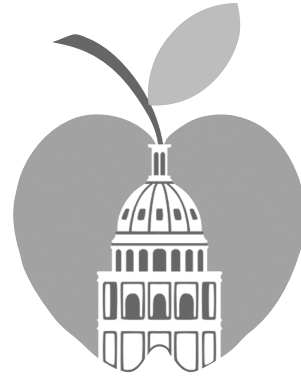


SECTION III:

High School

Information and Graduation Requirements



AISD

AISD Disclaimer:

The contents of the Secondary School Information Guide are relevant to AISD Policy (Legal and Local), Regulation and Practice as of December 2006. For current information regarding district policy please refer to the Austin Independent School District website at www.austinisd.org or visit with your school counselor.

Specific school-related questions should be directed to campus staff. When a parent or guardian has a question or concern, he or she should contact the person who made the initial decision. After discussing the matter, if the concern continues, the principal should be contacted.

High School Information and Graduation Requirements

The high school curriculum in the Austin Independent School District is designed to meet the needs of students preparing for college, careers and citizenship in the community. AISD offers a full range of courses, advanced academic courses, and a comprehensive array of Career and Technology Education programs. All AISD students are expected to prepare for both college and careers.

In addition to the core academic programs, each high school also offers a variety of extracurricular and co-curricular programs for students. High school students can perform in a marching band, star in a dramatic production, learn modern dance, or edit a newspaper. They can compete in volleyball or football, or any of a dozen other sports; and every campus has numerous clubs and organizations students can join for fun and education.

All students entering grade 9 are required to enroll in the Recommended High School Program or Distinguished Achievement Program. Permission to enroll in the Minimum Graduation Plan will be granted only if an agreement is reached among the students, the parents or guardian, the counselor, and the principal. The AISD Permission to Graduate on the Minimum Graduation Plan may be obtained from your school counselor.

Browse through the course offerings in this guide to identify electives or programs that interest you. Counselors are available to help students identify courses to take, but students should discuss their goals and interests with parents as well. Students and their families should explore the many college scholarship opportunities available to successful high school students. Scholarship information is provided to eleventh and twelfth grade students. See your counselor for scholarship information.

College and Career Pathways and Majors

All Austin ISD high school students have the opportunity to focus their high school elective course choices in a field of interest. All high school courses of study begin with the more rigorous Recommended Graduation Programs. The courses of study are divided into six broad categories called "Pathways." Pathways are a method of organizing the available electives into manageable college/career focus areas.

Majors are a coherent sequence of courses (3 or more) within a Pathway. All schools should have a Math, Science, Humanities and one or more Career Majors. Each Major will have a series of three or more courses that will move a student from a beginning introductory course to two or more increasingly advanced courses. All Majors start with the Recommended High School Graduation Programs as a foundation and focus on the use of electives in a coherent sequence to build student skills in an area of interest. The selection of a Major is based upon individual interest and aptitude. To accommodate student growth and changing interests a student can achieve more than one Major or change Majors as appropriate.

Following are the Pathways that are available in Austin ISD.

- Administration and Sales
- Business Operations
- Technical
- Social Services
- Arts and Humanities
- Science, Mathematics and Technology

Students are urged to take the pathway courses in a coherent sequence to maximize the effectiveness of the learning. In many of the pathways, college credit through Tech-Prep is dependent on following the correct sequence of courses. Your teachers and counselors will be glad to help you review your interests and skills that will help you determine what pathway to choose.

Graduation Programs

All students officially accepted into high school during or after the fall semester of 2000 must complete at least the required 22 credits in the Minimum Graduation Program or the equivalent to graduate. Graduation under the Minimum High School Program requires parental permission. AISD expects students to take at least the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Recommended High School Program, which requires a minimum of 24 or 26 credits for graduation, or the Distinguished Achievement High School Program which requires 24 or 26 credits, including three years of Language Other than English, plus advanced measures.

All students must take required English, mathematics, science and social studies courses in the year they enter high school, and they must continue those courses annually until all requirements are met. Students are encouraged to continue their mathematics and English study throughout high school.

Students must graduate on one of the graduation programs available to them when they enter Grade 9. Outlined below are the various graduation programs available to students based on the year that they enter high school (Grade 9). Students entering Grade 9 in fall 2001 through fall 2006 can graduate under the following three High School Programs:

- 1) Minimum High School Program with Austin ISD Modification Exhibit 1:
- 2) Recommended High School Program (as approved by the State Board of Education in 2000) Exhibit 2:
- 3) Distinguished Achievement High School Program (as approved by the State Board of Education in 2000) Exhibit 3:

Students entering Grade 9 in fall 2007 and thereafter will have new graduation requirements for the Recommended and Distinguished Graduation Programs. These include an increase in the total credits required from 24 to 26 and a requirement for four (4) credits of mathematics and four (4) credits of science. Details on these new plans were not finalized in time for the printing of this document. High School counselors and the AISD web site will provide updated information for Grade 9 students entering in fall 2007 as soon as it is available. Refer to the EIF Exhibits in District Policy found on the AISD website at www.austinisd.org.

Austin ISD Graduation Plans

Students must demonstrate proficiency in one the following Graduation Programs
 Approved concurrent enrollment in a college level course (dual credit) is an acceptable course substitution.

