

Early Graduation Policy

Last Updated April 2025

WHEA recognizes that each student has unique academic goals and aspirations. Therefore, we have established the following approved guidelines to accommodate students who wish to graduate from our school at the end of their junior year, provided they meet certain criteria and follow a specific process. Our process aims to ensure that students who choose this option do so with careful consideration of their academic readiness and plans.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for early graduation at the end of their junior year, students must meet the following criteria:

- Earn only As and Bs in all freshman, sophomore, and junior courses.
- Students can not be chronically tardy and/or absent (10% or more of the school year).
- Provide a written request for early graduation to the school administration, signed by the student and their legal guardian, by May 1st of their 10th-grade year.
- Provide evidence of completed required state credits by August 1 of the planned completion year - at least 16 of the 24 required credits.
- The .5 Personal Transition Plan credit must be earned by the end of junior year.
- Demonstrate a consistent record of good behavior and conduct throughout their high school career as determined by the school administration.
- Meet with their current Advisor, MTSS Coordinator, Tier Level Facilitator, Associate Director, Director, College and Career Counselor, and at least one parent/guardian to discuss early graduation's academic and personal implications and develop a personalized plan for post-graduation goals.
- If an application to graduate early is approved, the College and Career Counselor and the student will develop a tailored academic plan for their final year. This plan may include advanced coursework, independent study, and other educational opportunities that align with the student's future goals.
- Students who successfully meet diploma requirements will be invited to participate in the graduation ceremony at the end of the accelerated graduation year.

This policy is subject to periodic review and revision by the school administration and may be updated as needed to reflect changing educational standards and practices.

Running Start Policy

WHEA values the academic growth and advancement of our students. We offer access to dual credit courses through Hawaii Community College to allow eligible students to earn college credits while still in high school. We encourage all eligible students to consider the benefits of participating in early college dual enrollment courses, as they can provide valuable college experience and advanced coursework opportunities. Students are advised to consult their college and career counselor for guidance on selecting appropriate courses and planning their educational pathways.

To maintain the integrity of these programs and ensure that students are academically prepared for the challenges of college-level coursework, we have established the following eligibility requirements for enrollment:

Eligibility Criteria:

- Students must be enrolled in WHEA and must have completed their sophomore year.
- Students must have demonstrated proficient-level competency in the majority of their courses to date (equivalent to 85%).
- Students must meet the college's academic standard threshold via an EdReady assessment or equivalent placement test (e.g., ACT with a minimum score of 19).
- Students must obtain written approval from their academic advisor and school director indicating that they are academically prepared for the rigors of college-level coursework.
- If the student is under 18, their parent or legal guardian must provide written consent for their participation in the Running Start dual enrollment program.
- Students must take courses that do not interfere with WHEA's school schedule.
- Students must adhere to the admission requirements and policies set forth by the partnering college or university offering the dual enrollment courses.
- Students must complete additional admission requirements, such as application forms or placement tests, specified by the partnering college or university.
- Enrollment in specific dual enrollment courses is subject to the availability of seats and the course offerings at the partnering college or university.

Financial Responsibility:

- Students and their families are responsible for any associated costs, including tuition, fees, textbooks, and transportation, unless otherwise specified by WHEA or the HCC. WHEA is offering to cover the related costs for at least one course per semester for each student enrolled.

Conduct and Behavior:

- Students must adhere to the code of conduct and behavior policies of both WHEA and HCC.
- Students must maintain good academic standing and conduct throughout the dual enrollment program. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.

Application Deadlines:

- Students must submit all required application materials, including completed application forms, by the specified deadlines set by the partnering college or university and WHEA.

Enrollment Limitations:

- Enrollment in dual enrollment courses may be subject to the college's limitations, including course prerequisites, availability, and scheduling constraints.
- Students enrolled in a dual enrollment college course are subject to the grading policies of the instructor/college, and the grade issued becomes part of not just the high school record but also the college transcript.
- Students must earn a minimum C in their college courses to enroll in the subsequent semester.
- Students must have a driver's license and/or their own mode of transportation to take an in-person college course.

This eligibility policy is subject to periodic review and revision by WHEA's administration to align with the evolving needs of our students and the requirements of our partnering college.