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SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

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GOVERNOR

November 16, 2023

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, School Counselors, District Test Coordinators

**FROM:** Arsenio Romero, Ph.D., Secretary of Education 

**RE:** High School Graduation Requirements Guidance Manual

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This memorandum announces a revised PED Graduation Manual. The manual is revised in alignment to [Section 22-13-1.1 Graduation Requirements NMSA 1978](#) and should be implemented for **Cohort 2025** and beyond. The manual addresses both course requirements and demonstration of competency requirements.

**Course Requirements** (Requirements have not changed but are included here as a courtesy.) Successful completion of the requirements of the New Mexico diploma of excellence shall be required for graduation for students entering the ninth grade beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. Successful completion of a minimum of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic content and performance stands shall be required to earn a New Mexico diploma of excellence. These units shall be as follows (one of which must be an honors, advanced placement, dual credit, or distance learning course):

- 1) four units in English, with major emphasis on grammar, nonfiction writing and literature; provided that department approved work-based training or career and technical education courses that meet state English academic content performance standards shall qualify as one of the four required English units;
- 2) four units in mathematics, of which one shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of algebra 2, unless the parent submitted written, signed permission for the student to complete a lesser

mathematics unit; and provided that a financial literacy course or department-approved work-based training or career and technical education course that meets state mathematics academic content and performance standards shall qualify as one of the four required mathematics units;

- 3) three units in science, two of which shall have a laboratory component; provided that department-approved work-based training or career and technical education courses that meet state science academic content and performance standards shall qualify as one of the three required science units;
- 4) three and one-half units in social science, which shall include United States History and Geography, World History and Geography, Government and Economics, and one-half unit of New Mexico History.
- 5) one unit in physical education, as determined by each school district, which may include a physical education program that meets state content and performance standards or participation in marching band, junior reserve officers' training corps or interscholastic sports sanctioned by the New Mexico activities association or any other co-curricular physical activity;
- 6) one unit in one of the following: a career cluster course, workplace readiness or a language other than English; and
- 7) seven and one-half elective units that meet department content and performance standards. Career and technical education courses shall be offered as an elective. Student service learning shall be offered as an elective. Financial literacy shall be offered as an elective. Pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as electives. Media literacy may be offered as an elective.

For students entering the eighth grade in the 2012-2013 school year, a course in health education is required prior to graduation. Health education may be required in either middle school or high school, as determined by the school district.

### **Demonstration of Competency Requirements**

6.19.7 New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC): Demonstration of Competency for High School Graduation, was revised and published on July 31, 2023. As a reminder, demonstration of competency requirements for Cohort 2024 are posted on PED's Graduation Requirements web page here.

For questions regarding this memorandum, please contact [Grad.Questions@ped.nm.gov](mailto:Grad.Questions@ped.nm.gov) for high school graduation coursework questions and for high school graduation demonstration of competency requirement questions, please contact [PED.Assessment@ped.nm.gov](mailto:PED.Assessment@ped.nm.gov)

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