

Section F1. Graduation Requirements Different from DCMR - Date Stamp 20190312

***ONLY complete this section if applying to amend Graduation Requirements.**

Per DC PCSB’s [High School Graduation Requirements](#) policy, an approved public charter school has exclusive control over its instructional methods. However, as specified in a school’s charter agreement, changes to a school’s curriculum that impact the school’s mission require a charter agreement amendment, which includes changes to a charter high school’s graduation requirements. DC PCSB will approve the graduation requirements of any charter high school that chooses graduation requirements that are equivalent to or surpass the requirements outlined in the [DC Municipal Regulations \(DCMR\) Title V, Chapter 22](#).

According to DCMR, “A total of twenty-four (24) credits in corresponding subjects and required volunteer community service hours shall have been satisfactorily completed for graduation.”

Therefore, per DC PCSB’s standard, at minimum, the following subjects and minimum credit values are required in a charter school’s graduation requirements:

COURSES	CREDITS(S)
English	4.0
Mathematics; must include Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra II at a minimum	4.0
Science; must include three (3) lab sciences	4.0
Social Studies; must include World History 1 and 2, United States History; United States Government, and District of Columbia History	4.0
World Language	2.0
Art	0.5
Music	0.5
Physical Education/Health	1.5
Electives	3.5
Total	24.0

If a charter high school elects to require a different standard for graduation requirements, in which its total number of required credits or the required courses differ greatly (e.g., The school has no requirement for health/P.E., the

school requires additional year(s) of world language, the school requires 26.0 credits to graduate) then the school must submit a charter amendment application to DC PCSB for approval. If approved, the school's graduation requirements will become a binding attachment to the school's charter. DC PCSB will use the approved graduation requirements when determining 9th grade on track and reviewing transcripts for graduation.

Section F1. Graduation Requirements (continued)

1. Please describe in detail your proposed graduation requirements.

DCI Proposes four pathways to graduation for our students. Pathway (1) would retain our existing requirements and pathways 2-4 would retain a 24 credit requirement while allowing for alternative pathways to fulfill the IB Diploma Program (2), IB Career-related (3) or IB Arts (4) requirements:

(1) DCI would retain our existing graduation requirements as summarized below for a majority of our students:

District of Columbia International School Graduation Requirements

DCI's high school credit and graduation policies reflect our philosophy as well as adherence to DC law and the Office of the State Superintendent for Education guidelines, DC Public Charter School Board policy, and the approach of the International Baccalaureate Organization. In effect, to earn a DC diploma, students must fulfill the obligations of DC law and, in most cases, either the structures of IB Diploma or Career Programmes.

To receive a standard DC diploma from DCI, students must earn 24.0 credits (or Carnegie Units) as follows:



Subject	Credits (Carnegie Units)
English	4.0 credits
Mathematics (including Integrated Math 1, 2, and 3)	4.0 credits
Science (must include three lab sciences, including Biology)	4.0 credits
Social Studies (including 1.5 credits of US and DC History and Government, and 1.5 credits of World History)	4.0 credits
World Language	2.0 credits
Art	0.5 credits
Music	0.5 credits
Health and Physical Education	1.5 credits
Electives	3.5 credits

Total	24.0 credits
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All students must also satisfactorily complete the following to earn a DCI diploma **unless the credit hours below are used for credit recovery:**

1. MYP Personal Project (typically in 10th grade)
2. A class in Theory of Knowledge (ToK) or Personal and Professional Skills (PPS), typically in 11th/12th grade, which can count towards elective credits
3. The Creativity, Service, and Action Project or Career-related Program Service Requirement (in 11th/12th grade) which may include the 100 hours of required community service, that is also a requirement to graduate.
4. The Extended Essay or Reflective Project (typically in 11th/12th grade)

For the IB Diploma Programme and the IB Career Programme, we will follow current rules of the IB Organization. Please note that the IB Organization makes final decisions as to awarding of IB diplomas and certificates.

A student with special needs who does not achieve a diploma shall be eligible to receive an Individual Educational Program (IEP) Certificate of Completion. The decision to pursue a program leading to an IEP Certificate of Completion shall be made by the IEP team including the parent(s) and where possible, the student. The decision shall be made no earlier than the ninth (9th) grade and shall be attached in writing to the student's IEP. We will comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 and District law with regard to appropriate transition assessments.

We propose the following amendments in order to support all students pathways to the rigorous and internationally benchmarked International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma and Career-related Programs:

(2) A student who fulfills the requirements specified below toward completion of an international baccalaureate diploma programme and 24-credits is considered to have satisfied PCSB minimum requirements for graduation from a public high school:

To receive a high school diploma under this section, a student must complete and pass all required international baccalaureate diploma programme courses as scored at the local level (and 9th and 10th grade preparatory courses) in each of the required subjects under the diploma programme.

(3) A student who fulfills the requirements specified below toward completion of the international baccalaureate career-related programme in addition to a minimum of 24-credits and IB diploma program courses in English, social studies, science, language acquisition, and mathematics (and 9th and 10th grade preparatory courses) is considered to have satisfied the PCSB minimum requirements for graduation from a public high school:

To receive a high school diploma under this section, a student must complete and pass all required international baccalaureate career-related courses and enrolled diploma programme courses as scored at the local level.

