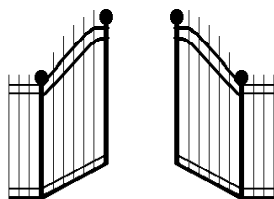


# Gateway Christian Schools

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## GUIDELINES FOR HIGH-SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS AND COURSE ASSIGNMENT

GATEWAY EXPECTS THE PARENT-TEACHER TO DIRECT THE STUDENT'S FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION. Our goal is to prepare a credible transcript representing the academic work of a student; whether for transferring credits to other high schools, or for entrance into colleges/universities, vocational/technical schools, the military, or employment. To do this we must evaluate the acceptability of a student's coursework. (For example, we do not consider "Spelling" to merit high-school credit, even though a high-school student may need to continue improving that skill.) Please note that it is not our design to prevent parents from pursuing whatever studies they feel would benefit their children. Nevertheless, it is our responsibility to inform parents of Gateway's standards for transcripts, diplomas, and graduation from our church-related school. (Not everything a student does should necessarily appear on a transcript, even though it may be of an academic nature.) EVALUATIONS ARE TYPICALLY SENT TO THE PARENT/GUARDIAN IN THE SPRING OF THE STUDENT'S JUNIOR YEAR AFTER THE FIRST SEMESTER GRADES ARE RECEIVED. Yours may arrive later, depending upon our workload. The following guidelines have been prepared to help steer your student toward a high-school diploma with a credible transcript, and to answer the most frequently asked questions:

**ALL Grade/Attendance Reports must be submitted for transcript requests. PLEASE ALLOW TWO WEEKS FOR US TO PREPARE THE TRANSCRIPT (for withdrawals, insurance purposes, transfers, scholarships, college applications, dual enrollment, etc.).**

### I. TIME REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

#### A. School Year

A school year is 180 days. A school day is a minimum of four (4) hours per day. We do not consider an 8-hour day as two (2) days. A day is a day, whether four or eight hours.

#### B. Credits

We consider a credit to be the *equivalent* of 150 classroom hours. This can include reading, writing, research, practice, performing, or computer use related to the subject. A 50-minute class each day for 180 days (the number of days in a school year) would equal 150 hours. It is not necessary, however, to do a course in a classroom setting or in 50-minute increments. Certain factors can increase the effectiveness of instructional time for each subject such as one-on-one tutoring, or a motivated student doing work on his/her own (as opposed to being in a classroom). For some students, a credit may require more than 300 hours and such a slower pace may enable a student to succeed who would otherwise make an unacceptable grade. **We consider eight credits to be the upper limit for the two-semester school year.**

#### C. 21 Credits to Graduate

Some schools take a more liberal approach to credits, others a more conservative one. Gateway adheres to a conservative approach and thus requires only **twenty-one credits** for high-school graduation (while some schools require more than 30). Although another school may give one credit each for Algebra 1A and Algebra 1B, Gateway would only transfer one credit total for Algebra 1. We reserve the right to assign credits according to our discretion.

**Note: Students graduating after August, 2012 will be required to complete 22 credits to graduate. Watch our website for details.**

#### D. How Many Credits Each Year?

A student in Gateway's home-education program is expected to take at least four credits per year (two per semester). **Twenty-one** credits are required to graduate. Traditionally, high school lasts four years; therefore, one might suppose a student should take about five courses each year. It may, however, be better to take more courses in the ninth and tenth grades, when a student has more time to pursue academics. As the student gets older, it is possible that apprenticeships, part-time jobs, and other activities will leave less time for academics. The student pursuing a college-track program will also need

more time to apply for scholarships and fill out applications for admission, etc. If the student transfers into another high school (public or private), placement tests may be required before the school will accept credits.

E. Summer School

A student may take a maximum of three summer-school credits per summer. A summer session is typically expected to take 55-60 days. Non-academic courses (such as Distributive Education, P.E. and Home Economics) will not be given summer credit unless accompanied by an academic subject during a summer session. Should a student transfer to another school system, no more than two credits will transfer for each summer. Please bear this in mind when choosing courses. Summer-school courses should be submitted on a separate Grade/Attendance Report by the end of August.

