

**MOUNT DESERT ISLAND REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION GUIDELINES**

The intent of the system of learning results is that all students meet the applicable content standards, as well as any local requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. Maine Department of Education regulations recognize that individual students may take fewer or more than the traditional four years to complete diploma requirements, and that some requirements can be met by programs or plans provided outside the regular course of study. Any such programs or plans must support students in meeting the content standards of the learning results required for graduation.

Exceptional Students

It is the school's intention for students with identified disabilities to follow graduation requirements whenever possible. When the Pupil Evaluation Team determines that changes in this policy are necessary for an individual with a disability, the change will be specified on the student's Individual Education Plan in compliance with Section 5.3 of the Maine State Special Education Regulations, Chapter 101. Beginning with the class of 2008, all students will be required to meet the content standards as required by Maine law and Department of Education rules.

External Courses

With prior approval of the Principal, guidance counselor and parent/legal guardian, a student may enroll in external courses that support the student in meeting the content standards of the learning results. Examples of such courses include individual tutoring, adult education, on-line or correspondence courses, internships and college courses.

EXTERNAL COURSE OPTIONS

All courses taken to meet Mount Desert Island High School graduation requirements that are not a part of the regular curriculum must be approved in advance by the Director of Guidance and the Principal. These options include:

Adult Education

Students who wish to take a State approved Adult Education Course must complete that program's application process. Once enrolled, students must participate and attend classes regularly.

This option is reserved for courses not offered in our regular curriculum. The Principal, Guidance Director and Adult Education Director will determine the appropriateness of the course. Students will be limited to one course per two (2) terms which does not count toward the minimum credit load. Exceptions will be granted for college level coursework offered through the Maine Educational Network.

Courses at College of The Atlantic and University of Maine at Ellsworth

Both the College of The Atlantic and the University of Maine at Ellsworth offer special student status to academically qualified students. Students participate fully in class activities, with normal requirements for successful completion of credit. Credit is fully transferable to college; normal evaluations are provided and official transcript records are created. This option is open to seniors with the recommendation by teacher or guidance counselor (Mount Desert Island Regional High School credit varies).

Correspondence Courses

Such courses are not seen as a part of the standard curriculum at Mount Desert Island High School. Students may take up to three (3) credits only after their class's normal date of graduation. If successfully completed, they will receive a diploma dated with their original class. All such courses must be approved in advance through a student's guidance counselor.

Independent Study

Independent study will be reserved for work that is not offered in our regular curriculum or can not be scheduled. The Principal, Director of Guidance and sponsoring department and teacher will determine the appropriateness and credit of such study. Students will be limited to .5 credits per two (2) terms.

Applications and details are available in the Guidance Office.

Internships/Cooperative Education

Experiential learning is an important part of student growth and development. Internships and coop placements must be approved through the Internship/Co-Op Coordinator. Credit varies and will count, toward meeting the minimum course load.

On-Line Courses

Students may take an on-line course in a subject they have previously failed. Students may take a course that is not offered as part of the Mount Desert Island Regional High School curriculum. Students must apply to the Student Assistance Team for permission.

Magnet Schools

In attempting to best meet the educational needs of individual students, the Mount Desert Island School Committee supports the concept of attendance at publicly funded magnet schools in the State of Maine. The school assumes no financial responsibility for such attendance.

Such programs are seen as opportunities for students to extend their learning through accelerated study and specialization in their chosen area of interest. Since these programs are seen in this light, students who have attended Mount Desert Island High School a minimum of eight (8) terms and who meet all of the school's requirements for graduation and credit expectations will be eligible for:

- (1) A dual graduation certificate issued by the magnet school stating that the student is a graduate of both that school and Mount Desert Island Regional High School;
- (2) Consideration for scholarships that are not individually competitive but awarded to groups of students;
- (3) Inclusion in the school yearbook; and
- (4) Participation in the Senior Prom and Project Graduation.

Each student is personally responsible for meeting all eligibility criteria and deadlines associated with these privileges. Neither a Mount Desert Island Regional High School diploma nor other senior honors, activities, privileges or services are open to students exercising this educational option.

Post-Secondary Enrollment

Secondary students may earn credits towards graduation by taking courses from public two year and four year post-secondary institutions. Three college credits will equal .5 high school credit. Mount Desert Island High School will not pay any cost for students who are participating in this program. Admission criteria are available through the Guidance Office.

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Tutoring

On rare occasions credit may be awarded through instruction from a tutor outside of the regular school program. The tutor must be certified in the subject area taught and approved in advance. Such arrangements are at parent expense and do not fulfill the minimum 6 credit requirement. The Principal, Director of Guidance and sponsoring teacher will determine the appropriateness and credit of such study.

Alternative Education

Mount Desert Island High School offers the "Compass Rose" Alternative School option to students who find themselves at risk for dropping out of school but are motivated towards self-improvement. More information regarding this program can be obtained from your guidance counselor.

Transfer Students

When a high school student transfers from another state or from an educational program that is not required to meet the standards of the system of learning results, the Principal shall determine the value of the prior educational experience toward meeting the standards through the local assessment system.

Early Awarding of Diplomas

A student who meets the applicable content standards of the learning results and completes the school unit's additional requirements in fewer than four years may be awarded a diploma early. Any student interested in pursuing this option must schedule a meeting with their parent/legal guardian and their guidance counselor to review the requirements and prepare a plan. The student's plan must be approved by the Principal, guidance counselor and the student's parents.

Extended Study

A high school student is eligible for extended years of study to complete the requirements of a diploma if he/she has not reached the age of 20 at the start of the school year. A student eligible for extended study may be referred to adult education or similar resources suitable to young adult learners.

The Superintendent may request that the Commissioner approve on a case-by-case basis waivers of the age requirements to allow a student who has reached 20 years of age before the start of the school year to be enrolled as a public secondary school student.

Delayed Awarding of Diplomas

A high school student who last attended Mount Desert Island Regional High School, who has satisfactorily completed the freshman year in an accredited degree-granting institution of higher education may receive a diploma, although the student does not meet all diploma requirements specified in Maine Department of Education Chapter 127. Such decisions shall be made at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Certificates for Students Not Meeting the Content Standards

If a student leaves Mount Desert Island Regional High School without meeting the standards of the system of learning results, the Board may award a certificate stating the student's participation in the educational program for a specified number of years as well as any record of achievements.

Cross Reference: IKF – Graduation Requirements
 IHCDA – Post-Secondary Enrollment Options
 IHBGA – Home Schooling – Participation in School Programs

Legal Reference: Chapters 127 and 130 (Maine Department of Education Rules)
 Maine Special Education Regulation 5.11 (Nov. 1999)
 20-A M.R.S.A. § 5201 et seq.

Adopted: 11/14/00

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