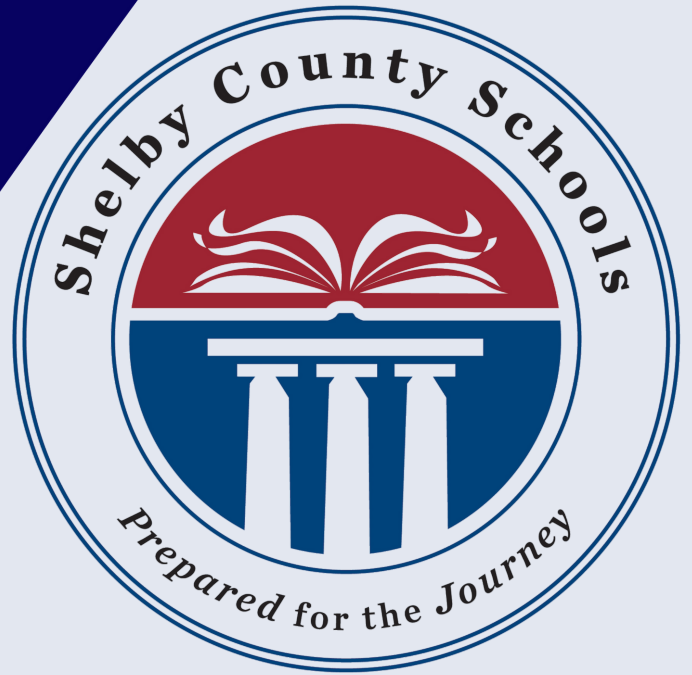




2025-2026

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS ACADEMIC GUIDE

Table of Contents

Instructional Standards and Curriculum	3
Textbooks and Instructional Resources	3
Instructional Transparency	3
Academic Integrity	3
Valid Courses	4

Elementary School

Entry Age	6
Literacy Act	6
Promotion and Retention	7
Numeracy Act	7
Grading Practices K-5	8

Middle School

Transitioning to Middle School Successfully	10
Academic Expectations	10
Uniform Grading Plan	11
Promotion, Retention, and Standards Recovery	11
Gifted Services and Challenge Courses	11
Math Options and High School Implications	12
Controversial Texts in the English Language Arts Classroom	12
Academic Writing	12
Athletic Participation	13
Transferring from Non-Traditional Setting	13
Non-Traditional Athletic Students	13

High School

Alabama High School Graduation Requirements Class of 2026 & 2027 Option A	16
Alabama High School Graduation Requirements Class of 2026 & 2027 Option B	17
Alabama High School Graduation Requirements Class of 2028 & Beyond Option A	18
Alabama High School Graduation Requirements Class of 2028 & Beyond Option B	19
Additional High School Guidance	20
Valedictorian and Salutatorian Selection	22
Shelby County Schools Advanced Endorsement Requirements	23
Grading Plan	23
Grade Point Average Calculation	24

Shelby County Schools 2025-2026 Academic Guide

Shelby County Schools Semester Exam Policy	24
Guidelines for Students Transferring Into Shelby County Schools	25
High School Gifted Education Program	27
Middle School Offerings for High School Credit	27
Controversial Texts in the English Language Arts Classroom	28
Writing Practices in Shelby County Schools	28
Dual Enrollment and Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit	29
Dual Enrollment and Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Requirements	30
Advanced Placement Program Guidelines	32
Virtual Shelby County	34
Credit Recovery and Summer School	36
Non-Traditional Athletic Students	37
NCAA Division I, II and III Eligibility	37
Core Courses for Students on the Essentials Pathway	38
Required Courses for Students on the Essentials Pathway	40
Required Core Courses for Students on the Alabama Alternate Standards (AAS) Pathway	41
Required Non-Core Courses for Students on the AAS Pathway	43
Additional Non-Required Available AAS Courses	43
AAS Super Seniors – Grades 13-15 (Optional)	44

