

TOPEKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	REGULATION NUMBER 6150-02
SUBJECT: WAIVER OF GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS; 21-CREDIT DIPLOMA PROGRAM	DATE OF ISSUE: 04/13/15 <hr/> REVISIONS: <hr/> PREPARING OFFICE: TEACHING, LEARNING & ADMINISTRATION

I. PURPOSE

To increase graduation rates of at-risk students by allowing students who meet the state minimum 21 credit requirements to be awarded a diploma when extenuating circumstances make it unlikely they will be able to complete the required 24 credits as established by Topeka Public Schools Board of Education.

II. PERSONS AFFECTED

- A. High School Principals
- B. High School Students

III. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Students must meet specific conditions to be approved for the 21 credit program, which include at least two or more of the following:

- A. Chronic truancy
- B. Chronic behavior issues
- C. Academic/credit deficiencies
- D. Previous dropout
- E. Retained at least once
- F. Documented environmental, psychological challenges, such as (but not limited to):
 - 1. Substance abuse
 - 2. Medical/Psychological
 - 3. Homeless
- G. Other circumstances the Building Principal deems relevant.

IV. Procedure for Acceptance to Program:

- A. Application to the 21-Credit Diploma Program shall be made on the 21-Credit Diploma Program Agreement. No application shall be approved unless the requisite meetings have been completed and all required parties have signed the Agreement Form.**
- B. Students wishing to make application the 21-Credit Diploma Program must do so after completion of their 5th semester of high school but prior to the start of their 8th semester.**
 - 1. Class of 2015 is the exception to this rule due to the timing of this regulation.**
- C. Any student entering the 21-Credit Diploma program must have an education plan, designed in a meeting with the student, his or her parent or guardian, the assistant principal and the school counselor. At this meeting, the following issues will be discussed:**
 - 1. Graduation cannot occur prior to the conclusion of the student's seventh semester.**
 - 2. The importance of regular attendance and following the written plan developed in the meeting in order to meet the requirements of the 21-Credit Diploma Program.**
 - 3. Any impact a reduced-credit diploma may have on the student's post-secondary options, including a review of the qualified admissions requirements for Kansas Regents institutions and the admission requirements at any institution the student may desire to attend after graduation.**
 - a. The student should understand that successful completion of the 21-Credit Program may not qualify him or her for acceptance into a Kansas 4-year Regents institution.**
 - b. The student should understand that he or she may be eligible to attend a college if he or she successfully completes all the requirements of the 21-Credit Diploma Programs and meets the entrance requirements of the post-secondary institution he or she desires to attend.**
 - 4. The option to exit the 21-Credit Program and complete the 24-credit Topeka Public Schools diploma at any time prior to graduation.**
 - 5. The student should understand that any written plan developed will need final written approval Building Principal.**
- D. Once the educational plan is agreed to and signed, the student, his or her parent or guardian, the assistant principal and the school counselor will meet with Building Principal who will determine if the student will be accepted into the 21- Credit Diploma Program.**

V. Credit Requirements

Once accepted into the 21-Credit Diploma Program, a student must complete the following requirements in order to receive a diploma:

- A. Four units of English language arts, which shall include reading, writing, literature, communication, and grammar.**

- B. Three units of history and government, which shall include world history; United States history; United States government, including the Constitution of the United States; concepts of economics and geography.**
- C. Three units of science, which shall include physical, biological, and earth and space science concepts and which shall include at least one unit as a laboratory course.**
- D. Three units of mathematics, including algebraic and geometric concepts.**
- E. One unit of physical education, which shall include health and which may include safety, first aid, or physiology.**
- F. One unit of fine arts, which may include art, music, dance, theatre, forensics, and other similar studies selected by a local board of education.**
- G. Six units of elective courses.**

**REGULATION 6150-02
AGREEMENT FORM****21-Credit Diploma Program Agreement**

Because of extenuating circumstances the student has requested to be considered for acceptance into the 21-Credit Diploma Program. To be accepted for participation in the 21-Credit Diploma Program in Topeka Public Schools, the student must understand and agree to all of the following conditions:

- I have discussed with my high school counselor how a reduced credit diploma may impact my post-secondary options.
 - ✓ I understand that I may be eligible to attend a college if I successfully complete all the requirements of the 21-Credit Diploma Program and meet the entrance requirements of the postsecondary institution I would like to attend. I have reviewed those requirements with the team creating this education plan.
 - ✓ I understand that successful completion of the 21-Credit Program may not qualify me for acceptance into a Kansas 4-year Regents institution. I have reviewed the Kansas qualified admission requirements.
- My parents/guardians and I have developed a written plan with my counselor and submitted it to the principal for approval. My written plan includes a description of how I will meet all Kansas graduation requirements and earn the 21 credits required for this diploma.
 - ✓ I understand I will need the following credits to complete this program:
 - Four units of English language arts, which shall include reading, writing, literature, communication, and grammar.
 - Three units of history and government, which shall include world history; United States history; United States government, including the Constitution of the United States; concepts of economics and geography.
 - Three units of science, which shall include physical, biological, and earth and space science concepts and which shall include at least one unit as a laboratory course.
 - Three units of mathematics, including algebraic and geometric concepts.
 - One unit of physical education, which shall include health and which may include safety, first aid, or physiology.
 - One unit of fine arts, which may include art, music, dance, theatre, forensics, and other similar studies selected by a local board of education.
 - Six units of elective courses.
 - ✓ I understand that regular attendance is important to meeting the requirements of the 21-Credit Diploma Program.
 - ✓ I understand that I will need final written approval for my 21-Credit Diploma Program request from the School Principal.

- I understand I cannot graduate prior to the conclusion of my seventh semester in high school.
- I understand that at any time before I graduate I can exit the 21-Credit Program and pursue the 24-credit Topeka Public Schools diploma.

Student's Signature

Date

Additionally, the student's parent or guardian, the school counselor, the student's assistant principal and the building principal must understand these conditions and agree to allow and/or accept the student into the 21-Credit Diploma Program.

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Counselor's Signature

Date

Assistant Principal's Signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date