

ACADEMIC POLICIES REQUIREMENTS

GRADING SCALE

The computation of grades for the high school in the Lawrence County School District is determined as follows:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

For honor roll purposes, students may make a “C” in any AP class, and still be considered for “A – B” honor roll.

The Lawrence County School District maintains a point system for determining Grade Point Average (GPA) for a student. It is a four-point scale with the exception that any course with an Advanced Placement (AP) designation will be graded on a 5.0 basis.

A – 4.0	B – 3.0	C – 2.0	D – 1.0	F – 0.0
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The following scale and numeric values will be used for advanced placement courses:

A – 5.0	B – 4.0	C – 3.0	D – 2.0	F – 0.0
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Any student who takes an Advanced Placement course shall be required to take the end of course exam on the predetermined date. Make-up tests shall be scheduled through AP Coordinator and may require additional fees. Failure of a student to take the Advanced Placement end of course exam will require the school district to use the standard 4.0 grade point scale instead of the weighted 5.0 scale. Students may also be denied credit for the course at the discretion of the principal. Each case will be measured on its own merits.

GPA is calculated by determining the total points achieved from all courses (by adding the appropriate number of points for each letter grade earned) and dividing by the total classes completed.

EXAMPLE:

Science	A = 4	Total Points = 12
Civics	C = 2	
English	B = 3	Number of Courses = 4
Math	<u>B = 3</u>	
	12	12 points divided by 4 = 3.0 GPA

GPA's are used to determine class rank, awards and honors, and for eligibility for extracurricular activities.

The Lawrence County School District does not participate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. Students transferring into the Lawrence County School District who have participated in the IB program will have the grades transferred from the IB courses with the same 5.0 grading scale used for Advanced Placement courses.

The 5.0 grading scale used for Advanced Placement (AP) courses will be utilized for students who have completed an ADE approved Honors course. The same 5.0 grading scale will also be utilized for students who have completed an ADE approved Honors course from another district and transfer into the Lawrence County School District.

Weighted credit/additional quality points for designated AP courses and IB courses will be contingent upon the teacher completing training as required by the State Department of Education and the student taking the applicable AP and/or IB examinations.

Following graduation, a final cumulative grade point average reflecting all high school work will be entered on the permanent record.

Admission requirements for AP courses shall include some or all of the following: teacher recommendation, counselor recommendation, grade of “A” or “B” in previous prerequisite courses, 3.0 GPA, no discipline referrals to the office.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that occurs when a person passes off someone else’s work as his or her own. Plagiarism is an act that will have serious academic consequences in high school and in college.

Forms of plagiarism range from failing to cite an author for ideas incorporated into a student’s paper to cutting and pasting paragraphs from different websites to handing in a paper downloaded from the internet. All are plagiarism.

The use of generated Artificial Intelligence by a student trying to pass it as his/her own work is considered a form of plagiarism.

There are two main things all school students should know about plagiarism:

1. Plagiarism in most instances is easy to identify and expose. The very force that makes plagiarism easy and tempting to some students--the internet--makes its detection easy. Most teachers can locate the source of suspected plagiarism within a few minutes of searching the web. Students should be aware that all teachers have access to online tools that are very effective resources for catching plagiarism. Further, the experienced teacher will always be able to distinguish the fluency of sentences and word choice of adolescent writers when compared to university students or professional writers. It is this latter that uncovers most plagiarism in high school.

2. All parties to plagiarism are considered equally guilty. (If you share your coursework with another student and he or she plagiarizes it, you are considered as guilty as the one who has

plagiarized your work, since you enabled the plagiarism to take place.) Under no circumstances should a student make his or her coursework available to another student unless the teacher gives explicit permission for this to happen.

Students who plagiarize are likely to be caught, and the consequences will be severe and will include anyone who enabled the plagiarism to take place. All student work produced for school will be subject to an electronic database to determine plagiarism.

Consequences for plagiarizing work will range from redoing the project for half (1/2) credit for first-time offenders to receiving no credit for second-time offenders.

PROGRESS REPORTS/PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The faculty of the Lawrence County School District will communicate about the progress of students in their classes by means of mid-9 weeks reports. Two scheduled parent-teacher conferences are conducted, one in each semester to allow dialogue on a student's academic progress and/or behavior in classes. Parents can request more frequent progress reports by contacting the principal, counselor, or a particular faculty member.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

It is the belief at Walnut Ridge High School that teachers and parents maintain an open and frequent line of communication. If a teacher sees a student falling short of classroom expectations, not completing work, or failing to turn in numerous assignments, then the teacher will attempt to contact the parents with their concerns.

