

HOUSE BILL 5 & Foundation High School Plan (FHSP)

What is House Bill 5? House Bill 5 (HB 5) was signed into law by Governor Perry on June 10, 2013. HB 5 dramatically revises the number of high school student assessments required for graduation as well as overall graduation plans in Texas. In the long-term, these revisions will impact the state accountability system for schools, charters and districts.

When will these changes take place? The changes to testing are now in effect. The new high school graduation requirements will start in the 2014-15 school year (freshmen entering 9th grade 2014-2015).

What is the Foundation Plan? The Foundation High School Program replaces the current minimum, recommended, and distinguished graduation plans. Additionally, it allows students to earn endorsements in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), business and industry, public services, Arts and humanities and multidisciplinary studies.

What courses are included in the Foundational Plan diploma? The requirements of the new Foundation diploma are specifically outlined in the MISD Course Register. Additional support documents are soon to be released.

Does graduating with the Foundation Plan qualify my student for 4-year educational institutions? Yes. All students graduating with the Foundation Plan will be eligible to apply to all in-state, out-of-state, public and private four year colleges and universities. Parents and students are responsible for determining whether they have necessary requirements for post-secondary institutions. Students who complete the Distinguished Level of Achievement on the Foundation Plan are eligible for admissions to in-state public universities under the Top 10% automatic admissions provision.

What about the Top 10% rule? Students who complete the Distinguished Level of Achievement on the Foundation Plan are eligible for admissions to in-state public universities under the Top 10% automatic admissions provision. Algebra II is required to be eligible for the Top 10% rule.

TRANSITION TO FHSP

Does my student have to switch to the new Foundation Plan? All students who will enter high school in 2014-2015 (entering 9th grade in 2014-2015) are required to graduate on the FHSP.

Can my current high school student change their graduation plan to the Foundation Plan? Students may request to change their graduation plan from their current graduation plan. More information will be made available to current high school students.

How do I know if I should switch to the Foundation Plan? Parents and students should check the requirements of any post high school institution they plan to attend prior to requesting to switch plans.

If I am a current high school student and want to switch to the Foundation Plan, what should I do? If you are a current sophomore or junior, confirm the requirements of any university you are interested in prior to requesting to change your graduation plan. Parents and students are responsible for determining whether they have necessary requirements for post-secondary institutions.

Current high school students should complete the registration process with their high school counselor, meeting all required deadlines. Students may submit a request to change graduation plans and adjust their course requests accordingly. Paper work will be made available to all current high school students in the spring of 2014. Changes will not be made to current graduation plans of current high school students without school counselor review and recommendation. Counselor staff will help students identify their interests and match them to an endorsement plan. Parent approval is required. Please be patient as we work through the registration process.

Why haven't I received more information on current high school students and their option to transition to the new FHSP? The State Board of Education just recently approved the final FHSP on January 30, 2014. With that final

approval came numerous changes. MISD has been working to put together comprehensive reference materials for parents and students. The Guidance and Counseling website has had information posted since December that students would be able to transition to the new FHSP starting with the 2014-2015 school year. Because of the late approval of the FHSP by the SBOE, MISD high school campuses have moved forward with registration based on the student's current graduation plan. Students will be allowed to adjust their graduation plan later in the spring. Information will be posted on the district Guidance and Counseling website and on high school campus websites when it becomes available.

ENDORSEMENTS

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Does a student have to choose one of the five endorsements on top of the Foundation Plan? MISD believes choosing to graduate with an endorsement will help position your student for success in his or her future. However, a student is not required to graduate with an endorsement and can elect to graduate with only the Foundation Plan diploma after 10th grade and with parent and administrative permission.

When will students choose an endorsement? Students will select an endorsement during the 9th grade registration process. That selection will be confirmed with the counselor during the registration process. Students are allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career within certain windows by completing appropriate paper work.

Can my student change their endorsement? Yes. Students will be allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career within certain windows. Some of the endorsements have different core course requirements in the math, science, English and social studies area.

If I want more than one endorsement, which core courses do I select? To keep your options open, you may want to select the core courses that will qualify you for multiple endorsements. The most rigorous core course requirements are in the STEM endorsement area.

Do I have to choose the Arts and Humanities endorsement since I'm going to be in band/orchestra/choir all 4 years? No. You will likely qualify for the Arts and Humanities endorsement based on your completion of band/orchestra/choir classes, but you can select another endorsement to pursue as well.

Which endorsement will colleges prefer? The FHSP diploma is still very new. Colleges will still look at specific core courses taken, the rigor of those courses, student GPA, SAT/ACT scores, extracurricular activities, and student involvement to evaluate the student on an individual basis. Students and parents need to be aware of any admission requirements for the university or college they plan to attend.

Are students only allowed to graduate with one endorsement? No. Students may earn multiple endorsements.

What if I am not sure which endorsement I want? The Guidance and Counseling Department will help guide parents and students in the four year planning process and in selecting an endorsement.

Will my endorsement limit me from enrolling in certain colleges? The FHSP diploma is still very new. Colleges are still likely to look at specific core courses taken, the rigor of those courses, student GPA, SAT/ACT scores, extracurricular activities, and student involvement to evaluate the student on an individual basis. Students and parents need to be aware of any admission requirements for the university or college they plan to attend.

What happens if the student changes their mind when they are a Junior or Senior? Students are allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career but should select core courses that do not limit their options.

What if I/my student am/are undecided and do not want to specify an endorsement? TEA requires that all 8th graders select an endorsement upon entering 9th grade. For MISD students, this will occur initially during the 9th grade registration process. However, students are allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career within certain windows.

DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT

What is the Distinguished Level of Achievement? Under HB 5, students can obtain a Distinguished Level of Achievement that can be attained in any of the above-mentioned endorsement programs by completing an additional science and math credit (which must include Algebra II). Students who complete the Distinguished Level of Achievement are eligible for admissions to in-state public universities under the Top 10% automatic admissions provision. To earn a Distinguished Level of Achievement, a student must have 4 credits in math (including Algebra II), 4 credits in science, all remaining curriculum requirements and at least one endorsement. To be eligible for the top 10% provision for Texas automatic admission provision, students must earn the Distinguished Level of Achievement.

SPECIFIC COURSE QUESTIONS

How do I know if I should take World Geography or World History? World Geography will continue to be the 9th grade course offered. Although not required, students are still encouraged to take both courses. If your plan does not allow you to take both, there is a comparison of the two courses in the MISD Register in the Social Studies department listings.

Since I don't have to take both World Geography and World History, can I take U.S. History as a sophomore? No, U.S. History is still a junior level course. Students can select as tenth graders a course that would meet other FHSP requirements (World History).

Can I do two things like band and athletics? Cheerleading and choir? Can I be in the STEM endorsement and still be in band? There are numerous options that may allow for combinations of courses across endorsements. In some cases, you may need to take courses outside the school day through distance learning to make this work.

Why did MISD decide not to require Speech? MISD supported the intent of the legislature to allow students more flexibility in their graduation plans, giving them the opportunity to explore interests and possible career fields. Students are encouraged to take speech or professional communications if their schedule permits. In addition, Professional Communications can count as an elective in several endorsements.