Career Technical Education (CTE)

Career Technical Education CTE	46
Approved Career Technical Education Course Substitutions	47

High School / Career Tech Fees

Fees	48
----------------------	----

Instructional Standards and Curriculum

In the State of Alabama, academic standards and their corresponding courses of study are developed by the Alabama State Department of Education. This process occurs in a regular, orderly way in each area of study, and the work includes both local educators and ALSDE personnel. Once these standards and courses of study are reviewed and adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education, it is the responsibility and prerogative of the duly-elected Shelby County Schools Superintendent of Education to adopt curricula and instructional practices that best deliver state standards to our students. The superintendent will ensure that a diligent, equitable, fair-minded process governs the selection and procurement of instructional materials, both core and supplemental. Shelby County Schools retains the right to reconsider, review, and potentially remove any instructional resource that might be deemed objectionable.

Textbooks and Instructional Resources

The acquisition and maintenance of textbooks and other instructional resources are critical tasks in our school district. These materials support and foster quality teaching and greater student achievement. Shelby County Schools takes a thoughtful, diligent approach to evaluating, acquiring, and maintaining instructional materials. Furthermore, our work is informed and guided by state statute and best practices. Instructional resources are reviewed by both central and local school personnel and evaluated for overall quality and appropriateness before any decisions regarding adoption are made. In accordance with state textbook law, Shelby County Schools will conduct this work in an ongoing fashion, emphasizing good judgment and faithful stewardship regarding the acquisition, maintenance, and disposition of all textbooks and instructional materials.

Instructional Transparency

In keeping with recent state legislation and in accord with our long-held belief that parents are essential partners in the education of their children, Shelby County Schools and its teachers will ensure that instructional resources are made available to parents.

Academic Integrity

Student work is first and foremost a reflection of student learning. Shelby County Schools expects students to complete their own work without undue aid or assistance from other people or virtual resources such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). Unless a specific task or assignment involves appropriate collaboration, students should ensure that the work they submit is their own. Failure to meet expectations regarding academic integrity may result in natural academic consequences.

In instances involving AI specifically, Shelby County Schools expects the following guidelines to be honored:

- As a guiding principle in this area, AI tools should be used to enhance, never replace, a student's own critical thinking, analysis, or original work;

- Acceptable, ethically responsible uses of AI include activities such as brainstorming ideas, receiving research assistance (provided it is cross-referenced against established credible sources), and checking one's accuracy prior to submission;
- Students may not use AI to complete assignments without meaningful personal effort or submit AI-generated content as their original work;
- If used in academic research, AI-generated summaries, essays, code, or other similar work product may not be submitted without proper citation;
- Teacher may allow or disallow AI tools in their respective classrooms and will communicate clearly with their students about the use of such tools;
- When AI tools are allowed, students must clearly disclose and properly cite the role of AI in the final work product.
- Inappropriate or unethical use of AI tools constitutes academic misconduct and may result in natural academic consequences.

For information regarding student management issues such as attendance and discipline, please see our companion document, the Shelby County Schools Student Code of Conduct and Attendance.

Valid Courses

The Alabama State Department of Education publishes and maintains a master file of all valid courses available to be offered in our public schools. Shelby County Schools, like all districts, draws its course offerings from the ALSDE valid list. It is important to remember, however, that not all state-approved courses are offered locally. The ALSDE master list, along with important information about each course, may be found here:

[ALSDE Valid Course File](#)

Elementary School

Entry Age

Parents often have questions about enrolling their students in public school for the first time, especially regarding age appropriateness. The following guidelines are offered to help with this important decision:

- First Class Pre-K is a statewide initiative aimed at greater school readiness. These programs are not offered at every school site, and space is limited. There is a lottery system in place for those parents seeking enrollment for their children. To be eligible, students must be four years-old on or before September 1 of the academic year. First priority will be given to students living in the physical zones of our First Class Pre-K programs. For more detailed information, you may explore the following link: [First Class Pre-K](#)
- Kindergarten is offered at all elementary schools in our district, excluding our three intermediate schools which serve only the upper grades. Kindergarten focuses largely on school readiness and the development of the whole child. To be eligible, students must be five years-old on or before September 1 of the academic year.
- First grade is mandatory for school-age children in Alabama. Students who are six years-old on or before December 31 of the academic year may be enrolled in first grade. Please remember that students from 6-17 are required to attend school.