REPORT CARDS

A report card with student grades and attendance record will be given at the end of each nine weeks. Parents will be notified by letter at the fifth week of each nine weeks if the student is doing failing or near failing work.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

A disservice is done to students through social promotion and is prohibited by state law. The district shall, at a minimum, evaluate each student annually in an effort to help each student who is not performing at grade level. The Lawrence County School District shall include in the student handbook, the criteria for promotion of students to the next grade as well as the criteria for retaking a course, if applicable. Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s). Notice of a student's possible retention or required retaking of a course shall be included with the student's grades sent home to each parent/guardian or the student if 18 or older.

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be held as necessary in an effort to improve a student's academic success.

The criteria used to determine retention will be based on academic performance. In grades seven and eight, if a student has a yearly average of a failing grade in two or more of the four core academic subjects, then he or she shall be recommended for retention. A retention committee made up of the principal, counselor, and teachers will review student performance to determine if the student shall be retained. Students in grades 9 through 12 must pass the course to receive credit for the course. If a student fails a course then he/she must retake the course. If the course is required for graduation then a student must obtain a passing grade to receive credit for the course. This can be done either by retaking the course during the next available offering, an approved correspondence course, or summer school.

If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student, or their required retaking of a course, a conference between the parents/guardians, teacher(s), other pertinent personnel, and principal shall be held before a final decision is made. The conference shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non-participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement, the final decision to promote or retain shall rest with the principal or his/her designee.

Promotion/retention or graduation of students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) shall be based on their successful attainment of the goals set forth in their IEP.

CLASSIFICATION

Seventh Grade:	Promotion from sixth grade
Eighth Grade:	Promotion from seventh grade
Freshman:	Promotion from eighth grade
Sophomore:	5.5 units of credit passed
Junior:	11 units of credit passed
Senior:	A minimum of 16.5 units of credit passed and enrollment in a schedule which will permit the student to receive the necessary 24 credits for graduation.
Graduate:	24 credits required.

LANGUAGE ARTS

- English 9
- Advanced English 9
- English 10
- Advanced English 10
- English 11
- AP Language & Composition
- Freshman Composition 1 & 2 - Concurrent Credit
- English 12
- AP Literature & Composition
- World Literature 1 & 2 – Concurrent Credit
- Personal Communications
- Professional Communications
- Journalism I
- Journalism II
- Journalism III
- Debate I
- Academic Reading
- Transitional Literacy

SCIENCE

- Physical Science
- Advanced Physical Science
- Biology
- Advanced Biology
- Anatomy & Physiology (Every other year)
- Chemistry
- Physics (Every other year)
- AP Biology
- Environmental Science

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH

- Personal Fitness for Life
- Health & Safety

FINE ARTS

- Art I-IV
- Band
- Jazz Studies I-V (Local Credit Only)
- Vocal Ensemble I-V
- Music Appreciation
- Music Lab I

AGRICULTURE

- Intro to Agriculture
- Agriculture Mechanics & Fabrication
- Agriculture Fabrications; metals
- Agriculture Fabrications; structures
- Plant Science I & II

BUSINESS

- Survey of Business
- Business Procedures
- Accounting
- Financial Planning

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Intro to Criminal Justice
- Criminal Justice I & II

COMPUTER SCIENCE

- Intro to Computer Science

MATHEMATICS

- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Advanced Geometry
- Technical Math for College & Career
- Algebra II
- Advanced Algebra II
- Algebra II
- AP Pre-Calculus
- College Algebra – Concurrent Credit
- Quantitative Reasoning

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Civics
- Advanced Civics
- Economics w/ Personal Finance
- Advanced Economics w/ Personal Finance
- World History
- AP World History (World Civ II – Concurrent Credit Second Semester)
- U.S. History
- AP U.S. History
- U.S. History – Concurrent Credit
- U.S. Government
- AP U.S. Government
- Psychology

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

- Spanish I & II

FIRE SCIENCE

- Firefighter I
- Firefighter II
- Community Preparedness

**DRIVERS EDUCATION
(Local Credit Only)****EAST I-IV****NEA TECHNICAL CENTER
(Jonesboro H.S.)**

2 Elective Credits (See Counselor)

**BLACK RIVER TECHNICAL CENTER
(Pocahontas BRTC Campus)**

3 Elective Credits (See Counselor)

NON-CREDIT CLASSES

Annual Staff (Local Credit – 1 Year Only)
Athletics
Teachers Aid
Study Hall

Correspondence courses must be approved by the counselor and principal prior to enrollment. Seniors must also complete and have grades on file for any course counted toward graduation in order to participate in the graduation ceremony.

