



Poland Regional High School

**Program of Studies and Course Descriptions
2008-2009**

"Graduation requirements should exceed current state minimums in all areas."

The PRHS Curriculum Committee Report, 1998

PRHS Graduation Requirements

PRHS is transitioning away from a graduation system based on accumulating credits and towards a system where students must demonstrate competencies - a certain depth of skill, knowledge and understanding - within each subject area. These competencies are necessary for students to achieve the expectations of the Maine State Learning Results.

LEARNING AREA	COURSES THAT MUST BE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE GRADUATION LEVEL COMPETENCY
English	Humanities 3 and Senior English or AP English Literature or AP English Language
Math	Math 4 or Math (4)/Physics
Science	Integrated Science 2 and 2 additional science credits
Social Studies	Humanities 3 and Comparative Government and Economics
World Language	French 2, Latin 2 OR Spanish 2
Visual/Performing Arts	2 credits of Visual and Performing Arts <i>Beginning with the class of 2011: Introduction to Visual and Performing Arts and 1 additional VPA credit</i>
Physical Education	Fitness for Life OR Fitness and Conditioning <i>Beginning with the class of 2009: Wellness 1, 2 & 3</i>
Technology	Introduction to Technology and ½ additional technology credit
Health	Health: Trends for Teens OR Championship Health <i>Beginning with the class of 2009: Wellness 1, 2 & 3</i>

Additional Requirements and Notes

- **24 course credits** and **4 Roundtable credits** are required for graduation. The typical number of credits earned from all required courses is 22.
- All students must pass **Roundtable** each year, including the **Freshman M.A.P.I.T. Project**, the **Sophomore Exhibition**, the **Junior Career Portfolio** and the **Senior Celebration**.
- All students must actively participate in at least **four co-curricular activities**, or one co-curricular activity per year, over the course of their enrollment.
- Students may earn credit toward graduation for completing an approved equivalent to one or more of the requirements listed above.

"...The call to improve Maine high schools put forth in *Promising Futures* has truly been heard at Poland Regional High School... During my visits I have been particularly impressed by the extent to which personalization of curriculum, instruction and assessment is occurring at Poland Regional High School. The emphasis on personalization allows the faculty at Poland to maintain high standards for all students while also engaging students where their interests and aspirations are... This notion of equity of access to a rigorous and challenging secondary experience is yet another underlying theme of *Promising Futures* that the leadership and faculty of Poland Regional High School are trying to implement."

Maine Commissioner of Education, J. Duke Albanese, June 2002

Maine State Learning Results Requirements

For The Classes of 2008, 2009 and 2010:

In order to receive a high school diploma, students must demonstrate that they have met the content standards of Maine State Learning Results for the following content areas: English Language Arts, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

A Year by Year Overview

Freshman Year

In their first year at PRHS, students will build their academic foundation while focusing on the interpersonal skills necessary for a successful community. The question, "What makes a successful community?" will be explored deeply and from various perspectives throughout the freshman year. Whenever possible, all freshmen are required to enroll in seven courses per semester as well as Roundtable. PRHS students must earn at least six credits a year to be on track for the 24 credits needed to graduate in four years. Each class meets every other day for seventy-eight minute blocks; the Roundtable meets one-half hour every day. A team of teachers representing math, science, English, social studies and usually special education will work with a team of about 80 students to develop the skills and knowledge needed to flourish in high school. To enable these four-five teachers to know their students well and to deepen possibilities for learning, they will "loop," or stay with the same team of students for two years. One period every other day will be dedicated to academic support in core classes. Academic support will allow time for tutoring, remediation and additional challenges, such as the Honors Seminar. Beyond core classes, freshmen are required to take Introduction to Technology, Wellness 1 and Integrated Visual and Performing Arts (IVPA). Students are also strongly encouraged to continue, or begin, their studies in world language.

Typical Freshman Course of Studies

Integrated Science 1
Humanities 1*
Integrated Math 1
Freshman Roundtable
Integrated Visual and Performing Arts
World Language (Spanish, French or Latin)
Wellness 1/Introduction to Technology
Team Academic Support
*One English and one social studies credit

Sophomore Year

Sophomores will continue to learn essential skills and knowledge while honing their abilities to solve problems. Whenever possible, all sophomores are required to enroll in seven courses per semester as well as Roundtable. PRHS students must earn at least six credits a year to be on track for the 24 credits needed to graduate in four years. All sophomores will take Math 2-3, a double-block math course designed to prepare students with more math earlier in their scholastic careers. Sophomores will continue to work with a team of teachers and students in their core classes, when possible the same teachers from their freshmen year. A sixth block will be set aside for academic support, including tutoring, remediation and additional challenges, such as the Honors Seminar. Sophomores should continue or begin their study of world languages and fine arts; two years of both are required for graduation, and many colleges recommend three-four credits of a world language. Sophomores might also consider completing their wellness requirement by enrolling in Wellness 2.