Beginning in 2007 – 2008, students who enter 9th grade after 2007- 2008 will have changes in the Recommended and Distinguished Achievement Graduation Plans. The State Board of Education requires that each student successfully complete four courses in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies for a total of twenty-six (26) credits rather than twenty-four (24) credits. This change should not impact 9th grade course selection. Additional information will be sent home with secondary students in the spring of 2007 concerning specific courses in each subject area.

Minimum High School Program (Exhibit 1)		Recommended High School Program (Exhibit 2)		Distinguished High School Program (Exhibit 3)	
English Language Arts Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must consist of 2 English I, II, and, III. (English I for Speakers of Other Languages and English II for Speakers of Other Languages may be substituted for English I and II only for immigrant students with limited English proficiency). The fourth credit may be English IV, Research/Technical Writing, Creative/Imaginative Writing, Practical Writing Skills, Literary Genres, Business Communication, Journalism, or concurrent enrollment in a college English course.	4.0	English Language Arts Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must consist of English I, II, and, III, and English IV. (English I for Speakers of Other Languages and English II for Speakers of Other Languages may be substituted for English I and II only for immigrant students with limited English proficiency).	4.0	English Language Arts Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must consist of English I, II, and, III, and English IV. (English I for Speakers of Other Languages and English II for Speakers of Other Languages may be substituted for English I and II only for immigrant students with limited English proficiency).	4.0
Mathematics Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must include Algebra I and Geometry.	3.0	Mathematics Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must include Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II.	3.0	Mathematics Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must include Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II.	3.0
Science Must consist of Biology and Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC). A student may substitute chemistry or physics for IPC but then must use the second of these two courses as the academic elective credit identified below. Note: students must take one full credit of the same course.	2.0	Science 1 credit must be Biology, AP Biology or IB Biology. Students must choose the remaining 2 credits from the following three areas (not more than 1 credit may be chosen from each of the areas to satisfy this requirement). Note: once the area is chosen, students must take one full credit of the same course. Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC), Chemistry, AP Chemistry or IB Chemistry, Physics, AP Physics or IB Physics, or Principles of Technology I. Students on the Recommended High School Program are encouraged to take courses in biology, chemistry, and physics to complete the science requirements.	3.0	Science 1 credit must be Biology, AP Biology or IB Biology. Students must choose the remaining 2 credits from the following areas (not more than 1 credit may be chosen from each of the areas to satisfy this requirement). Note: once the area is chosen, students must take one full credit of the same course. Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC), Chemistry, AP Chemistry or IB Chemistry, Physics, AP Physics or IB Physics, or Principles of Technology I. Students on the Distinguished Achievement High School Program are encouraged to take courses in biology, chemistry, and physics to complete the science requirements.	3.0
Social Studies Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must consist of World Geography or World History, United States History since reconstruction, and United States Government – 0.5 credit.	2.5	Social Studies Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must consist of World Geography, World History, United States History since reconstruction, and United States Government – 0.5 credit.	3.5	Social Studies Students must take one full credit of the same course. Must consist of World Geography, World History, United States History since reconstruction, and United States Government – 0.5 credit.	3.5

Minimum High School Program (Exhibit 1)		Recommended High School Program (Exhibit 2)		Distinguished High School Program (Exhibit 3)	
Economics With emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and its benefits.	0.5	Economics With emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and its benefits.	0.5	Economics With emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and its benefits.	0.5
Speech Must consist of Communication Applications.	0.5	Speech Must consist of Communication Applications.	0.5	Speech Must consist of Communication Applications.	0.5
Physical Education Must include Foundations of Personal Fitness (0.5 credit). Students may earn no more than 2 credits toward state graduation requirements in physical education. Students may substitute certain physical activities for the required credits of physical education, including the 0.5 credits for Foundations of Personal Fitness. Substitutions must be based on physical activity involved in drill team, marching band, and cheerleading during the fall semester, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps; athletics; Dance I-IV; 2 or 3 credit career and technology work-based training courses; and off-campus physical education. The District may award up to 2 credits for physical education for appropriate private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted on or off campus, with approval by the Commissioner. 19 TAC 74.42, 74.52(b)(7)	1.5	Physical Education Must include Foundations of Personal Fitness (0.5 credit). Students may earn no more than 2 credits toward state graduation requirements in physical education. Students may substitute certain physical activities for the required credits of physical education, including the 0.5 credits for Foundations of Personal Fitness. Substitutions must be based on physical activity involved in drill team, marching band, and cheerleading during the fall semester, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps; athletics; Dance I-IV; and 2 or 3 credit career and technology work-based training courses. The District may award up to 2 credits for physical education for appropriate private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted on or off campus, with approval by the Commissioner. 19 TAC 74.43, 74.53(b)(7)	1.5	Physical Education Must include Foundations of Personal Fitness (0.5 credit). Students may earn no more than 2 credits toward state graduation requirements in physical education. Students may substitute certain physical activities for the required credits of physical education, including the 0.5 credits for Foundations of Personal Fitness. Substitutions must be based on physical activity involved in drill team, marching band, and cheerleading during the fall semester, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps; athletics; Dance I-IV; and 3 credit career and technology work-based training courses. The District may award up to 2 credits for physical education for appropriate private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs conducted on or off campus, with approval by the Commissioner. 19 TAC 74.44, 74.54(b)(7)	1.5
Health Education or 1 credit of Health Science Technology		Health Education or 1 credit of Health Science Technology		Health Education or 1 credit of Health Science Technology	
Fine Arts Students must take one full credit of the same course. This requirement may be satisfied by any course in 19 TAC 117, Subchapter C (relating to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts), except for any Speech course.	0.5 1.0	Fine Arts Students must take one full credit of the same course. This requirement may be satisfied by any course in 19 TAC 117, Subchapter C (relating to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts), except for any Speech course.	0.5 1.0	Fine Arts Students must take one full credit of the same course. This requirement may be satisfied by any course in 19 TAC 117, Subchapter C (relating to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts), except for any Speech course.	0.5 1.0

