



## Mapping Out Your Four-Year Plan

*With so many choices in high school, it's important for your student to plan ahead! Use this introduction to high school credits and the Learning About Credits video to discuss the importance of planning for high school early and how courses affect graduation. After you introduce these points, help your student create his or her four-year plan.*

*Note: The attached plan covers state graduation requirements, but local requirements can vary. Ask the guidance counselor (or your student) for a copy of your district's graduation requirements and the list of courses and programs available at your high school. Then help your student start a four-year plan!*

- Credits are earned when you pass a course. Your grade level (freshman, sophomore, etc.) is based on how many course credits you earn.
- Courses build on each other. You must earn credit for some courses before you move on to others.
- Some courses count as a full credit and some as a half.
- When making your plan, remember to follow the 4x4 rule—four credits each of math, science, English language arts, and social studies.
- The state's requirements for graduation, called the Recommended High School Plan, are listed on the attached plan, but your school district may have additional requirements. Ask your counselor to be sure!
- Make room in your plan for electives, including art, band, and computer courses.
- You may be able to earn high school credit in middle school by taking courses like Algebra I or Spanish I. Taking high school courses early can help you get a jump on learning and free up space in your high school schedule. But remember, your performance in those classes will show on your high school transcript. Ask your counselor what is offered in your school.
- Use your college and career interests to help you with decisions. Take an interest inventory or research what high school courses will help you with a college path.
- Are you planning to take advanced courses? Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) allow you to take college-level courses while in high school. Score well on the exams, and you can earn college credit.
- And finally, ASK for help! Your counselors and teachers will be happy to answer your questions.

*A sample four-year plan is attached. Go ahead—get started!*

## My Four-Year Plan for High School

*Fill in the names of the courses offered at your high school that you plan to use to meet the state and district graduation requirements.*

Subject	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
English Language Arts (4)				
Mathematics (4)				
Science (4)				
Social Studies (3.5)				
Economics (.5)				
Physical Education (1/1.5*)				
Health (0/.5*)				
Speech (.5)				
Foreign Language (2/3*)				
Fine Arts (1)				
Electives (6/5*)				
<b>Total Credits (Minimum Required - 26)</b>				

\*The Distinguished Achievement Program requires a 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Foreign Language, 1.5 credits of Physical Education, .5 credit of Health, 5 electives, and completion of 4 advanced measures. Advanced measures include: 1) an original research project (no more than 2), 2) an AP score of 3 or more, 3) an IB score of 4 or more, 4) a PSAT score of that qualifies student for recognition in certain National Merit Scholarship Corporation programs, and 5) completion of college courses, advanced technical credit, and dual credit courses with a grade of 3.0 or higher.