Parents should be aware that a child's initial transition to school is a significant one. This transition involves and depends heavily upon professional educators, parents, school communities, and certainly the students themselves. School readiness is greater when all of these stakeholders are successfully aligned. Parents are encouraged to be informed about and supportive of the ongoing transition and readiness efforts enacted by their local school. Our shared goal centers around helping children care for themselves, regulate their behaviors appropriately, and grow academically and socially.

Literacy Act

The *Alabama Literacy Act* was passed in 2019 to foster improved reading among all students in Alabama public schools. Specifically, the goal of the act is that all students read proficiently by the end of the third grade. Strong foundational reading skills are critical at this point because students need them in order to engage and make meaning from print—in all subject areas.

Toward this end, Shelby County Schools has adopted *Open Court Reading* as its comprehensive reading instruction program. This program has been reviewed and approved at both the state and local levels, and we believe it gives our students and their teachers a sound instructional framework rooted in the science of reading.

Students in kindergarten through third grade will have their reading skills assessed three times during the school year. This assessment data will inform and guide instruction while also identifying students who are struggling and may be in need of more intensive support and intervention. Parents will be informed of their child's progress. Our ongoing intervention efforts

are informed by and compliant with state guidelines. Beginning with the spring of 2024, the act stipulates that students in the third grade who are not reading proficiently may be retained rather than moving on to the fourth grade.

Promotion and Retention

At the end of each academic year, students will be evaluated and considered for promotion (to the next grade) or retention (remaining in the current grade). This highly individualized review will be conducted by a team of educators at each school site, and parents will be informed and appropriately involved throughout. The school-based team will consider multiple data points (classroom achievement, progress on formative assessments, attendance, etc.) when determining whether a student should be promoted or retained. Please note that it is our desire for all students to make adequate progress each year and move on with their classmates.

As indicated in the previous section, retention in the third grade may be necessary for some students based on the provisions of the *Alabama Literacy Act*. To reiterate, if a student is not reading proficiently at the end of third grade, he or she may be retained based on this factor alone. There are, however, other possible pathways for these students to advance to the fourth grade. Typically, this would involve summer school for struggling students culminating in another opportunity to demonstrate the necessary proficiency. For more detailed information on this subject, you may consult this helpful document from the Alabama Reading Initiative: [2022 Literacy Act FAQs for Families](#).

Numeracy Act

The *Alabama Numeracy Act* was passed in 2022, and implementation of this new initiative is ongoing. This act is designed to meet the foundational math needs of all elementary students in Alabama public schools. Since these skills are critical both for individual opportunity and the overall well-being of our state and its economy, the *Alabama Numeracy Act* proposes a comprehensive framework for improving mathematics achievement in grades K-5. The plan will include math coaches in every elementary school, quality instructional standards and curriculum, training for both teachers and administrators, intensive intervention for struggling students, and accountability to ensure schools and systems are making adequate progress.

Grading Practices K-5

In the primary grades (K-2), Shelby County Schools practices standards-based grading. This approach means that a parent will receive progress reports detailing the student's mastery of certain foundational skills, competencies, and standards. We believe that standards-based grading most nurtures academic growth and development among our youngest elementary school students. In the upper elementary grades (3-5), student progress is reported in a more traditional way in each subject area. The goal of any grading approach remains the same: accurately capturing and reporting student learning and achievement.

