



Oregon's Newest High School Diploma Requirements

Communication Tools for Districts Regarding Requirements For
Higher Education and Career Path Skills & Personal Financial Education

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Introduction

Overview

Senate Bill 3 (2023), which requires a 0.5 credit in Personal Financial Education and a 0.5 credit in Higher Education and Career Path Skills, was a result of a collaborative effort that received broad support from educators, parents, students, and business and community partners. In June 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 3 amending Oregon’s diploma requirements. This document is intended to support districts in communicating these requirements to their students, families, and community, reflecting our shared commitment to education.

Requirements of the Bill

Beginning with students graduating on or after January 1, 2027, the Oregon Diploma requirements will include a 0.5 credit in Personal Financial Education and a 0.5 credit in Higher Education and Career Path Skills, as part of the 24 credit requirements. Districts must ensure that students who will be awarded an Oregon Diploma, including a modified diploma, **on or after January 1, 2027** are able to satisfy these credit requirements in accordance with [Oregon Administrative Rule 581-021-0003: Course Requirements for Personal Financial Education and Higher Education and Career Path Skills](#).

While the overall credit requirement of 24 credits has not changed, students’ high-school course planning will be impacted as the total number of elective credits will be reduced from six to five. Districts will need to communicate with families during the 2024-25 school year to ensure that students graduating on or after January 1, 2027, and beyond are informed, prepared, and supported in planning to meet the new requirements for receiving a high school diploma in Oregon.

Purpose of the New Requirements

Oregon’s newest diploma requirements provide students with information about future planning and personal finance that are essential for their own success and the success of future generations. The required content standards for each content area create an equal “floor” for instruction related to future planning, providing a baseline for the content that all students in Oregon are required to receive. The new requirements provide students with access to the knowledge and skills needed for navigating systems. Instruction in these content areas help students with a range of post-secondary plans to identify opportunities for a successful future. The purpose of Oregon’s newest diploma requirements are to:

- Provide students opportunities to acquire a variety of real-world skills
- Enable students to focus on the practical application of financial literacy to future aspirations

- Establish dedicated time for all students to receive support in developing interview skills and resumes, applying for financial aid, and completing employment and/or college applications
- Promote students’ successful transition to career, college, and life after K-12 education.

Importance of Personal Financial Education



Personal Financial Education is essential for high school students as it equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the ever-changing financial world. Understanding the concepts included in Oregon’s Personal Financial Education Standards empowers students to make informed decisions that can significantly impact their future. By fostering financial literacy before graduation, districts help teach responsible financial behaviors that can lead to long-term economic stability and independence. Educated students are better prepared to avoid debt, build wealth, and contribute positively to the economy. Ultimately, personal financial education is a crucial investment in the future well-being and success of our youth and communities.

Importance of Higher Education and Career Path Skills

Emphasizing Higher Education and Career Path Skills in high school education empowers students to pursue meaningful post-secondary options and provides opportunities for them to thrive in their careers and lives after graduating high school. Higher Education and Career Path Skills courses are vital for high school students as they prepare to enter an increasingly competitive and dynamic workforce. It is essential for high school students to receive this instruction as it provides them with opportunities to make informed decisions about their post-secondary education, career paths, and life goals.



By learning to anticipate challenges and opportunities, students gain the ability to navigate life's uncertainties with confidence and resilience. Higher Education and Career Path Skills courses support students with identifying school and community resources and understanding their rights and responsibilities; in addition, these courses provide opportunities to practice self-advocacy skills that are essential for getting one’s needs met. Instruction related to future planning also encourages students to identify their strengths, interests, aptitudes and values. By understanding various post-secondary education options, career options, and the skills required for different fields, students can make informed decisions about their future, aligning their education and personal interests with their vision for a successful future.

Key messages for educators and school leaders

School leaders and high school educators and staff can use the following key messages to talk to students, families, staff and their school boards about Oregon’s newest diploma requirements.

WHO?	WHAT?	WHEN?
<p>Oregon Students Graduating on or after January 1, 2027.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Oregon public high schools and charter schools must implement the new requirements. • All students who receive an Oregon Diploma on or after January 1, 2027 must meet the new diploma requirements. • Students who receive a Modified Diploma on or after January 1, 2027 must meet the new diploma requirements. 	<p>Students must earn a combined total of 1.0 credit in Personal Financial Education and Higher Education and Career Path Skills to meet Oregon’s new diploma requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students graduating on or after January 1, 2027, and beyond are now required to take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0.5 credit in Personal Financial Education ○ 0.5 credit in Higher Education and Career Path Skills • This 1.0 credit requirement is part of the existing 24 credits required to graduate with an Oregon diploma. 	<p>Starting with students graduating on or after January 1, 2027, all students who receive an Oregon Diploma or Modified Diploma will need to meet the new credit requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School district and public charter school leaders were recommended to notify students and families impacted by the change during the 2023-24 school year. • It is recommended that districts and public charter schools meet with current 8th graders and communicate the requirements as they do class forecasting with students. • For students who are receiving a Modified Diploma, the district or public charter school must notify families of students who receive services as early as 5th grade that

		diploma requirements have changed.
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Communication Tools

Below are tools that can be used to communicate with families about Oregon's newest diploma requirements, ensuring that all students have access to the necessary information and resources to meet the updated diploma requirements.

[Informational Webinar](#)

This Introduction to New Diploma Requirements recording introduces the timeline and requirements established by 2023's Senate Bill 3.