(4) District of Columbia International School (DCI) students that complete a full credit of visual arts, music, theater **or** photography/film in grades 9 or 10 will not be required to obtain a .5 credit of visual arts and a .5 credit of music towards graduation requirements.

District of Columbia International School Graduation Requirements

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students must fulfill the obligations of DC law and, in most cases, either the structures of IB Diploma or Career Programmes.

To receive a standard DC diploma from DCI, students must earn 24.0 credits (or Carnegie Units) as follows:

Subject	Credits (Carnegie Units)	IB Diploma Alt. Pathway (1)	IB Career-related Program Alt. Pathway (2)	Arts Alternative Pathway
English	4.0 credits	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits
Mathematics (including Integrated Math 1, 2, and 3)	4.0 credits	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits
Science (must include three lab sciences, including Biology)	4.0 credits	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits
Social Studies (including 1.5 credits of US and DC History and Government, and 1.5 credits of World History)	4.0 credits	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits

World Language	2.0 credits	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	4.0 credits and DP Course (SL or HL)	2.0 credits
Art	0.5 credits	Exception granted when necessary for achievement of IB Diploma requirements	Exception granted when necessary for requirements of IB Career-related Program	1 credit of Art, Music, Theater, Film or Photography in preparation for IB DP Visual Arts, Music, Theater, Film or Photography
Music	0.5 credits	Exception granted when necessary for achievement of IB Diploma requirements	Exception granted when necessary for requirements of IB Career-related Program	See above
Health and Physical Education	1.5 credits	Exception granted when necessary for achievement of IB Diploma requirements	Exception granted when necessary for requirements of IB Career-related	1.5 credits

			Program	
Electives	3.5 credits	Exception granted when necessary for achievement of IB Diploma requirements	Exception granted when necessary for requirements of IB Career-related Program	3.5 credits
Total	24.0 credits	24.0 credits	24.0 credits	24.0 credits

All students must also satisfactorily complete the following to earn a DCI diploma unless the credit hours below are used for credit recovery:

1. MYP Personal Project (typically in 10th grade)
2. A class in Theory of Knowledge (ToK) or Personal and Professional Skills (PPS), typically in 11th/12th grade, which can count towards elective credits
3. The Creativity, Service, and Action Project or Career-related Program Service Requirement (in 11th/12th grade) which may include the 100 hours of required community service, that is also a requirement to graduate.
4. The Extended Essay or Reflective Project (typically in 11th/12th grade)

For the IB Diploma Programme and the IB Career Programme, we will follow current rules of the IB Organisation. Please note that the IB Organisation makes final decisions as to awarding of IB diplomas and certificates.

A student with special needs who does not achieve a diploma shall be eligible to receive an Individual Educational Program (IEP) Certificate of Completion. The decision to pursue a program leading to an IEP Certificate of Completion shall be made by the IEP team including the parent(s) and where possible, the student. The decision shall be made no earlier than the ninth (9th) grade and shall be attached in writing to the student's IEP. We will comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 and District law with regard to appropriate transition assessments.

2. What is the school's rationale for proposing such different graduation requirements?

The internationally benchmarked requirements for both the IB Diploma and IB Career-related Program are known to be of the most rigorous curriculum and assessment programs offered in the world today. In addition, they are [strongly correlated](#) with college attendance, persistence and graduation. The complex requirements of both programs require strong preparatory courses in ninth and tenth grade in order to prepare students for the enormously rigorous two-year (college credit bearing) courses. These requirements may not allow a student to take PE/Health or other 'traditional' graduation requirements. Thus, impeding their ability to be adequately prepared for IB Diploma or Career-related courses.

In addition, the District of Columbia International School offers an "honors for all curriculum" by requiring all students to take IB Middle Years Program Courses in grades 9 and 10 and IB Diploma and Career-related courses in grades 11 and 12. Thus, requiring that a strong preparatory program is in place for all students. This is the basis for the specific adjustment to the .5 credit art and .5 credit music graduation requirement requested above. Our students need a strong preparatory course in music, visual arts, theater or film if they are going to pursue any one of these courses at the Diploma Program level (a two-year course that has the possibility of bearing college credit).

This proposal mirrors existing policies in the following jurisdictions that accept participation in IB programs as an alternative pathway to graduation:

- Alabama
- Florida
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Washington State



- Chicago Public Schools

3. Given most DC public charter schools follow, at minimum, the DCMR graduation requirements, how will the school ensure that students transferring **into** the school or **exiting** the school will be able to carryover credits from or to other schools?

The District of Columbia International School does not accept new students after the ninth grade. Thus, providing these students with an opportunity to meet these requirements in all four years of high school.

4. Describe the involvement the greater community (e.g., teachers, parents) had in this decision, including parents and staff.

The District of Columbia International School engaged with teachers, administrators, parents (PTO) and our governing board prior to agreeing upon this decision. Our entire community has been informed of this request via our weekly community newsletter (*The Dispatch*).