



Policy Number: 3100

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PROCESS AND STANDARDS FOR ACCEPTANCE AND RECIPROCITY OF CREDITS EARNED POLICY

Purpose and Philosophy

It is the policy of the American Leadership Academy Board of Trustees to implement curriculum and instruction standards, competency measures, and high school graduation requirements in accordance with Utah State Law and State Board of Education rules (R-277-705); **encouraging individualized and flexible options for students where appropriate.**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that American Leadership Academy clearly and consistently communicates applicable standards, measures and requirements to its patrons and offers appropriate guidance and support so that every student has the opportunity to earn a high school diploma.

1. Diplomas and Completion Certificates

American Leadership Academy shall offer differentiated diplomas to secondary students:

- 1.1 A high school diploma indicating that a student successfully completed all state and school course requirements for graduation.
- 1.2 A high school honors diploma indicating on the diploma that a student successfully completed all state and school course requirements for graduation and additionally completed a rigorous course of study in Fine Arts, Academics or Career and Technical Education.
- 1.3 A certificate of completion shall be awarded to students who have completed their senior year, are exiting the school system, and have not met all State or District requirements for a diploma. These students may participate in graduation ceremonies. Example: IEP students that age out of the system.

2. Curriculum/Graduation Credits

- 2.1 Students in grades K-6 shall be taught according to the requirements found in the charter, as amended. Requirements are amended from time to time by the Utah State Board of Education and the most current version of the Utah Administrative Code should be consulted. The requirements are as listed:
Grades K-2:

Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, curriculum which includes the integration of literacy with science and social studies.

Grades 3-6:

Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Arts including visual arts, music, dance and theatre, Health Science, Physical Education, Educational Technology and Library Media

Informal assessments should occur on a regular basis to ensure continual student progress.

2.2 Students in grades 7-8 shall earn a minimum of 12 credits in accordance with Utah Administrative Code R277-700-5, as amended, to be properly prepared for instruction in grades 9-12. In addition to the credits listed below, students must earn enough elective credit to reach the 12 credit- minimum:

- 2 credits—Language Arts
- 2.5 credits—Mathematics
- 1.5 credits—Social Science
- 1.0 credit—The Arts
- 1.0 credit—Physical Education
- .5 credit—Health Education
- 1 credit—Career and Technical Education
- .5 credit--Leadership

2.3 Students in grades 9 through 12 must earn a minimum of 28 units of credit in the following curriculum areas through course completion or competency assessment.

- 4 credits - Language Arts (English 9,10,11, plus one Applied, Advanced or Supplemental Course)
- 4 credits – Mathematics (Common Core Math 9, 10, 11 one Applied or Advanced) A student who has successfully completed the Calculus course has completed the mathematics graduation requirement, regardless of the number of mathematics credits earned.
- 4 credits - Science (Courses from two of the four Foundation Courses plus two additional Foundation Courses or Applied, Advanced or Supplemental Courses)
- 4 credits - Social Science (World Geography .5, World Civilizations .5, U.S. History 1.0, World History 1.0, and U.S. Government and Citizenship 1.0)
- 1.5 credits - Fine Arts
- 2 credits--Physical and Health Education (Health, Participation Skills, Fitness for life and Individualized Lifetime Activities or with school approval, a maximum of .5 credits for participation on a school sponsored athletic team or other school organization which involves a significant amount of physical activity.)
- 1 credit--Career and Technical Education
- .5 credit--Computer Technology
- .5 credit--General Financial Literacy
- .5 credit--Leadership
- 6 credits--Electives

2.4 Approved Foundation, Applied, and Advanced courses are available to view at: www.schools.utah.gov/curr/main/graduation. Changes to these graduation

requirements or credits must be approved by the American Leadership Academy Board of Trustees.

- 2.5 Course descriptions will assist students, parents and counselors in preparing a student for success in their academic pursuits and eventual graduation.
 - 2.5.1 The Utah State Board of Education establishes **minimum** standards and objectives for each course in the required general curriculum.
 - 2.5.2 Course descriptions are required and elective courses are developed cooperatively by American Leadership Academy and the Utah State Office of Education.
 - 2.5.3 The descriptions shall contain course mastery criteria and shall stress mastery of the course material.
 - 2.5.4 Implementation and assessment procedures for approved courses are the responsibility of the professional staff at American Leadership Academy.
 - 2.5.5 Proposed new courses at the school must be approved by administration, following the procedure in place to review new courses (see procedures for new course implementation found in *the USOE CACTUS course addition request process. This form must be submitted to USOE no later than November 1 of the year preceding the school year you would like the new course to begin*).
- 2.6 Diplomas or unofficial transcripts may not be withheld from students for non-payment of school fees.