Minimum High School Program (Exhibit 1)	Recommended High School Program (Exhibit 2)	Distinguished High School Program (Exhibit 3)
<p>Technology Applications Note: students must take one full credit of the same course. This requirement may be satisfied by: The following courses in 19 TAC 126 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Technology Applications): Computer Science I, Computer Science II, Desktop Publishing, Digital Graphics Animation, Multimedia, Video Technology, Web Mastering; or Independent Study in Technology Applications. The following courses in 19 TAC 120 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Business Education): Business Computer Information Systems I and II, Business Computer Programming, Telecommunications and Networking or Business Image Management and Multimedia; or The following courses in 19 TAC 123 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Technology Education/Industrial Technology Education): Computer Applications, Technology Systems (modular computer laboratory- based), Communication Graphics (modular computer laboratory- based), or Computer Multimedia and Animation Technology.</p>	<p>1.0 Technology Applications (1) The following courses in 19 TAC 126 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Technology Applications): Computer Science I, Computer Science II, Desktop Publishing, Digital Graphics/ Animation, Multimedia, Video Technology, Web Mastering, or Independent Study in Technology Applications, and for students entering ninth grade in the 2004-05 school year or thereafter, state approved technology application innovative courses. (2) The following courses in 19 TAC 120 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Business Education): Business Computer Information Systems I or II, Business Computer Programming, Telecommunications and Networking or Business Image Management and Multimedia; or (3) The following courses in 19 TAC 123 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Technology Education/ Industrial Technology Education): Computer Applications, Technology Systems (modular computer laboratory- based), Communication Graphics (modular computer laboratory-based), or Computer Multimedia and Animation Technology. Students entering ninth grade in the 2004-05 school year or thereafter may satisfy the Technology Application requirement through the completion of three credits (for students participating in a coherent sequence of career and technology courses or who are enrolled in a Tech Prep high school plan of study) consisting of two or more state-approved career and technology courses in 19 TAC 119-125 and 127. Districts shall ensure that career and technology courses, including innovative courses, in a coherent sequence used to meet the technology applications credit are appropriate to collectively teach the knowledge skills found in any of the approved courses listed in (1)–(3) above. Students pursuing the technology applications option described in this paragraph must demonstrate proficiency in technology applications before beginning grade 11 through credit by examination as described in 19 TAC 74.14 (relating to Credit by Examination).</p>	<p>1.0 Technology Applications (1) The following courses in 19 TAC 126 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Technology Applications): Computer Science I, Computer Science II, Desktop Publishing, Digital Graphics/ Animation, Multimedia, Video Technology, Web Mastering, or Independent Study in Technology Applications, and for students entering ninth grade in the 2004-05 school year or thereafter, state approved technology application innovative courses. (2) The following courses in 19 TAC 120 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Business Education): Business Computer Information Systems I or II, Business Computer Programming, Telecommunications and Networking or Business Image Management and Multimedia; or (3) The following courses in 19 TAC 123 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Technology Education /Industrial Technology Education): Computer Applications, Technology Systems (modular computer laboratory- based), Communication Graphics (modular computer laboratory- based), or Computer Multimedia and Animation Technology. Students entering ninth grade in the 2004-05 school year or thereafter may satisfy the Technology Application requirement through the completion of three credits (for students participating in a coherent sequence of career and technology courses or who are enrolled in a Tech Prep high school plan of study) consisting of two ore more state-approved career and technology courses in 19 TAC 119-125 and 127. Districts shall ensure that career and technology courses, including innovative courses, in a coherent sequence used to meet the technology applications credit are appropriate to collectively teach the knowledge skills found in any of the approved courses listed in (1)–(3) above. Students pursuing the technology applications option described in this paragraph must demonstrate proficiency in technology applications before beginning grade 11 through credit by examination as described in 19 TAC 74.14 (relating to Credit by Examination).</p>