Content Area	Credit Requirement
Language Arts	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Social Sciences	3 credits
Health	1 credit
Physical Education	1 credit
Credits may come from any of these content areas: World Languages Arts Career and Technical Education	3 credits
Personal Financial Education	0.5 credits
Higher Education and Career Path Skills	0.5 credits
Electives	5 credits
Total	24 Credits

[Informational Slide Deck](#)

This slide deck can be used to communicate the new requirements, timeline, and other pertinent information regarding Oregon's newest diploma requirements.

Key messages for parents, caregivers, and families

- The overall credit requirement has not increased. Students are still required to achieve 24 total credits to receive a diploma in Oregon.

- The composition of the required content area credits has changed with the addition of two new areas. The table on the next page outlines the credit requirements for the Oregon Diploma. Each content area links to the adopted State Standards for that area. For more information on awarding credit, see the [Options for Awarding Credit](#) page.

Letter to Families of Students Receiving an Oregon Diploma or Oregon Modified Diploma

[Your School Letterhead]

[Date]

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Subject: Introduction of New Diploma Requirements for Oregon High School Students Graduating on or after January 1, 2027.

We are writing to inform you about some important updates regarding the diploma requirements for Oregon's high school students that will impact students at [School Name]. As part of ongoing efforts to enhance students' academic experience and better prepare them for their future endeavors, the Oregon Department of Education has implemented new diploma requirements, established by [Senate Bill 3 \(2023\)](#), effective for all students beginning with students graduating on or after January 1, 2027.

These changes are designed to ensure that our students receive a well-rounded education that equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary for success beyond high school.

Outlined below are the key details of the new diploma requirements:

- **Distribution of Credits:** Students will now be required to complete 0.5 credit in Higher Education and Career Path Skills and 0.5 credit in Personal Financial Education.
- **Total Number of Credits:** There has been no increase to the total number of credits required to receive an Oregon Diploma. Students will still be required to earn a minimum of 24 credits in order to graduate from high school in Oregon.
- **Academic Advising and Support:** Our [Designated Staff, i.e., School Counselors] will be available to assist students in planning their course schedules and navigating the new credit requirements. We understand that these changes may raise questions, and we are committed to providing the necessary support to ensure a smooth transition for all students.

We encourage you to discuss these changes with your student and to reach out to our [Designated Staff] if you have any questions or need further clarification. If your student receives special education services, there may be an impact on their secondary transition and graduation needs. Please reach out to your student's case manager if you have any questions or concerns. Your partnership and support are crucial to the success of our students, and we look forward to working together to help them achieve their educational goals.

Thank you for your continued support of [School Name]. Together, we can empower our students to feel confident in their future goals and ability to achieve success after high school.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title/Position]

[School Name]

Frequently Asked Questions

Can my student complete this requirement in middle school?

The standards for both Personal Financial Education and Higher Education and Career Path Skills are designed to support high school students in the successful transition to post-secondary life. As students' aspirations and goals often change over time, it is recommended that Personal Financial Education and Higher Education and Career Path Skills courses are offered to high school students at developmentally appropriate grade levels as they are preparing to transition into post-secondary education and career paths. This will allow students to apply the knowledge and skills they are learning to relevant and meaningful experiences they are engaging with in real time. For example, Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards include instruction on navigating financial aid options such as the FAFSA, applying for entry level jobs, writing cover letters and resumes, and more. Personal Financial Education standards include instruction on developing goals for building assets using various investment options, developing a budget, simple and compound interest calculations, tax liability, and credit monitoring. Students who are preparing to transition to postsecondary life within 2-3 years will find these courses more engaging, intentional, and effective for preparing them for a successful future.

My student is in a CTE Program of Study. How does this impact their course plan?

The [Guidance for Personal Financial Education in Secondary CTE](#) document provides guidance on how Personal Financial Education (PFE) courses can be structured to meet PFE and Career Technical Education program requirements. Students will be able to continue to work towards a full program of study while taking a PFE course where the school has integrated and met the CTE program of study and additional requirements within the course.

My student has already taken a similar course. Do they need to take the new courses in addition to the classes they've already completed?

This is a decision made at the local level. Districts must use the correct NCES course code (19262 for PFE; 22900 for HECPS) to demonstrate that a student has received instruction in both required content areas. Districts may opt to utilize the [credit options rule](#) to allow students to demonstrate mastery of the adopted standards and receive credit for past learning. Please work with your student's school to request information about earning credit for mastery of the new standards, even if the instruction previously received was not within a standalone course.

My student is receiving special education services which specify a diploma option. Do they have to satisfy the new course requirements to earn a diploma?

Students who receive special education services and who are working towards an Oregon diploma or Modified Diploma must satisfy the new course requirements beginning with students graduating on or after January 1, 2027.

My student will be a “fifth-year senior” in the 26-2027 school year. Will they be required to meet the new requirements?

All students who receive their Oregon Diploma or modified diploma **on or after January 1, 2027** will be required to obtain 0.5 credit in personal financial education and 0.5 credit higher education and career path skills in order to graduate.

My student will not get to take an elective they have planned for with the new required credit. Is there an option to opt my student out of the new courses?

There is no option for a student to opt-out of a diploma requirement. A 0.5 credit in Personal Financial Education and a 0.5 credit in Higher Education and Career Path Skills are required to receive an Oregon Diploma or Modified Diploma. Students may take courses online or through other ways depending on what the district has established. To support your student in meeting their education and career goals through course forecasting, please reach out to your students’ counselor or admin to discuss options.