

Parents of 8th Grade Students:

It is approaching time to choose your child's degree pathway! Next year, your child will choose whether they want to work towards a traditional high school diploma, or take additional classes to earn an academic, distinguished academic or career and technical education endorsement.

Each diploma option will prepare students to be successful after graduation, whether that be in the workforce, a career and technical training program, or college to further education. Also, beginning with the class of 2022, students who earn an academic or distinguished academic diploma endorsement from a public high school will automatically qualify for admission into any of the state's public universities.

Listed below are the diploma requirements and the different endorsement options. Please review with your child. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school counselor, Karly Spires.

Mississippi Diploma Requirements and Endorsement Options:

Traditional Mississippi High School Diploma

- Earn 24 credits (Carnegie Units) in a selection of required classes including English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology or Computer Science, College and Career Readiness, Health, Art, Physical Education and electives

Traditional Diploma + Career and Technical Education (CTE) Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Earn four credits from the same CTE program
- Achieve at least a 2.5 grade point average
- Score at silver level on ACT WorkKeys
- Successfully complete a dual credit course, a work-based learning experience or earn a national credential

Traditional Diploma + Academic Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Score at least 17 on ACT English section
- Score at least 19 on ACT Math section
- Achieve at least a 2.5 grade point average

- Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earn at least a C in the advanced course

Traditional Diploma + Distinguished Academic Endorsement

- Earn 28 credits
- Score at least 18 on ACT English section
- Score at least 22 on ACT Math section
- Achieve at least a 3.0 grade point average
- Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earn at least a B in the advanced course

Alternate Diploma

Mississippi public schools also offer an alternate course of study for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. Approximately 1 percent of students have a Significant Cognitive Disability. This course of study leads to the Alternate Diploma, which recognizes that a student has completed high school. The Alternate Diploma is not equivalent to a traditional high school diploma and is not recognized by postsecondary entities that require a traditional high school diploma.

Parents play a key role in helping their children advance successfully through middle and high school to graduation. Additional information can be found at www.mdek12.org/ESE.

Sincerely,

Karly Spires, M.Ed.

Ripley Middle School Counselor

718 Clayton Rd.

Ripley, MS 38663

662.837.7959 (office) 662.837.0251 (fax)