Minimum High School Program (Exhibit 1)		Recommended High School Program (Exhibit 2)		Distinguished High School Program (Exhibit 3)	
<p>Academic Elective Must be selected from World History, World Geography, or any science course approved by the State Board of Education for science credit under 19 TAC 112 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for Science). If a student elects to replace IPC with either chemistry or physics as described in Science above, the academic elective must be the other of these two science courses.</p>	1.0	<p>Languages Other than English Must consist of any two levels of the same language.</p>	2.0	<p>Languages Other than English Must consist of any three levels of the same language.</p>	3.0
<p>Electives Must be selected from the list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 as specified in 19 TAC 74.41 or 19 TAC 51(g), as applicable (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for the Foundation and Enrichment Curriculum), state approved innovative courses as specified in 19 TAC 74.27 (relating to Innovative Courses and Programs), Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (1 to 4 credits), or Driver Education (0.5 credit) A maximum of 3 credits of Reading I, II or III for elective credit may be offered by local policy to identify students.</p>	4.5	<p>Electives Must be selected from the list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 as specified in 19 TAC 74.41 or 74.51(g) as applicable (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for the Foundation and Enrichment Curriculum), state approved innovative courses as specified in 19 TAC 74.27 (relating to Innovative Courses and Programs), Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (1 to 4 credits), or Driver Education (0.5 credit). All students who wish to complete the Recommended High School Program are encouraged to study each of the four foundation curriculum areas (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) every year in high school.</p> <p>A maximum of 3 credits of Reading I, II or III for elective credit may be offered by local policy to identify students.</p>	3.5	<p>Electives Must be selected from the list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 as specified in 19 TAC 74.41 or 19 TAC 74.51 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills for the Foundation and Enrichment Curriculum), state-approved innovative courses as specified in 19 TAC 74.27 (relating to Innovative Courses and Programs), Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (1 to 4 credits), or Driver Education (0.5 credit). All students who wish to complete the Distinguished Achievement High School Program are encouraged to study each of the four foundation curriculum areas (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) every year in high school.</p> <p>A maximum of 3 credits of Reading I, II or III for elective credit may be offered by local policy to identify students.</p>	2.5
<p>Total Credits for Minimum High School Program</p>	22	<p>Total Credits for Recommended High School Program</p>	24	<p>Total Credits for Distinguished High School Program</p>	24

Minimum High School Program (Exhibit 1)	Recommended High School Program (Exhibit 2)	Distinguished High School Program (Exhibit 3)
<p>Derived from 19 TAC 74.42; 74.52.</p> <p>Substitutions/Alternatives College Board Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for courses required in appropriate areas. Credit may also be awarded without prior instruction through credit by examination. 19 TAC 74.41(g), 74.24, 74.51(h).</p>	<p>Derived from 19 TAC 74.43.</p> <p>Substitutions/Alternatives No substitutions shall be allowed in the Recommended High School Program, except as allowed by the State Board rule and local policy. College Board Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate academic areas. Credit may be awarded for core courses without prior instruction through credit by examination. Derived from 19 TAC 74.41(g); 74.24; 74.44(e) and 74.51(h).</p>	<p>Derived from 19 TAC 74.44; 74.54.</p> <p>Substitutions/Alternatives No substitutions shall be allowed, except as allowed by State Board rule and local policy. College Board Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate academic areas. Credit may also be awarded without prior instruction through credit by examination. 19 TAC 74.41(g), 74.24, 74.44(e) 74.54(e).</p> <p>Advanced Measures</p> <p>A student also must achieve any combination of four of the following advanced measures. The measures must focus on demonstrated student performance at the college or professional level. Student performance on advanced measures must be assessed through an external review process. The advanced measures are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An original research /project that is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Judged by a panel of professionals in the field that is the focus of the project; or (b) Conducted under the direction of mentor (s) and reported to an appropriate audience; and (c) Related to the required curriculum set forth in 19 TAC 74.1 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills). Original research/projects may not be used for more than two of the four advanced measures. 2. Test data in which a student receives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A score of three or above on the College Board Advanced Placement examination; (b) A score of four or above on an International Baccalaureate examination; or (c) A score on the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) that qualifies a student for recognition as a Commended Scholar or higher by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation; as part of the National Hispanic Scholar Program of the College Board; or as part of the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro students of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The PSAT score may count as only one advanced measure regardless of the number of honors received by the student. 3. A grade of 3.0 or higher in courses that count for college academic credit, including tech-prep articulated college courses.

Graduation Requirements for Students Receiving Special Education Services

A secondary program for students with disabilities will terminate when the student graduates or when the student no longer meets the age requirement for eligibility. A student with disabilities who has not reached his or her 22nd birthday on September 1 of a scholastic year shall be eligible for services through the end of that scholastic year or until graduation. Graduation constitutes a release from services and is a change in placement.

A student receiving special education services may graduate and be awarded a high school diploma if:

- 1) The student has satisfactorily completed the state's or district's (whichever is greater) minimum curriculum and credit requirements for graduation applicable to students in general education, including satisfactory performance on the exit-level assessment instrument; or
- 2) The student has satisfactorily completed the state's or district's (whichever is greater) minimum curriculum and credit requirements for graduation applicable to students in general education and has been exempted from the exit-level assessment instrument under TEC chapter 39.027(a)(2)(b).
- 3) A student receiving special education services may also graduate and receive a regular high school diploma when the student's ARD committee has determined that the student has successfully completed:
 - A. The student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and met one of the following conditions:
 1. Full time employment, based on the student's abilities and local employment opportunities, in addition to sufficient self-help skills to enable the student to maintain the employment without direct and ongoing educational support of the district.
 2. Demonstrated mastery of specific employability skills and self-help skills which do not require direct ongoing educational support of the district; or
 3. Access to services that are not within the legal responsibility of public education, or employment or educational options for which the student has been prepared by the academic program.
 - B. The state's or district's (whichever is greater) minimum credit requirements for students without disabilities; and
 - C. The state's or district's (whichever is greater) minimum curriculum requirements to the extent possible with modifications/substitutions only when it is determined necessary by the ARD committee for the student to receive an appropriate education.
- 4) A student receiving special education services may also graduate and receive a regular high school diploma upon the ARD committee determining that the student no longer meets age eligibility requirements and has completed the requirements specified in the IEP.