## II. SELECTING COURSES FOR CREDIT

A. Courses of Study

At the completion of high-school coursework, the *transcript* of a regular graduate will reflect either the “college-preparatory” or the “general” course of study. This is shown by the coursework on the transcript and the requirements met. (The college-prep course of study requires more advanced coursework and a 21 composite score on the ACT [or its equivalent] or acceptance by a college.) Successful completion of either course of study qualifies a student to receive the regular high-school diploma. Note: “Resource” or “remedial” courses will not be counted for credit toward the regular-diploma requirements. A special-needs student may be eligible for a “Special-Education Diploma.”

B. Earning Credits Before Ninth Grade

A student may acquire up to three high-school core-curriculum credits before he/she enters the ninth grade. However, not all core subjects are acceptable. For example, English, U.S. History, Physical Education, Health and Economics are among those that are *not acceptable*. High-school Physical Science before ninth grade would require Algebra I as a pre- or co-requisite to be *acceptable*. Algebra I or II, Geometry, World History and Foreign Language are other examples of *acceptable* subjects. If most or all of the student’s work is high-school level, he/she should be enrolled as a ninth grader.

C. Finishing High School Early

English units pose the greatest challenge for early completion of high school. An English credit in the summer puts a student on a fast track for early graduation, so advanced planning is essential. The minimum time for a student to complete all high-school course work is about two and one-half school years. This would require two summer sessions, each including one unit of English. We do not permit a student to take consecutive courses simultaneously (e.g., “Algebra I” and “Algebra II”).

Beware of advancing a student too quickly since a student may be required to take an ACT and score a specific minimum composite in order to graduate before his/her seventeenth birthday. A student attempting to graduate early who does not make a sufficient ACT score will be considered to have done too much too quickly and, therefore, not academically ready to graduate. In such cases, Gateway will not award a high-school diploma.

D. Block Schedule

Even though we do not encourage the “block schedule,” sometimes parents decide this is best for a student. With the “block schedule,” (also known as the “4 x 4 system”), a student takes four complete courses the first semester and four different courses the second semester. Generally, no more than one English credit, even on the block schedule, may be taken in a two-semester school year. Transfers from the “block schedule” to a traditional schedule or vice-versa require careful consideration.

E. Language Arts/English

All the language arts (literature, grammar, composition, vocabulary, spelling, poetry, etc.) are included in the one credit of English per two-semester year, or per summer school. Generally, only one credit of English can be earned in a regular (two-semester) school year, though a second credit of English may be completed in a summer session. Although some schools may give one credit for English and an additional credit for Literature or Creative Writing, Gateway adheres to a more conservative approach, transferring only one credit of English during the regular school year.

F. Physical Education

Physical Education credit is easily earned for home-educated students. Team sports, running/jogging, weight training, personal fitness programs (such as aerobics), martial arts, horseback riding, and bicycling are just some of the possibilities. Generally, one-half credit is assigned for one school year or one summer school, as students typically do about 75 hours of physical education in a year. If, however, 150 hours are completed, a full credit can be assigned. Transfer students who come to us with one credit of “Wellness” will be assigned .5 credit of “Health” and .5 credit of “Physical Education” and will therefore still need another .5 credit of Physical Education to graduate.

G. Economics

Economics includes the study of inflation; monetary policy; currencies; rates of exchange; how the market affects employment and vice versa; production, distribution and consumption of goods and services; banks; trade deficits; the price system; the national debt; etc. This requirement is not met by accounting, marketing, consumer math, home economics, or personal finance. Economics should include both microeconomics and macroeconomics. Microeconomics is the study of how individuals, households, and businesses affect the market and includes such concepts as wages, rents, profits, supply and

demand. Macroeconomics is the study of how larger entities (such as the government) affect national and international markets.