The Lawrence County School District will limit the number of credits to be taken by correspondence to four (4) courses or two (2) credits, unless by special permission from the principal. Correspondence courses may be taken after a student has unsuccessfully attempted the core course offered by Walnut Ridge High School; elective courses must be approved by principal or counselor.

CONCURRENT CREDIT

Any student enrolled in the Lawrence County School District in grades 9-12 shall be eligible to enroll in a publicly supported community college, technical college, four-year college or university, or private institution in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the college or university. Three semester hours of college credit taken by a student in grades 9-12 shall be the equivalent of one unit.

Students participating in concurrent credit must comply with enrollment for graduation requirements of the Lawrence County School District. The District encourages prior approval of college classes to encourage that the classes are equivalent to or exceed the Arkansas frameworks in order to receive replacement credit for required courses. Otherwise, all courses will be given elective credit. All costs of higher education courses taken for concurrent college credit are the student's responsibility. Students are eligible to take concurrent credit at no cost to the student per hours allowed by DESE guidelines.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Twenty-four (24) units are required for graduation. Sixteen specific units are required. Please see courses below for graduation requirements:

English – 4 units

- English 9th Grade
- English 10th Grade
- English 11th Grade
- English 12th Grade

Mathematics – 4 units

- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Algebra II or Quantitative Reasoning
- Fourth Math – Algebra III, Quantitative Reasoning, AP Calculus, College Algebra, Comparable concurrent credit courses may be substituted where applicable

Science – 3 units

- Physical Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Other ADE Approved Courses

Social Studies – 3 units

- Civics – 1/2 unit
- Economics w/ Personal Finance – 1/2 unit
- World History
- U.S. History
- Other ADE Approved Courses – 1/2 unit

Oral Communications – 1/2 unit

Computer Science – 1 unit

Physical Education – 1/2 unit

Health & Safety – 1/2 unit

Fine Arts – 1/2 unit

Career Focus – 7 units

Community Service – 75 hours (as required by DESE)



Success-Ready Pathway Guide

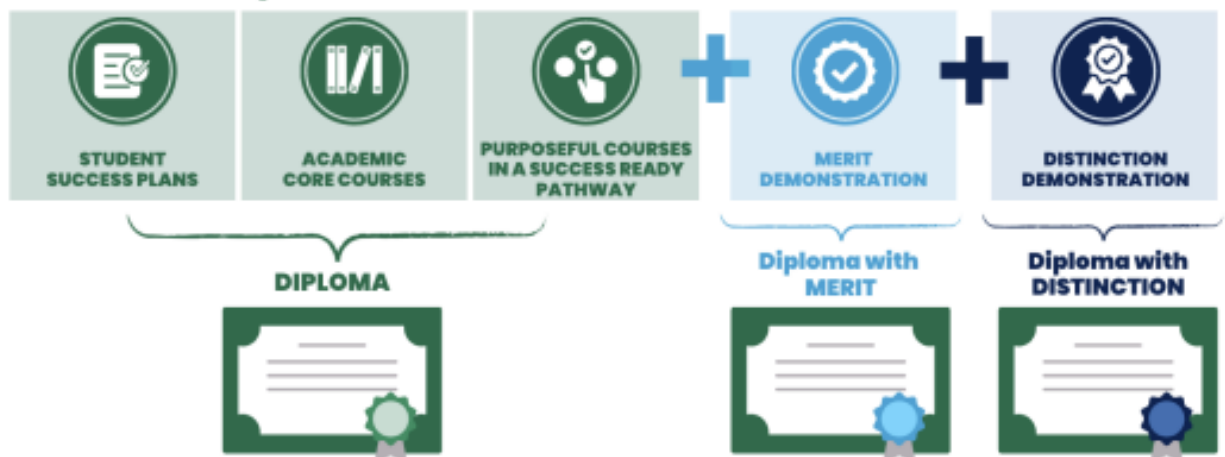
Every Arkansas student deserves the opportunity to graduate on a path toward prosperity.

Every student in Arkansas should graduate from high school success-ready with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and habits to succeed on their chosen path, with options including:

- **Enlistment** in military service,
- **Enrollment** in a postsecondary training or degree program, and
- **Employment** in a career that provides a family-sustaining wage.

