- 79
D	=	70
F	=	Below 70

- b. Progress in music, art, physical education and general conduct will be assessed and reported using the following symbols:

S	=	Satisfactory
N	=	Needs Improvement
U	=	Unsatisfactory

5. Alternative Report Cards

- a. For some special education students, alternative report cards are used to report progress made on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives. Some students will receive the regular education report card to report progress made in other subject areas.
- b. An English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Report Card Addendum is issued each grading period.

6. Grading English Learners (EL)

English Learners (EL) must receive grade level instruction using the Georgia Student Performance Standards on their English proficiency level as determined by the W-APT or ACCESS assessment. Resources provided by the World Class Instructional Design and Application Consortium (WIDA) will assist teachers with differentiation. Grades must reflect work that has been differentiated to their English proficiency

level and accommodations established in the English Language Learner–Testing Participation Committee Plan (ELL-TPC).

- a. Teachers will implement the accommodations determined by the student’s ELL-TPC committee and documented in his/her English Language Learner (ELL-TPC) plan. ESOL teachers will provide general education teacher with a classroom testing accommodation plan.
- b. Grading of ELs should therefore reflect daily instructional accommodations as well as testing accommodations, and should not penalize the student for not yet being fully fluent in English.
- c. ELs will receive grades based on accommodations or alternative assignments appropriate to the student’s language proficiency level, and receive the same report card that is used in general education.
- d. ELs will not be penalized for missing work in the general education classroom during the time they are pulled for ESOL services. Teachers must grade students on the components for which they are present and derive the class grade based on the elements that the student completed.
- e. Students will not receive grades of “D” or “F” based on lack of English proficiency. EL students will not receive grades of D or F unless their lack of performance on modified instruction warrants such grades.
- f. Classroom teachers will provide accommodations for instructional assignments and tests based on students’ English language proficiencies. The use of instructional accommodations and modifications does not indicate that a student cannot receive the highest grade in the content area.

B. Promotion, Placement and Retention

DEFINITIONS

Additional instruction – academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer instruction or other forms of instruction beyond the school day.

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Differentiated instruction – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

Grade level – standard of performance, based on competency of student performance standards.

Placement – the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

Placement committee – the committee established by the local school principal/designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet expectations on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instrument in the absence of Georgia state assessment. This committee will be comprised of the principal/designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment.

Promotion – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

Retention – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

Elementary school students will be promoted, placed or retained dependent upon their ability to meet the student performance standards and core curricular competencies of Cherokee County School District and State Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.11, Promotion, Placement, and Retention and 160-3-1-.07, Testing Programs-Student Assessment, and State law. Elementary school students will not be retained unless RTI Tier III placement has occurred for a minimum period of six weeks prior to the end of the school year.

1. When determining the placement of students, which must include review by the (RTI) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee, academic performance based on mastery with emphasis on proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics; and the level of social and emotional development will be considered.
2. For special education students whose promotion is in question, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee, which includes the principal/designee, will determine grade placement.
3. The principal/designee will have the final authority for appropriate grade placement of students in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 4 and 6. The principal/designee will be included in the placement committee for

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students in grades 3 and 5, within the limitations of School Board Policy, Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2 .11 and 160-3-1-.07 and Georgia law.

4. English Learners (EL) who have been enrolled in the ESOL program for two years or less may not be retained solely due to lack of English proficiency.
5. Work completed under private instruction will not be accepted by the School District except in accordance with Georgia Board of Education administrative rules.

6. **Additional Requirements for Grades One through Five**

- a. Each school principal/designee will distribute student data from the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment to teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Each teacher will use data to focus instruction on identified student academic performance in grades 1-5.
- b. Each school principal/designee will establish and/or convene a RTI or IEP Committee for each student in grades 3-5 who does not achieve grade level on reading and/or mathematics sections of the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment. The RTI or IEP Committee will provide the following:

Students will be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.

The school principal/designee will annually notify parents or guardians that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the academic achievement of the student on criterion-referenced assessments and/or other criteria established in this policy.

7. **Requirements for Grades Three and Five**

- a. Promotion of a student will be determined as follows:
 - 1) No third grade student will be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment

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in reading, unless otherwise specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

- 2) No fifth grade student will be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment in reading in mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy, unless otherwise specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- 3) In the event that State or Federal statutes/rules waive the requirement of Reading proficiency for 3rd and 5th grade students and Math proficiency for 5th grade students based on a state assessment, this policy will also be waived for the duration of the State waiver.
- 4) The school principal/designee may retain a student who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.
- 5) A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) will take the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics on the second administration day(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the School District. Placement or promotion of these students will follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.
- 6) A student's failure to take the Georgia state assessment in grade three or five in reading and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s), or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the School District will result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student will follow the procedure set forth in this rule.
- 7) For students receiving special education, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee will serve as the placement committee.