#### H. Electives

Electives are courses beyond the basic requirements, which serve to provide the student with an adequate number of total credits for high-school graduation. Various electives can be chosen according to the academic interests and preferences of the student. There are numerous possibilities for electives — though in some cases we may determine that certain “electives” do not meet academic requirements. Some things a student does would be more appropriately recorded in a student’s portfolio or resume than on a transcript (e.g. community service and volunteer work). Activities such as mission work, soul winning, study skills and ACT/SAT preparation while very worthwhile, will not be assigned academic credit. One elective often overlooked is a student’s part-time job. This credit is called “Distributive Education” (one credit requiring 300+ hours of work).

#### I. “Honors/AP” Courses

Gateway does not have “Honors” or “AP” courses. We do accept transfer credits from other schools which use these designations, but these courses will not have extra weight in Gateway’s GPA. Our GPA calculation is “unweighted” for all courses (i.e. based on A 4.0, B 3.0, etc.).

#### J. Dual/Joint/Concurrent Enrollment Courses at Colleges

Gateway’s Home-Education program is not intended for private instruction by anyone other than parents or guardians. Parents may, however, use Dual Enrollment (and/or tutoring) as a portion of their home-education program but not as a substitute for home education. With appropriate permission, it may be possible for high-school juniors and seniors to receive high-school and/or college credit for certain courses.

Generally, the college will require a letter of recommendation or permission from Gateway (or similar form signed by us) and a transcript (typically with appropriate grade-point average and ACT or SAT scores). For more information, check with the admissions counselor, website or catalog of the college where the student wishes to participate in dual-enrollment classes.

To receive the necessary paperwork from Gateway, please provide Gateway with the name of the college/university, the name of its program and a photocopy of the appropriate course description(s) from the college/university catalog. We are happy to provide this service to students who are properly enrolled and qualify for dual-enrollment according to Gateway’s standards. All grades must be current and up to date. Students must be enrolled with Gateway for the year in which they plan to pursue dual enrollment. Please allow two weeks for processing. Send necessary correspondence to Gateway: “ATTENTION: DUAL ENROLLMENT.”

### III. KEEPING EXCELLENT RECORDS

#### A. Record-Keeping

Parents, please keep originals of your student’s Grade/Attendance forms and copies of each year’s application for your records. Use a Checklist or Planning Sheet (available from Gateway) to monitor credits throughout the student’s high-school years. **IMPORTANT: Read our mailings and watch our website to stay abreast of current graduation requirements.**

#### B. Grade/Attendance Reports: Courses by Specific Titles

Grade/Attendance Reports are very important during high school; therefore, we require parents to submit one grade report per semester (i.e. twice a year) in a timely manner (and a separate Grade/Attendance Report for summer term, if applicable). This will help to insure that the student is on track and headed for graduation. It is also especially important that the parent list courses by specific titles (e.g., Algebra I, instead of “Math,” Biology, instead of “Science,” and World History, instead of “History” or “Social Studies”) on the application and Grade/Attendance Report forms.

### IV. PREPARING FOR GRADUATION

#### A. Graduates

**For seniors, final grades are due at least two weeks before the graduation ceremony** in which he/she will participate. When submitting your last grade reports for graduation, please include a note stating that these are the final grades for graduation and the date on which the student expects to graduate. Information about any graduation ceremonies we know about (in the state of Tennessee) will be mailed in the fall of the current school year to all registered seniors who qualify for spring graduation ceremonies. If the student is not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, he/she may not receive the information in time to meet the deadline for signing up, ordering invitations, caps and gowns, etc. **Gateway does not have a graduation ceremony for the Total Home Education Department.**

#### B. Six-Month Rule

Seniors with Gateway are required to enroll at the **beginning** of the school year (August) in which they plan to graduate. **Seniors must be registered a minimum of six months in order to receive a diploma from Gateway.** (Exception: **RETURNING** students who register at the **BEGINNING** of the school year may be able to graduate at the end of the first semester.) Seniors who wait until December 15 or later to enroll *may not be eligible to graduate*. Please note that many graduation ceremonies take place in early May. Seniors enrolling with Gateway for the first time should be registered by the first of November (at the latest) to complete the required six months in sufficient time to participate in such a ceremony.