Required Exit Level Tests for Graduates of 2008

Students must complete all graduation requirements for the TEA Recommended or Distinguished High School Graduation Programs, and pass certain tests, such as the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) exit level tests. (With written parental permission students can graduate under the Minimum plan).

The state of Texas requires every public school district to assess students' mastery of state curriculum standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The exit level test is designed for the 11th grade. Every student must pass the 4 TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) tests as one of the requirements for graduation (as listed above). The tests assess English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, requires knowledge of Algebra and Geometry, Biology and Integrated Chemistry and Physics, English III, and early American and United States History.

The following courses will be offered for local credit as a review for those tests that were not mastered.

TAKS Math Preparatory course- This is a locally developed course for local credit. The students will review the Math objectives needed to successfully master the exit level TAKS Math test. Those objectives will review functional relationships, properties, linear and quadratic functions, geometric and spatial relationships, two and three dimensional representations, shapes, measurements and similarity, the understanding of percepts, proportional relationships, probability and statistics in the application of problems and an understanding of the mathematical processes and tools needed in problem solving, Students must master the Math TAKS test as a requirement for graduation.

TAKS Science Preparatory course-This is a locally developed course for local credit. The student will review the Science objectives needed to successfully master the exit level TAKS Science test. These objectives will cover the demonstration of an understanding of the nature of science, organization of living systems, the interdependence between organism and the environment, structures and properties of matter, and the understanding of motion, forces, and energy. Students must master the Science TAKS test as a requirement for graduation.

TAKS Reading/English Language Arts /Writing Preparatory course-This is a locally developed course for local credit. The student will review the writing and language arts skills necessary to master the exit level English Language Arts/Writing TAKS Test. The student will demonstrate an understanding of culturally diverse written texts, demonstrate the ability to analyze written texts and visual representations, effects of literacy elements and techniques, produce an effective composition for a specific purpose, demonstrate the command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar usage, and sentence structure. The student will demonstrate the ability to revise and proofread to improve clarity and effectiveness of a piece of writing. Students must master the Reading and ELA/Writing TAKS tests as a requirement for graduation.

TAKS Social Studies Preparatory course- This is a locally developed course for local credit. The students will review the Social Studies objectives needed to successfully master the exit level TAKS Social Studies test. The students will review and demonstrate an understanding of issues and events in US history, geographic influences on historical issues and events, economic and social influences, political influences on history. The student will learn to use critical thinking skills to analyze social studies information. Students must master the Social Studies TAKS test as a requirement for graduation.

Semester and Final Examinations

All AISD students enrolled in high school courses are required to take semester examinations and/or complete culminating activities in all courses. Each student in special education will be required to take final examinations for regular course credit unless the student qualifies for an exemption or the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee recommends some alternative method by which the student may complete the course requirements.

Early Graduation

Students may graduate from high school early if the student completes each course required for graduation and meets the District requirement for graduation. Students who graduate from a Texas public high school in no more than 36 consecutive months are eligible for a \$2,000 credit (an additional \$1,000 will be awarded if the student also graduates with at least 15 hours of college credit) for tuition at any public college or university in Texas or at any nonprofit independent institution that agrees to provide the student a \$2,000 scholarship to match the state funds. The student must contact his/her counselor or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THEC) to obtain a three-part application. After the application has been completed, the student must obtain a signature from the counselor or principal. The counselor submits to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board upon the student's request. The Board will notify the Texas college or university of the student's eligibility. Students wishing to pursue this option should file their intention as early as possible, preferably in their 10th grade year, with the school counselor or registrar.

Other Ways to Earn Credits to Meet Graduation Requirements

High school courses taken in middle school

may count toward the graduation requirements. Examples of these courses are Health Education, Communication Applications (speech), Keyboarding, Algebra I, and a foreign language taken in the 7th and 8th grade. Students must take the same foreign language course in both grade 7 and grade 8 to earn one unit of foreign language credit. Students must complete part A in 7th grade and part B in 8th grade to earn one high school credit which will satisfy the first year of Languages Other Than English requirement in AISD graduation plans. Students who complete only part A will not receive the full credit toward Languages Other Than English. Students who complete only one year will earn .5 credit that will count toward state elective graduation credit. Grades earned in high school level courses are used in calculating high school grade-point averages and will appear on the high school transcript.

Correspondence courses offer students the freedom to choose when to take a course and under what conditions. High school students may enroll at any time and take up to nine months to complete the course requirements. Many students enroll through the University of Texas at Austin Continuing Education Center or Texas Tech. There is a fee to enroll for each course. See your counselor or registrar for information and enrollment procedures. Prior to enrollment in correspondence courses, students must make a written request to the principal or designee for approval to enroll in the course. If approval is not granted prior to enrollment, the student will not be awarded credit toward graduation. Grades earned in approved courses are used in calculating high school grade-point averages.

Credit by exam with prior instruction in a subject offers students the opportunity to recover or complete a course credit. Students must score at least a 70 to earn credit. The grade is used in calculating the grade-point average. Examinations for credit are administered throughout the year at the University of Texas Continuing Education Center. There is a fee for these tests. Under some circumstances, the AISD Office of Systemwide Testing provides opportunities for testing with prior instruction. See your counselor or registrar for information regarding specific testing dates and the criteria and procedures for accessing these tests.