C. Summer School

1. The summer school program provides accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in reading and mathematics.
2. Pursuant to State Board of Education administrative rules, and *as funds are appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly*, the opportunity to participate in the summer school program will be available to students who:
 - a. Failed one or more academic subjects (language arts, reading, mathematics, science or social studies); or,
 - b. Were retained in their current grade; or,
 - c. Scored in the below grade level range of the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instrument in the absence of Georgia state assessment.
3. Summer school records will be sent to the sending school at the conclusion of the summer school program. The teachers and principal/designee of the sending school will review the student's records to determine appropriate grade placement within limitations of School Board Policy, Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.11 and 160-3-1-.07 and Georgia Statutes. Eligibility for competitive interscholastic activities as defined in the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.19 cannot be met during summer school.
4. Extended School Year (ESY) services shall be offered to eligible special education students.

IV. MIDDLE SCHOOL PUPIL PROGRESSION

Reporting

1. Report Cards/Interim Progress Reports
 - a. Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Such reports will be distributed to students for delivery to their parents/guardians according to the School District calendar. If a student withdraws and does not qualify for a report card under this provision, he/she will be issued a withdrawal form listing current grades in each subject area.

- b. An interim progress report will be sent to parents/guardians no later than midway between grading periods.
- c. Student attendance for the grading period will be recorded on the report card.
- d. Conferences will be scheduled at the request of the teacher or parent. Parents/guardians will be notified by the teacher and through interim progress reports and report cards of the right to request and participate in at least two conferences annually.

2. Grading System – Grades Six, Seven and Eight

The grading system used in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades and the interpretation of the letter grades, which represent the equivalent numerical grades, are as follows:

Academic Grades

A	=	90-100
B	=	80- 89
C	=	71- 79
D	=	70
F	=	Below 70

A minimum passing score of 70 is required for all courses.

Conduct

S	=	Satisfactory
N	=	Needs Improvement
U	=	Unsatisfactory

3. Grading English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Students

English Learners (EL) who are served in the ESOL program will receive a report card each grading period. In order to evaluate ESOL students effectively, certain modification to traditional grading are recommended:

- a. Most ESOL students cannot participate fully in certain content areas including social studies, science and health where mastery of the English language is assumed. Report card evaluations for ESOL students will take into account the student’s motivation, effort and progress in the class.

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- b. In areas where language is not a barrier, such as mathematics, art, music, physical education, traditional grading procedures will be followed.

B. Promotion, Placement and Retention

Middle school students will be promoted, placed or retained dependent upon their ability to meet the student performance standards and core curriculum competencies of the School District and State Board of Education Rules 160-4-2-.11, Promotion, Placement, and Retention and 160-3-1-.07, Testing Programs-Student Assessment, and State Statutes. Middle school students will not be retained unless there has been a referral to the Response To Intervention (RTI), Tier III or Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee with sufficient timeliness to assure that appropriate interventions and accommodations to secure the student's success have been attempted and documented.

1. When determining the placement of students, which must include review by the Response To Intervention (RTI) Committee, academic performance based on mastery in language arts, reading and mathematics, passing science or social studies and passing one additional course during each year for grades six, seven and eight will be considered as well as the level of social and emotional development.
2. Special Education Students
 - a. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee, which includes the principal/designee, will determine grade placement for students with disabilities whose promotion is in question.
 - b. The IEP Committee will determine and record on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) the appropriate level of student performance standards and type of diploma the student will work toward.
3. The principal/designee will have the final authority for appropriate grade placement of grade 6 and 7 students. The principal/designee will be included in the placement committee for students in grade 8, within the limitations of School Board Policy, Georgia Board of Education Rules 160-4-2 .11 and 160-3-1-.07 and Georgia Statutes.

English Learners (EL) who have been enrolled in the ESOL program for two years or less will not be retained solely due to lack of English Proficiency.

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A middle school student whose accelerated academic needs cannot be met at the middle school level, as determined by the middle school principal/designee, high school principal/designee and Assistant Superintendent, Educational Programs, may be permitted to attend a high school for the necessary course. Middle school students will not attend a high school for a course when that course is available at the middle school level or when the course sought at the high school level requires successful completion of the middle school curriculum. Transportation to a high school for coursework must be provided by the parents/guardians.

4. Requirements For Grade Eight.

Promotion of a student will be determined as follows.

- 1) No eighth grade student will be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Georgia state assessment or alternative assessment instruments in the absence of Georgia state assessment in reading and mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.
- 2.) A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) shall take the reading and/or mathematics on the second administration day(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the local Board of Education.

Placement or promotion of these students will follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

- 3.) A student's failure to take the Georgia state assessment in grade eight in reading and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the School District will result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student will follow the procedure set forth in this rule.
- 4.) For students receiving special education services, the IEP Committee will serve as the placement committee.

C. Summer School

1. The summer school program provides remediation in language arts, reading, mathematics, science and social studies.
2. Pursuant to Georgia Board of Education administrative rules, and *as funds are appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly*, the opportunity to participate in the summer school program will be available to students who:
 - a. Failed one or more academic subjects (language arts, reading, mathematics, science or social studies); or,
 - b. Were retained in their current grade; or,
 - c. Scored in the below grade level range of the Georgia state assessment in reading and/or mathematics.
3. Summer school records will be sent to the sending school at the conclusion of the summer school program. The teachers and principal/designee of the sending school will review the student's records to determine appropriate grade placement. Eligibility for competitive interscholastic activities as defined in the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.19 cannot be met during summer school.
4. Extended School Year (ESY) services will be offered to special education students who are eligible.

V. HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL PROGRESSION

Reporting

1. Report Cards/Interim Progress Reports
 - a. Report cards or quarterly progress reports are issued at the end of every nine weeks of school and cover a period of approximately 45 school days. Such reports will be distributed to the students for delivery to their parents/guardians on the fifth school day following the end of the grading period except for the final report, which will be mailed to the parent.
 - b. An interim progress report will be sent to parents/guardians no later than midway between grading periods.
 - c. Student attendance for each class will be recorded on the report card.

- d. Conferences will be scheduled at the request of the teacher or parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified by the teacher and through interim progress reports and report cards of the right to request and participate in at least two conferences annually.

2. Grading System

- a. High schools will utilize numerical grades for normal progress reporting. Should letter grades be needed [to calculate certain Grade Point Averages GPAs, parental reference, etc.] the equivalent numerical grades are as follows:

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=71-79

D=70

F=Below 70

- b. The Numeric Grade Average (NGA) summarizes each student's academic performance in high school. NGA is used in determining eligibility for numerous awards, and activities.
- c. For the purpose of determining class rank, extra points will be awarded for advanced courses as follows:

Honors Courses

Five points
added to
numerical grade

Advanced Placement Courses (AP)

10 points added to
numerical grade

- d. An incomplete (I) is given as an opportunity for students to make up incomplete class work. Class work will be made up 14 school days after the close of the grading period. If the work remains incomplete at the end of this period, the "I" will revert to a failing grade. The principal/designee has the discretion, upon request, to extend the deadline.

B. Grade Adjustment

- 1. The principal/designee is responsible for the supervision and maintenance of student records. The principal/designee assumes the responsibility for adjusting a student's grades or credits when the necessity arises, consistent with the following reasons:

- a. Erroneously computed or recorded grades.
 - b. Conversion of grades from other schools into the School District's grading system.
 - c. Averaging or grades earned by students who may be:
 - Temporarily enrolled in another school in the United States or abroad, or
 - Enrolled in a special program (homebound instruction, out-of-district placement, tutorial programs, make-up work, and so on).
 - d. Summer school grades: The original grade assigned and the summer school grade earned will appear on the student transcript. Both the original grade and summer school grade are used in computing class rank.
 - e. Averaging grades earned by students who transfer to the high school from other schools during the course of the year with grades earned at the high school. Transfer grades received during the school year should be sent to individual teachers or department heads to be incorporated into the final average.
 - f. Granting credits earned in other high schools in subjects not offered in our curriculum.
 - g. Any other good and sufficient cause except that no grades may be adjusted to facilitate athletic eligibility.
2. In the above cases, as well as in any other case not delineated herein, the principal/designee will, when possible, consult with appropriate teachers in whose class the student is enrolled, officials of the sending schools, and persons in charge of special instruction.
 3. The principal will refer unresolved grade disputes between the principal and a teacher to the school's Grade Review Advisory Committee. The Superintendent will establish guidelines to insure consistent and timely implementation of the responsibilities of each school's Grade Review Advisory Committee. Reference GA. Code 20-2-989.20 and School District Guidelines for the Grade Review Advisory Committee.

C. Promotion, Placement and Retention

1. Parents/guardians will be notified at the end of the school year when a student is not considered “on-track” for graduation. Refer to current guidelines for determination of “on track” status.
2. Students will be assisted in meeting these requirements through accelerated instruction, differentiated instruction or additional instruction and other opportunities which may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Summer school attendance
 - b. Special counseling
 - c. Volunteer and/or peer tutors
 - d. School sponsored help sessions
 - e. Study skill classes
 - f. Polaris Evening School
 - g. Approved online courses
3. Special Education Students
 - a. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee will determine and record on the IEP the type of diploma the student shall work toward.
 - b. The IEP Committee has the discretion to determine that the student be permitted additional time or less time to complete a course. All decisions regarding this time modification must be specified on the student’s IEP.
 - c. An alternative report card will be used for students with disabilities whose progress cannot be appropriately reported using the standard report card.
4. End of Course Testing

To earn credit for a course requiring an EOC test, a student transferring a course from a non-accredited program must take and pass the corresponding EOC test.
5. Semester/Final Examinations

Semester and final examinations will be scheduled and administered in accordance with district procedures, rules and regulations. The End of Course Test, where required, serves as the final exam.

6. Online Courses

Students must receive approval prior to enrolling in any online course. Their school counselor must review the appropriateness for the student's program of study. Additionally, the Office of Educational Programs must approve the course content.

D. Summer School

1. A high school student may earn one-half credit for successful completion of a 60-hour summer school course.
2. A high school student may take up to two classes during the summer session.

E. Graduation Requirements

1. School Board Policy IHF addresses graduation requirements.
2. High School students transferring into the School District high schools will be subject to the graduation requirements for the grade level into which they enter (i.e., a student transferring from outside the district in the eleventh grade will fall under the same requirements as all other eleventh graders).

REVISED: July 21, 2016

Cherokee County Board of Education