Starting with the ninth-grade class of 2024–2025, students can pursue flexible college and career readiness pathways that guide course selection and progress toward graduation. These success-ready pathways support purposeful planning aligned with postsecondary and career goals, and completion may qualify students for a Diploma with Merit or Distinction.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STUDENTS



Updated: April 25, 2025



Pathways Leading to Diplomas with Merit and Distinction

In order to qualify for a **Diploma with Merit**, students must:

1. Complete a Success-Ready Pathway with three sequential credits as outlined in Table 1;
2. Earn a demonstration of readiness via *one* of the following:
 - [Identified High Wage, High Demand Industry-Recognized Credential](#)
 - 12 or more postsecondary credits
 - Arkansas Certified Pre-Apprenticeship leading to a Registered Apprenticeship
 - AP Scholar Designation¹
 - AP Scholar with Honor Designation²
 - ASVAB Score of 31 and completion of approved Enlistment Pathway
 - Cambridge Scholar³
 - IB Career-related Programme Certificate⁴
 - IB Scholar⁵
 - [Seal of Biliteracy](#)

In order to qualify for a **Diploma with Distinction**, students must:

1. Complete a Success-Ready Pathway with three sequential credits as outlined in Table 1;
2. Earn a demonstration of readiness via *one* of the following:
 - Technical Certificate or higher (e.g., Associate's Degree)
 - Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Diploma⁶
 - International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma⁷
 - AP Scholar with Distinction Designation⁸
 - AP Capstone Diploma Designation⁹
 - ASVAB Score of 31 and currently enlisted in the Armed Forces
 - Youth Apprenticeship leading to a Registered Apprenticeship

Please refer to [Business Rules](#) for the Class of 2026 and 2027 for determining Merit or Distinction.

¹ Granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams.

² Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

³ Granted to students who earn qualifying scores of "E" or higher on at least three Cambridge Advanced course assessments.

⁴ Granted to students who complete a minimum of 2 IB classes, up to 5 IB classes, AND complete the four elements of the IB CP Core components.

⁵ Granted to students who earn qualifying scores of 4 or higher on at least three IB course assessments.

⁶ Candidate must earn seven full credits from at least three subject groups through courses and exams taken over a 25-month period.

⁷ Candidate must take and complete the assessment components for six subjects AND the three core elements of the IB DP.

⁸ Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

⁹ Diploma program from College Board based on two year long AP courses: AP Seminar and AP Research.

DIGITAL LEARNING ACT

Per Act 1280 of the 2013 Arkansas Legislative Session, the District shall offer one or more digital learning course(s) through one or more District approved provider(s) as either a primary or supplementary method of instruction. The courses may be in a blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format. In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students are required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit while in high school.

Each high school student shall be required to take at least one digital learning course for credit to graduate. (Act 1280 of 2013)

Students will be required to pass with a minimum score of 60%, the civics portion of the Naturalization test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

For a student with disabilities, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) serves as the students' "graduation plan." Beginning not later than age 14, or earlier if determined by a student's IEP Team, transition planning must be initiated to prepare a student for exit from a secondary education program to post-secondary life. This includes planning for the student's exit from school due to graduation. For a student with disabilities, fulfillment of the requirements set forth in the student's IEP constitutes the basis for graduation from high school.

EARLY GRADUATION

In order for a student to graduate early, he she must meet the following requirements:

- Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Submit an intent for early graduation letter to the principal by the end of the sophomore year signed by both the parent and student
- Have completed junior English or its equivalent and have earned the necessary 16 credits prior to the start of the junior year
- Forfeit the right to be considered Valedictorian/Salutatorian; may still be granted honor graduate status

HONOR GRADUATE

In order to qualify for valedictorian, salutatorian, or honor graduate of a public high school or to qualify for membership in the National Honor Society or its equivalent, students must successfully complete the minimum core of courses recommended by the State Board of Higher Education and the State Board of Education, pursuant to Arkansas Code 6-61-217.

To be considered for Valedictorian or Salutatorian a student must also have attended Walnut Ridge High School for the last two (2) years.

To be named an honor graduate, a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Have a 3.5 or better grade point average
2. Have completed 4 units of math including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II and math beyond Algebra II
3. Have completed 3 units of Social Studies including World History, U.S. History, or Civics, and Economics
4. Have completed 2 units in one Foreign Language
5. Have completed 3 units of science including Physical Science, Biology and Chemistry
6. Have completed 4 units of English with emphasis on writing skills
7. Completed both Professional and Personal Communications or a three hour Oral Communications college course
8. Complete pathway for Merit Diploma OR Distinction Diploma (Starting with the 2029 Graduating Class)
9. A student who has been denied credit in any course due to excessive absences will not be eligible for honor graduate status

All who meet the above requirements would be designated as “Honor Graduates”. The number so honored could change each year. The student ranking highest would be named Valedictorian, and the second highest would be named Salutatorian. The ranking shall be based on all semester grades except the final semester of the senior year. In the event that a student takes at least 5 AP courses or college concurrent credit courses and that student makes a semester grade of an A in those courses and has maintained all A’s on his/her semester grades from the ninth through the twelfth grade then he/she will be awarded Valedictorian or Co-Valedictorian.