Credit by exam without prior instruction offers students who have expertise in a particular area but have not received instruction in that area to take an exam for credit. Credit by exam tests are not offered for weighted courses and tests are by semester for high school courses. Students must score at least 90 to receive credit. The grade on the exam is computed in the grade-point average. Credit by exam for acceleration is offered at least twice a year, Typically on several Saturdays in the fall, and during the first Week of June through the AISD Department of Systemwide Testing. Check with your counselor or registrar for the specific dates these tests are scheduled for administration.

Dual credit

High school and college credit can be earned at the same time by taking college courses while still in high school. Some dual credit courses may be offered on high school campuses or through Distance Learning. For detailed information about the qualifications and enrollment in dual credit opportunities through ACC's Early College Start Program, consult with your school counselor. A list of pre-approved dual credit courses offered at ACC is listed in Appendix B of this guide. Upon completion of a course taken through the Early College Start Program, an ACC transcript must be submitted to the registrar's office for the purpose of validating credit, including co-enrollment courses, if the co-enrollment course is to be used as an advanced measure for DAP consideration.

Tech Prep and Credit-in-Escrow allow students to earn high school credit for upper division Career and Technology courses and at the same time qualify for college credit at Austin Community College through a program called Tech Prep or Credit-in-Escrow. High school students have the option of choosing a career-oriented program that offers them the chance to take technical courses for college credit. The goal of the Tech Prep program is to prepare students with advanced training and life-long skills required for employment and higher education. Tech Prep integrates applied academics, career education and work-based

learning. Students must be enrolled in a Tech Prep program and register in the Career and Technology Education Management Application (CATEMA) system or complete an identification form for school records to earn Credit-in-Escrow. Students are to follow the suggested sequence of courses for the particular Tech Prep program; earn a grade of 80 or above in the identified course; and complete a transcript request identifying Tech Prep eligibility with their designated campus counselor or registrar.

Summer school courses may be taken for credit. Students may take courses in summer school for enrichment, acceleration, or remediation. Summer school grades are counted in the grade-point average. The only exception to this will be for students in grade 12 who are planning to graduate in the summer of a given school year. Grades earned in summer courses by these graduating seniors shall be recorded for credit purposes only, as numerical grades, and will be excluded from GPA calculation. Information about summer school is available during the spring semester at the high school campus.

Alternative course credit may be awarded by the District with prior written approval from the Austin ISD Curriculum Department. Students can receive credit for participation in private programs that advertise high school graduation credit as long as the course content and expectations match the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as set forth by the State of Texas. Awarding of credit is determined by individual districts.

Academic Recognition

Honor Roll System

The honor roll system recognizes and rewards academic achievement each grading period. Students are placed on honor rolls based on grade point average for the grading period. Eligibility for the honor roll has no direct relationship to National Honor Society for high school (NHS), which has requirements that include other factors.

National Honor Society

Membership in the National Honor Society is based on excellence in four areas: scholarship, leadership, service and character.

Definitions of these four areas are as follows:

- **Scholarship.** The student has a minimum grade point average (GPA) established by the high school faculty council.
- **Character.** Meets responsibilities; is reliable, honest, truthful and courteous and has perseverance.
- **Leadership.** Is resource; demonstrates initiative; sets good example and successfully holds positions of responsibility;
- **Service.** Volunteers; assists teachers and staff; participates in community activities and acts with or on behalf of others; without any direct financial or material compensation to the individual performing the service.

Each category is judged independently. To be eligible for consideration for membership, a student must have the minimum GPA established by the high school faculty council on all course

work completed. In addition to this academic requirement, outstanding character, service and leadership at school and in other activities is required.

Standards for National Honor Society at High School include:

- All local selection guidelines for NHS must conform to the national guidelines.
- Each campus will have a five-member faculty council with a chapter adviser. The adviser will exercise the duties outlined in the NHS Constitution published by the national office of NHS.
- Guidelines will be fairly and consistently applied and any changes in guidelines will be publicized prior to implementation.
- Each campus must establish and publicize written NHS guidelines annually and forward a copy to the Associate Superintendent for High Schools.
- All schools will publicize the selection process and make the information available to parents, students and faculty members upon request. The selection criteria will be publicized in the District's Secondary School Information Guide (SSIG) annually.
- Students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible for membership. Students in grade 10 are eligible for candidacy during the spring of their sophomore year.
- The faculty council will establish a minimum GPA. Students meeting the established GPA are qualified to apply for membership in the NHS. The GPA will be calculated in the same manner as usually calculated in AISD.
- Each campus may utilize the Student Activity Information Form suggested by the national office or a similar document.
- Faculty evaluation forms will be used, and the evaluator will sign each form. The evaluator must be prepared to support any below average rating to the faculty council with substantiating data based on sound professional judgment and action. Faculty advisers will conduct informal interviews with faculty members regarding below-average ratings that appear to be unique.
- The faculty council will establish an equally weighted point system to rate students equally in scholarship, leadership, service and character. Teacher input would be compiled using the system developed by the faculty council.
- Once scholarship criteria for entry are established, each campus will establish a rubric for weighting grade point averages that are above the minimum.
- Student applicants should submit documentation of service to the faculty council, who will establish a rating for service based on hours and contributions made by the student.
- All high schools will follow the national guidelines for NHS.

Rank in Class

In order to determine an individual's class rank, a student's grade point average (GPA) is compared with the GPA's of students within the class for which he/she is ranked. The highest accumulated GPA is ranked #1 and the lowest is the student who has the lowest GPA in the total number of students in that particular class. Class ranks are computed at the end of each semester; thus one's rank does not change each six weeks although a student's Honor Roll status may change. Students entering the District from out of district schools will be ranked according to the rank practices utilized in AISD.