Often, the coordinators of these ceremonies do not let students “walk” in the ceremony if they have not first received diplomas indicating completion of all course work.

C. Final Grade Deadline for Seniors

**Any senior whose yearly or summer-school grades are not received by August 31 must register for the new school year and continue with more work.** This may require the student to fulfill an updated set of graduation requirements. Note that the official year of graduation will be the school year in which the student was last registered and finished graduation requirements. This will mean little to some. To others, it is important to graduate with “the class of \_\_\_\_” (dates on class rings, tassels, etc.).

## V. TRANSCRIPTS FOR COLLEGE

A. Transcripts vs. Portfolios

A transcript reflects the individualized progress of a student’s academic work. It is not designed to display all of the student’s activities. It is best for a transcript to be simple and to the point—more is not always better. Non-academic information such as character training, mission work, community service, volunteer work, descriptions of course work, achievements and honors should be assembled by the parent/teacher in a portfolio which may accompany the transcript for college or scholarship applications, employment records, etc.

B. College & Scholarship Applications, Transcripts, etc.

Parents of students planning for college should begin investigating scholarship information even prior to the student’s junior year. Gateway may be able to answer your questions, but it is your responsibility to research and seek out scholarships. Gateway offers assistance with transcripts, calculating GPA’s and class ranks, signing scholarship applications, assistance with National Merit Scholarship applications and other scholarships, as well as other forms. Feel free to call the Guidance Counselor’s office for help with these needs. Be aware that two weeks are required for us to respond to these requests, so **read the fine print on deadlines!** For the **first ten transcripts** we send there is no fee. For additional transcripts, an offering of \$2 per transcript is suggested. Requests for multiple transcripts are best submitted in writing (mail, e-mail, or fax). Address to: “ATTENTION: HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR.”

C. Final Transcripts & Diplomas

When the student graduates from high school, please do not assume we know that you want a transcript sent or to which college or university you wish the final transcript sent. Many students apply to several schools during the year. It is important that you contact us after your student’s graduation, and tell us where the final transcript should go. Students who participate in organized graduation ceremonies may receive multiple “certificates” and/or “diplomas” from different sources. **A diploma from another source does not mean that the student has graduated from Gateway Christian Schools.** If final grades are not in and all graduation requirements are not met, the student has not graduated, and we cannot provide a final transcript.

D. Preparing for College Courses

Parents who have their students on the college-preparatory track should stay current with the requirements of the Tennessee State Board of Regents (or equivalent entity which sets standards for other colleges and universities). If a student is going to a private college/university, the parents should have the most current catalog listing all the requirements for admission to the school (e.g. ACT/SAT requirements and pre/co-requisites).

E. ACT/SAT

The ACT and SAT need not be taken every time they are offered. Use the **Gateway high school code: 431-421** when filling out the application for the ACT or the SAT so that both the school office and the family will get a copy of the scores. Colleges and universities may consider only the highest score the student makes, but when a student applies for scholarships, all the scores may be averaged together. This may be a hindrance if the student has several test scores in the lower range which were taken early “for practice.”

ACT	<b>www.act.org</b>	(319) 337-1270
SAT	<b>www.collegeboard.com</b>	(609) 771-7600

Remember, these are just some of the general guidelines. The above cannot possibly cover all the possibilities and/or questions which may arise in your individual case. Home education by its very nature cannot be “pigeonholed,” and we are thankful that this is so. We hope that this information will be of some help to you. Please keep these guidelines on file for reference. If you have questions that have not been addressed, we will be most happy to help you. If you are in doubt about anything, please contact us by phone, e-mail (gateway\_@bellsouth.net), fax or mail. We will assist you however and whenever we can.

Check out the high-school section on Gateway’s website:

**www.GatewayChristianSchools.com**  
(Click “Total Home Education Program”)