3. Academic Grades

- 3.1 Academic grading is a teacher responsibility and should reflect academic progress toward the mastery of the course curriculum. Teachers must honestly and accurately grade the work of each student based upon the standards and objectives established for the course. Academic grades must reflect the actual competence or academic growth of a student and proficiency at the end of a term or unit should be the major consideration in determining a student's grade.
- 3.2 The secondary schools use letter grades to reflect mastery of the subject matter of a course. Credit is granted for letter grades A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and P (pass) grades. Credit is not granted for F (fail), NG (no grade), WF (withdraw failing) and I (incomplete) grades. "P" grades and the resulting credit will not be counted when calculation grade point averages. "I" grades may be given if there is a valid extenuating reason why a student has not completed the course work required for a passing grade by the end of the grading period. "I" grades may be made up and changed to another

grade within the next grading period of the school. "I" grades that are not made up will be changed to "f" grades.

3.3 In calculating GPA (grade point average), the following scale will be used:

A	4.000	B	3.000	C	2.000	D	1.000
A-	3.667	B-	2.667	C-	1.667	D-	0.667
B+	3.333	C+	2.333	D+	1.333	F	0.000

3.4 Monitoring of academic growth is a critical step in the educational process. Student work will be corrected promptly, scores posted to the electronic grading system and work returned to students in a timely manner. Teachers, parents and students have a shared responsibility to monitor student progress as well as attendance information by accessing the electronic system used by American Leadership Academy. **Communication with the parent/guardian will be made when a student is doing D or F work, allowing an opportunity for improvement before the grading period ends.**

3.5 Grades may not be changed for the sole purpose of allowing a student to become eligible for activities or for the sole purpose of earning a diploma.

3.6 Grades that have been posted for more than one (1) calendar year cannot be changed. All grade changes must be made by the teacher and approved by the school principal or his/her designee. Once issued, grades may be changed, during a one (1) year time limit for the following reasons.

3.6.1 A calculation or other grading error on the part of the teacher was discovered.

3.6.2 Clerical error.

3.6.2 Course work was satisfactorily completed following the issuance of an "I" grade.

3.6.3 A student demonstrates competency during the next term.

3.7 ALA Policy: *Academic Grade Change Policy and Procedure* provides additional guidelines for incompletes and grade changes.

4. Granting Credit and Accepting Transfer Credit for Graduation

4.1 A unit of credit or fraction thereof shall be given upon satisfactory completion of a course of learning experience in compliance with state course standards. In some cases, course credit may also be completed on a performance or design basis in which case assessment of mastery will be the responsibility of the high school principal. Credit can be awarded only once for a specific required course with the same content during the secondary school experience.

4.2 In addition, American Leadership Academy shall accept transfer credits from accredited institutions. The high school shall employ a review process to ensure that the demonstration of competency, the acceptance, and reciprocity of transfer credits earned by students are consistent with state law and Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Administrative Rule (R277-705-3).

- 4.3 High School students enrolled in American Leadership Academy may earn graduation credit by the following methods:
- Successful completion of accredited high school courses;
 - Successful completion of approved concurrent enrollment, advanced placement courses and distance learning courses;
 - Successful completion of accredited "supplemental education" school courses;
 - Successful completion of Utah Electronic High School courses that comply with NWAC (Northwest Accreditation Commission, an accreditation division of AdvancEd) proctored assessment requirements.
 - Successful completion of accredited correspondence/independent study courses; including but not limited to ALEKS Math and BYU Independent study.
 - Home School Instruction - On an individual basis, transfer of credit may be allowed through student testing or other appropriate education measures as determined by the high school principal.
- 4.4 All graduation credits earned/granted to meet core graduation requirements shall be aligned to the standards and objectives of the Utah State Core Curriculum and have an end-of course assessment that meets or exceeds the state assessment of the course. Transfer graduation credits accepted by American Leadership Academy shall be deemed as original credit.
- 4.5 American Leadership Academy may not waive credits required for graduation, but may grant credit earned based on demonstrated competency, assessment, or proficiency.

5. Students with Disabilities

- 5.1 A student with disabilities served by special education programs shall satisfy completion or graduation criteria, consistent with state and federal law and the student's Individual Education Plans (IEP).
- 5.2 Graduation issues must be addressed by the IEP team on an individual basis. The IEP is the vehicle for making changes to graduation requirements to meet the unique educational needs for a student with disabilities. A student may be awarded a certificate of completion or a differentiated diploma, consistent with the state and federal law and the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

6. Guidelines and Procedures for Reciprocity of Credit

- 6.1 At a minimum, each school with grades 9-12, shall have 1000 hours of credit granting instructional time in a 180-day school year.
- 6.2 To prepare students to meet graduation requirements, secondary school will implement a College and Career Readiness Plan (CCR) for every student. Each student's plan must outline a clear pathway toward the goal of earning 28 academic credits and meeting

Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) requirements prior to graduation. A student with a qualified disability must satisfy high school completion or graduation criteria consistent with state and federal law and his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

