**What is meant by “early graduation”?**

Early graduation is a deliberate pathway for students who wish to finish high school requirements ahead of their cohort in order to further pursue post-secondary education or planned employment options. Students may apply for early graduation the second semester of their junior year to be considered for a January graduation of their senior year. No application will be approved for graduation until the student has met all the requirements for graduation.

**Who should be considered?**

* **Advanced Studies Diploma Students:**
Only students pursuing an Advanced Studies Diploma will be eligible for early graduation. Additionally, students must have completed at least 28 credits to qualify.
* **Students are not permitted to take Government or English 12 in summer school:** Summer school is reserved for students needing to repeat courses or those who have fallen behind and need to keep up with their cohort.
* **Special Circumstances Exceptions:**
We recognize that certain situations may necessitate exceptions to these requirements. Therefore, we will give special consideration for students facing military relocations, financial hardships, or those designated as McKinney-Vento (MV) students or Foster Care and being relocated.
* **Students will not be considered without a complete packet.**

**Steps for early graduation approval:**

1. **Student/Parent submits a completed application to the student’s school counselor by June 1 of the student's junior year.** This timeline will allow us to make informed decisions and ensure schedules are updated appropriately.
2. Counselors review transcripts to verify courses needed to meet graduation requirements as it applies to their four-year cohort. Only then is the application forwarded to the committee for review. Students must have earned the appropriate number of credits/verified credits for the desired diploma to graduate.
3. Counselor schedules a meeting with the committee to review the application including the student’s stated post-secondary goals.
4. Committee is to be made up of the Principal/Designee, School Counseling Director/Designee, Graduation Coach, parent, and student.
5. Committee completed the Early Graduation Application Form documenting considerations and actions. (Early Graduation Application Form attached)
6. Principal notifies the student/parent in writing of the preliminary decision (**Notice of Early Graduation Decision**) made regarding the request for early graduation.
7. **The final approval for early graduation will be contingent upon the student submitting at least one of the following to the principal:**
	1. **Employment (proof of employment such as letter from employer, pay stub)**
	2. **Military (Letter from recruiter showing entrance date or copy of Permanent Change of Station)**
	3. **Trade program/apprenticeship (letter of acceptance to include date of entry)**
	4. **Two-year college (letter of acceptance to include date of entry)**
	5. **Four-year college (Non-Athletes: letter of acceptance to include date of entry; Athletes: Signed National Letter of Intent, Clearinghouse cleared, and letter of acceptance to include date of entry)**
	6. **Extenuating circumstances (documentation to be provided as deemed appropriate by the principal)**

8. The School Counselor places all documentation in the student’s cumulative record.

9. Principal forwards application, post-secondary plan and committee action to the Director

 of Secondary Leadership, who will in turn notify the Chief of Schools.

 10. Appeals are to be expressed in writing by the student/parent directed to the Principal

 within ten business days, who will then seek the involvement of the Director of

 Secondary Leadership. Appeals will follow the same pathway as any parent concern:

 Principal; Director of Secondary Leadership; Chief of Schools; Superintendent.

**Other Guidelines:**

1. Official transcripts will be issued on the regular cycle.
2. Class rank will be determined at the completion of the senior year.
3. Students graduating early **are not** eligible for consideration for valedictorian or salutatorian.
4. Students approved for early graduation and wishing to participate in spring commencement must make this request in writing by the **second week of January** to the principal. Students will be responsible for communicating with class sponsors and other designated staff concerning graduation practice. Approval is at the principal’s discretion and decision provided within a week of receipt of the student's written request.
* Students will not be granted permission to participate in senior functions such as prom (except as a guest), senior award night, or senior class field trips.
1. Students **may not** participate in athletics or other clubs/organizations at the completion of the approved final semester of attendance.
2. Students who completed their approved final semester are not to be on school grounds during the school day without prior approval by the principal.
3. Students must contact the selected college/university’s admissions office to determine that this request will not affect the student’s admission.
4. Students wishing to play college sports need to ensure they have met the current NCAA/NAIA/NJCAA requirements when requesting Early High School graduation. A school counselor can assist with this process.
5. **Diplomas may not be conferred until the spring graduation.**