Early Graduates - Grade point averages for a student who completes the high school program requirements in fewer than four years shall be calculated on the scale with the class in which he or she actually graduates.

Out-of-School-Testers will be ranked with the respective graduating class upon completion of all coursework requirements, regardless of when they master all state mandated exit-level tests.

Students who entered grade 9 prior to school year 2007-2008: An alternative rank system is used to honor identified students in grades 9-12 who are receiving special education services to encourage academic achievement and citizenship. A comparative class rank will be issued for those students included in the alternative rank. [See FG(REGULATION)]

A "comparative rank" means the student's District GPA is compared numerically to other students in that grade level and in that school. Comparative class ranks will be issued under the following circumstances:

When a student transfers to a District high school from outside the District or transfers from one District high school to another, including seniors who are transferring through NCLB choice options.

When a potential three-year graduate is reclassified to grade 12 prior to receiving a final class rank.

When a student included in the alternative rank system is issued a final class rank, it will be a comparative rank.

For 9th grade students entering high school in 2007-08 and thereafter and graduating in 2010-2011 and thereafter, will be ranked on the Integrated Ranking Scale. The Integrated Ranking Scale will replace the Alternative Ranking System for those Special Education students (Refer to Appendix A: "Grading Scale").

The Integrated Ranking Scale is described below:

- Tier I 5.0 scale Advanced Level Courses*
- Tier II 4.0 scale General Ed Courses, including courses with limited TEKS modification ("R" and "S" courses)*
- Tier III 3.0 scale Prescribed Courses-Locally Developed Courses / Below Grade-Level and/or significant modification of TEKS*

Foreign exchange students, upon admission to a District high school, shall be required to state in writing whether or not they intend to seek a high school diploma from a District high school. Those who declare in writing that it is not their intent to seek a high school diploma will be excluded from calculation of class rank. See your school registrar for appropriate paperwork [FD Regulation].

A candidate for valedictorian or salutatorian must meet all course requirements, have been enrolled and attending classes in the same district high school for the entire school year in which the graduation requirements are met, and complete the Recommended High School Program or the Distinguished Achievement High School Program. Rank in class is as follows:

Valedictorian meets all the requirements for graduation and has the highest grade point average in the graduating class.

Salutatorian meets all the requirements for graduation and has the second highest grade point average in the graduating class.

Co-Valedictorian will be named in the event of a tie for the Valedictorian. The position of Salutatorian will then remain vacant.

Co-Salutatorians will be named in the event of a tie for Salutatorian.

Graduates with Highest Honors are students who's rank-in class are within the top two percent.

Graduates with Higher Honors are students who's rank-in class are within the next three percent.

Graduates with High Honors are students who's rank-in-class are within the next five percent.

Top 10% of Graduating Class

Students who are ranked in the top 10 percent of their graduating class are automatically admitted to a Texas public college or university of their choice. Students must apply for admission no later than two years after graduating from a Texas high school, and they must submit a completed application before the expiration of any filing deadline established by the college or university. Colleges and universities may require an essay, letters of recommendations, admission and placement tests, fees, and an official high school transcript. Colleges and universities may add additional requirements under this ruling. Check with the counselor at your high school.

AISD policies are updated regularly. Please check the AISD website for online policy and up-to-date policy information—www.austinisd.org.

Texas Tuition and Fee Exemption for Recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The State of Texas will waive tuition and fees for the first year at a public institution of higher education in Texas (universities and colleges, community and junior colleges, and technical colleges). To be eligible:

- Be a Texas resident;
- Have graduated from a public high school in Texas;
- Have been a dependent child whose parents received financial assistance through the TANF program for at least six months of the year of the child's high school graduation;
- Are younger than 22 years of age on the date of enrollment;
- Enroll as an undergraduate student at a public college or university and start using the award within 24 months of graduation from high school; and
- Enroll in classes for which the college receives tax support (i.e., a course that does not depend solely on student tuition and fees to cover its costs).
- May be used only at Texas public colleges and universities.
- The student must provide proof from the Department of Human Services of receiving TANF benefits to the college registrar.

Toward Excellence, Access and Success (TEXAS) Grant Program

The TEXAS Grant Program is designed to help eligible, academically prepared students attend public or private not for profit institutions of higher education in Texas. A student who meets one of the following two eligibility categories may apply for the grant program. Application does not ensure the student will be awarded The TEXAS Grant Program:

Category I:

- Is a Texas resident;
- Is an entering undergraduate (a student who is enrolled in the first 30 semester credit hours or their equivalent, excluding hours taken during concurrent enrollment in high school and courses for which the student received credit through examination);
- Has financial need and an expected family contribution (EFC) of no more than \$4,000;
- Has applied for any available financial aid or assistance;
- Has not been previously granted a baccalaureate degree;
- Enrolls at least 3/4 time in an undergraduate degree or certificate program at a Texas non-profit college or university;
- Has not been convicted of a felony or a crime involving a controlled substance;
- Graduated from an accredited high school in Texas no earlier than the 1998-1999 school year;

- Completed the recommended or distinguished achievement high school curriculum or its equivalent; and
- Enrolls in an eligible Texas college or university within 16 months of high school graduation.