- 6.3 Principals in grades 9-12 are directed to protect credits from intrusions by additional required credits. For example, a science teacher cannot require a student to sign up for an additional lab period to compliment a given science course. Elective course credits may be CCR driven.
- 6.4 Credit may be issued for work release completed inside or outside the regular school day, in accordance with school guidelines. (Program is currently not in place)
- 6.5 Secondary schools shall establish remediation programs for students who do not meet competency levels in English, mathematics, science, or social studies (53A-13-104).
- 6.6 Schools may offer challenge opportunities for courses in the regular program of studies if approved by the school principal. All credits in this area must be CCR justified by the student, parent, and the school.
- 6.7 Schools may offer additional credits for students, before or after school, when the regular course offering fails to meet curricular demands provided that funding is available for the class and the principal has approved the class for credit.
- 6.8 Early college Admissions and Requirements

Admission exists when:

- A student elects on his or her own initiative to enroll in a USHE (Utah System of Higher Education) institution to pursue course work;
- A student is registered at the high school and either attends classes at the high school for a portion of the day, or attends no classes at the high school but still wishes to graduate with his or her class;
- Courses are taught on the USHE institution's campus; and
- Expenses and arrangements associated with college enrollment and credit are the sole responsibility of the student.

- 6.8.1 Admission Student Eligibility Requirements
 - Students must meet all admission standards of the USHE (Utah System of Higher Education) institution they wish to attend.
 - Students must have a current CCR on file at the school which identifies areas of course application toward high school graduation.
- 6.8.2 Admission credits may be counted for completion of high school requirement if:
 - The school approves the post-secondary program;
 - The student provides the school with progress reports and membership and attendance reports; and

- The student is enrolled in the high school.

6.9 Early Graduation

Secondary school students who have completed all required courses or demonstrated mastery of required skills and competencies as outlined in this policy may graduate at any time.

6.9.1 Students intending to graduate early shall satisfy existing graduation requirements of American Leadership Academy.

6.9.2 In consultation with a student's parent/guardian and school counselor, each student shall indicate to his or her school principal or designee, the intent to graduate early at the beginning of the ninth grade year or as soon as possible thereafter as the intent is known.

6.9.3 To be eligible for early graduation, a student shall have a current CCR on file at the student's high school. The CCR shall outline the course work needed to satisfy the early graduation goal.

6.9.4 The school principal may waive the semesters of membership graduation requirement for students who have met all other graduation requirements.

6.9.5 Diplomas are available when the high school orders and prepares diplomas for the graduating class.

6.10 GED

The GED is coordinated through the Nebo School District.

6.11 Students who have graduated from high school, either in the United States or in a foreign country, will not be allowed to enroll in a high school program at American Leadership Academy.

6.12 The school shall submit for approval to the Board of Trustees any changes to these approved graduation requirements before scheduling students.

7. Graduation Ceremony

American Leadership Academy recognizes that a student's graduation is the culmination of years of planning and successful completion of state and school requirements. The wearing of the cap and gown and participation in the ceremony awarding the certificate of completion or diploma shall be reserved for students who have met those requirements. The Board of Trustees recognize the importance of the completion of the requirements for a certificate of completion or diploma from American Leadership Academy and view it as an achievement that improves the community as well as the individual. The Board of Trustees wishes to recognize that achievement in a publicly celebrated graduation exercise.

7.1 Participation in the graduation ceremony is an opportunity and not a protected property right. Participation may be denied if final student checkout is incomplete, as a

disciplinary measure, or if a student refuses to comply with graduation ceremony standards established and developed at American Leadership Academy.

- 7.2 Participation in the graduation ceremony is optional and is not required.
 - 7.3 Caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner as designated by the school administration.
 - 7.4 Special needs students shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in ceremonies utilizing criteria based upon their unique circumstances.
 - 7.5 ALA Policy: *Participation in Graduation Exercises* provides additional guidelines for graduation exercises.
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References

Utah Code Ann. 53A-13-108.5 - Acceptance of credits and grades awarded by accredited schools.
Utah Code Ann. 53A-13-104 - Local school board remediation programs for secondary students.
Utah Administrative Rule R277-700-The Elementary and Secondary School Core Curriculum and High School Graduation Requirements.
Utah Administrative Rule R277-705 - Secondary School Completion and Diplomas Courses meeting the criteria for graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2011.
Students with Disabilities R277-705-5

Definitions

Accredited--Evaluated and approved under the Standards for Accreditation of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges or the accreditation standards of the State Board of Education.
Concurrent Enrollment--The enrollment by public school students in one or more college or university courses for credit by a high school student who continues to be enrolled and counted in average daily membership.
Early College--Participation by a public school student in the Concurrent Enrollment program on a college or university campus.
Early Graduation--Any secondary public school student, with the approval of the student, the student's parent or guardian, and an authorized local school official, who has completed all required courses or demonstrated mastery of competencies, graduates prior to the conclusion of the twelfth grade.
Transcript--An official document or record generated by one or several schools which includes, at a minimum; the courses in which a secondary student was enrolled, grades and units of credit earned, SAGE scores and dates of testing, citizenship and attendance records. The transcript is usually one part of the student's permanent or cumulative file which also may include birth certificate, immunization records and other information as determined by the school in possession of the records.