Typical Sophomore Course of Studies

Integrated Science 2
Humanities 2*
Integrated Math 2-3**
Sophomore Roundtable
World Language (Spanish, French, or Latin)
Art or Wellness course(s)
Team Academic Support
*One English and one social studies credit
**A two-credit math course

Junior and Senior Years

Junior and senior schedules may be as diverse as the students themselves. Although it depends on what credits a student already has, most students will take a course in the humanities, math and science. We also encourage students to continue with their world language study, since many colleges require 3 or 4 credits of a world language. **Juniors and seniors must enroll in a minimum of six courses each semester – as well as Roundtable.** In exceptional circumstances, a senior may petition in writing for a reduced schedule. Reduced schedules must be approved by the principal. In preparation for life after high school, juniors and seniors should expect to face learning opportunities that are increasingly sophisticated, rigorous and independent. **Seniors who will complete all graduation requirements and who still have room in their schedules are also strongly encouraged to take at least one college course.**

Typical Junior Course of Studies

Junior Roundtable
Humanities 3*
Integrated Math 4
Science course

Plus up to **four** selections each semester from the areas below.

*One English and one social studies credit.

Typical Senior Course of Studies

Senior Roundtable
Senior English or AP English Literature or AP English Language
Comparative Government & Economics
Science course

Plus up to **five** selections each semester from the areas below.

Humanities – Electives

Science – Electives

Technology – Electives

**World Languages – French, Latin,
Spanish**

Math – Electives

**Support Services – Academic Support
Special Education, Student Aide**

General Electives – Accounting, Business

Vocational – LRTC Offerings

Wellness – Health, Physical Education

Visual & Performing Arts – Art, Drama, Music

**Other Offerings – Junior/Senior Individualized
Team, Independent Study, Distance Learning**

University/College Courses

Grading and Reporting

at PRHS

What is standards-based grading?

Like other schools in Union 29, PRHS is standards based. Standards are the skills and knowledge all students need in each content area (such as art or science) to earn a diploma. Our standards are based on the Maine Learning Results and national and local standards. Your child must demonstrate competency in the course standards in order to earn credit in a class.

SAMPLE HUMANITIES CLASS GRADEBOOK	ASSESSMENT #1	ASSESSMENT #2	ASSESSMENT #3	ASSESSMENT #4	ASSESSMENT #5	ASSESSMENT #6	ASSESSMENT #7	TREND GRADE IS CALCULATED FOR EACH STANDARD
	History	3		3	3.5	3.5		
Government	1		1	2.5		2	2.5	2.5 (CO-)
Geography	3	3	3.5	3.5			4	3.8 (DS)
Average of all the standards gives an overall grade for the class								3.4 (AD)

Once my child has completed assignments and assessments for a standard, how is the grade for that standard calculated?

When we calculate a final standard grade for students, we are trying to find a "true score" for that student, a number that reflects what that student actually knows and can do.

We calculate a "true score" of learning by using a trend analysis. This way of calculating a score focuses on whether or not a student "gets it" by the end of a unit. This system would not penalize a student for mistakes made early in the learning process but would emphasize that the student learned the content by the end.

Teacher judgment is an important element of grading. After observing students' work over several months and scoring many assessments, teacher judgment is essential to determining an overall grade.

How is an overall grade in a course calculated?

Unlike the K-8 schools in Union 29, PRHS does not have a standards-based report card. As a result, we average the grades your child earns on each standard in a course to calculate an overall grade. We use the following ranges to determine the overall grade for a course:

- DS- to DS+ = 3.7 to 4.0**
- AD- to AD+ = 3.2 to 3.6**
- CO- to CO+ = 2.5 to 3.1**
- NC = 2.4 and below**

What kinds of grades can I expect to see on my child's schoolwork?

Like the K-8 schools in Union 29, your child will be graded on homework, tests, lab reports, essays, and other tasks using a 4-point scale. The numbers are used to describe the level of performance your child has achieved.

4	Exceeds the standard: The student's work includes complexity, sophistication, originality, depth, synthesis or application that clearly exceeds what would be expected to meet the standards in this assessment. The work may not be perfect.
3.5	Exceeds the standard: The student demonstrates progress toward exceeding the standard.
3	Meets the standard: The student's work fundamentally meets the standard being assessed and the assessment requirements.
2.5	Partially meets the standard: Student demonstrates progress toward meeting the standard.
2	Partially meets the standard: The student has demonstrated a substantive attempt to meet the standards but needs more time or effort to achieve competency.
1.5	Does not meet the standard: The student shows progress toward meeting the standard with help.
1	Does not meet the standard: The student does not demonstrate understanding or did not attempt the assessment.

7-8th Grades

Not-Posting
Grades