Category II:

- Is a Texas resident;
- Has financial need and an expected family contribution (EFC) of no more than \$4,000;
- Has applied for any available financial aid or assistance;
- Has not been previously granted a baccalaureate degree;
- Enrolls at least 3/4 time in an undergraduate degree or certificate program at a Texas non-profit college or university;
- Has not been convicted of a felony or a crime involving a controlled substance; and
- Received his/her first associate degree in May 2001 or later and enrolls in a higher-level undergraduate program within 12 months of receiving the Associates Degree.

Please note that funding in this program is limited. Though you may meet eligibility requirements, your financial aid package may not include this grant if funds are not available at your college.

Non-citizen In-state Tuition at Public Post-secondary Institutions in Texas

HB 1403 provides that a non-citizen shall be classified as a resident for tuition purposes if they have lived in Texas with a parent or guardian, and

- Graduated from a public or private accredited high school, or received a GED;
- Attended a public or private high school for three or more years as of the date of high school graduation; and
- Provides to the institution an affidavit stating that the individual will file an application to become a permanent resident as soon as they are eligible to do so.
- Other restrictions may apply. Check with the counselor at your high school. The student must be eligible for state aid.

Check with your Counselor for more information on Financial Aid And Scholarship Opportunities. Additional information can be located on www.austinisd.org/academic/ss

College Preparation and College Testing Information

All AISD students are strongly encouraged to take tests required to qualify for college admission and scholarships. Generally, the most effective preparation for any of the tests is a rigorous course of study, regular school attendance, and consistent, strong study skills. Knowing what kinds of tests will be required or recommended is critical to planning and preparation.

Pre-college Entrance Tests

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) and National Merit Qualifying Test (NMQST) provide students an opportunity to take a practice test that is very much like the SAT. The SAT is a test students may take as part of their college admission. Any freshman, sophomore, or junior may take the PSAT/NMQST on their campus. Juniors are strongly encouraged to take the PSAT/NMQST. For juniors, the PSAT/NMQST is the National Merit Scholarship qualifying test. Juniors who perform exceptionally well on the test might be eligible for National Merit Scholarships. All Texas colleges and universities will accept either the SAT or the ACT for admissions purposes. These two tests are different, and excellent performance on one does not necessarily predict excellent performance on the other. When deciding which test to take, students should select the one that best matches their strengths. The ACT measures achievement in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning and covers content typically taught in high schools across the United States. The SAT measures critical reading, writing and mathematical knowledge and aptitude and includes some material not generally taught in school.

The ACT is a three-hour multiple-choice test measuring achievement in four areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The writing test, which is optional, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay. Each sub-test yields a score of 1-36. Averaging the four sub-tests produces a composite score that also is reported on a scale of 1-36.

The SAT (Reasoning Test) is a three-hour and forty-five minute test of critical reading, writing and mathematical abilities administered by the College Board. It also includes a twenty-five minute essay for the writing portion. Students will receive three scores on the 200-800 scale—one for critical reading, one for math, and one for writing. Students will also receive two sub-scores: a multiple-choice score from 20-80 and an essay score from 2-12. The total writing score, which is a combination of the multiple-choice and essay scores, is reported on the 200- 800 scale. The essay will make up approximately 30% of the writing section score.

The THEA (Texas Higher Education Assessment) is required for entry to any Texas public college or university. Students must take and pass tests in reading, mathematics, and writing. This is not the same as the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) or the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which students must take and pass in order to receive a high school diploma. Even students who wish to take dual credit courses or to concurrently enroll in high school and college must have THEA scores prior to enrolling in college courses. The THEA Program consists of the three tests that measure skills students have learned in high

school, advisement and placement, and remediation for students who do not pass one or more sections. THEA is not an admissions test. It will not limit students' access to college. Students may be exempt from the THEA test if they score high on the ACT, SAT or the exit-level TAKS test. Students must score at or above the following to be exempt from the THEA.

ACT – composite score of 23 with a minimum of 19 on both the English and math tests; or

SAT – combined verbal and math score of 1070 with a minimum of 500 on both the verbal and math tests; or

TAKS – Math 2200, Language Arts 2200, and Writing Subsection 3. Students should check with their counselor to see if they qualify as THEA exempt. Colleges vary in their admissions requirements and in their use of college admissions test scores. Students should consult the admissions offices for specific information. Many colleges encourage students to take both tests and use their best score.

Content-based Tests

The SAT Subject Tests are one-hour, primarily multiple-choice tests that measure student's knowledge and skills in particular subject areas, as well as their ability to apply that knowledge. Many selective colleges and universities require that students take one or more of these tests as part of the admissions process or for placement purposes in college courses. Students should consult the admissions offices of the schools they are considering to determine if SAT Subject Tests are required. Students should take SAT Subject Tests at the end of corresponding high school courses. For example, a student who completes chemistry at end of the junior year is encouraged to take the SAT chemistry test in June following the junior year.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams give students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. Each AP course is based upon a national course outline equivalent to a first-year college course. At the completion of each AP course taken in high school, students have the opportunity to take the AP exam in that subject. AP exams are given only once a year, in May. They are offered at the student's high school campus. Policies for granting college credit based on performance on an AP test vary from college to college. Students should consult college admissions offices to determine individual institution policies.

Registration materials for all of the tests discussed in this section are available on all high school campuses.

Students with disabilities may qualify for special accommodations on each of these tests. Students should consult the test registration materials and/or their high school counselors for specific information about accommodations.