GRADUATION – ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR MATH, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS SENIORS ACT 1326 OF 1997

Students who attended school in the Lawrence County School District prior to acceptance to the Arkansas School for Mathematics and Sciences may elect to participate in senior activities the year they graduate, including prom, senior banquet, baccalaureate services, and all other graduation services.

Students attending ASMSA will be sent a questionnaire at the beginning of their fourth year of high school in which they are to indicate which activities they plan to attend. The questionnaire will

be sent to the last address on record in the school district files. Failure to return the questionnaire by October 1 will constitute a waiver of the election to participate. Students who will graduate early and who intend to participate in any activities must notify the senior high principal in writing by October 1 that they will graduate early and plan to participate in graduation activities.

ASMSA students will be responsible for the costs of these activities to the same extent as Lawrence County School District students, and agree by participating to abide by the Student Handbook of the Lawrence County School District at these functions. Students who violate provisions of the Student Handbook at senior activities may be barred from attending one or more future events upon recommendation of the senior high principal, subject to appeal to the superintendent, whose decision shall be final.

ASMSA students who participate in the graduation ceremony are not eligible to be recognized as valedictorian or salutatorian, but upon presentation of an official transcript from ASMSA by March 12 of the graduating year, will be recognized as honor graduates, if appropriate and based on the criteria of the Lawrence County School District for honor graduates, ASMSA students who choose to participate in graduation ceremonies will not receive diplomas issued by the Lawrence County School District, but will instead be presented with certificates of recognition.

SEMESTER TEST EXEMPTIONS

All students in grades 7-12 with an A or B for the semester will be exempt from the semester test. The students may opt to take the test only to improve their grade.

Students who have an average of C or below will be required to take the test but only to potentially improve their grade.

This policy does not include concurrent credit courses or courses taught online through Black River Technical College.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS

Teachers will post examination schedules on bulletin boards in their respective rooms for subjects taught. Each teacher will determine if a student is to be exempt from his/her test.

Examination testing periods will be the length of one class period. Students who are exempt will not have to attend school during semester tests. Students will attend school during the time of their examinations only. Students who remain at school during semester tests shall be required to go to a designated area when not testing. Loitering in the halls will not be permitted.

Students are required to take semester tests during their designated times. Tests are not to be taken early unless extenuating circumstances exist that might require them to be taken prior to the designated times. Parents should make arrangements with the principal prior to the semester tests dates. The principal shall have sole authority in determining whether or not a student will be

allowed to take semester tests before their designated date and time.

It is the responsibility of the student to make certain when their examinations are to be held. Any student missing an examination must present a doctor's certificate before being granted a special examination, unless given permission by the principal.

It is the responsibility of the student to be punctual. If a student is late, he/she loses just that much time from the exam.

All library fines, fees, and any other obligations must be taken care of before students are permitted to take examinations. Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the principal.

The examination schedule will be posted on the bulletin board outside the high school principal's office.

Teachers will stay in their respective testing areas as long as students are taking their tests.

Semester tests equal $\frac{1}{5}$ of the semester grade, and each nine weeks grade equals $\frac{2}{5}$ of the semester grade.

A student must attend school within the Lawrence County School District for one entire grading period per semester before being eligible for exemption from semester tests.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Academic awards shall be given at the end of each school year.

7-8 Honors:

- All A Honor Roll: Students achieving all A's on grade level in all subjects
- A/B Honor Roll: Students achieving all A's and/or B's on grade level in all subjects
- Perfect Attendance: no absences or tardies (early dismissals)
- Top 5: Top five students with highest grade in each subject per grade level
- Most Valuable Attitude: one student per grade level
- Student of the Year: one student per grade level
- Mack Davis Award: one 8th grade student

9-12 Honors:

- All A Honor Roll: Students achieving all A's on grade level in all subjects
- A/B Honor Roll: Students achieving all A's and/or B's on grade level in all subjects
- Perfect Attendance: no absences or tardies (early dismissals)
- Each class taught will award the top two students