Extended learning opportunities (ELOs), established in Alabama Administrative Code Rule 290-3-1.03, currently include only one partner, School Ministries of Alabama, and operate in select elementary schools where opportunities have been sought out and established.

Middle School

Transitioning to Middle School Successfully

If the middle school years could be summed up in one word for most students, that word would be CHANGE. Students change dynamically during these years in various ways, just as the school experience itself changes dramatically from the elementary grades to middle school. Several factors are worth considering and discussing relative to this critical transition:

- Students will have several different teachers and will rotate classes;
- Time management, scheduling, and organization become even more important;
- Students may interact with far more students than they did previously;
- Successfully managing interpersonal relationships will be very important;
- Middle school students will be encouraged to advocate for themselves more frequently;
- Learning to express ideas and engage in civil, idea-driven discussion is critical;
- Students will be expected to abide by the district's Code of Conduct;
- Regular attendance greatly improves a student's likelihood of success;
- Informed parental guidance will make the transition to middle school easier.

Our goal is to make sure that the middle school experience is responsive, challenging, empowering, equitable, and engaging for our students. Our teachers and building leaders work hard to create welcoming environments where students are able to explore and grow as learners.

Academic Expectations

The middle school academic experience is characterized by a deeper, more rigorous exploration of various subject areas, both core and elective/exploratory. Cultivating the habits outlined in the previous section will equip students to manage this shift in their learning. Some of the key features related to academic success in middle school are listed below:

- Students will have the opportunity to explore new areas of interest;
- Homework, especially in core areas, will be expected, graded, and meaningful;
- Academic integrity, doing one's own work, is essential and expected;
- Students will likely begin to define areas of strength and areas where growth is needed;
- Learning as an ongoing process, highlighting student growth, should be the standard;
- Students will be expected to demonstrate greater responsibility for their own learning;
- Ongoing, formative assessment should guide and inform instruction;
- Targeted intervention may be required for students who are struggling in a particular area;
- Math, English Language Arts, science, social studies, and physical education are all required each year for middle school students; in addition, elective/exploratory opportunities will be offered to students as well;
- Students should anticipate the introduction of nine-weeks comprehensive exams in core subjects. State assessments such as ACAP Summative will also continue in middle school.

As the level of rigor rises during the middle school years, the development of strong academic habits is more important than ever for student success. Regular attendance, classroom engagement, and the timely completion of assignments are powerful learning tools.

Uniform Grading Plan

One key difference students will notice during middle school is the approach to classroom grading. Because students' grades should reflect academic achievement in the classroom first and foremost, teachers will employ the following categorical grading plan for computing nine-week averages:

- GOLD Grades = Major tests and work products/projects will comprise 60% of a student's grade;
- SILVER Grades = Quizzes and secondary assignments will comprise 30% of a student's grade;
- BRONZE Grades = Homework and minor classroom will comprise 10% of a student's grade.

Semester averages are comprised of the two nine-week averages, each of which accounts for half of the final semester grade. The four quarterly averages each account for 25% of the overall yearly average.

Promotion, Retention, and Standards Recovery

At the end of each academic year, middle school students will be evaluated for promotion or retention. Multiple indicators (classroom grades, formative and summative assessment data, etc.) will be considered by each school leadership team when making these important, highly individualized decisions regarding each student's progress. Students facing possible retention may have the opportunity to pursue standards recovery during the summer. This approach would allow them to address the academic areas in which they need to demonstrate greater progress. You may contact your local school should you have additional questions about this process.

Gifted Services and Challenge Courses

Shelby County School System complies with the guidelines set forth in the "gifted" section of the Alabama State Department of Education's Administrative Code (see 290-8-9-12) for referral, consent, evaluation, eligibility determination, placement and service delivery options, gifted education plan, administration, caseload, and procedural safeguards. Specifically, middle school students identified as gifted are served through advanced course offerings ("challenge" courses) taught by qualified regular or gifted educators who undergo specialized professional development. In addition, these courses may also be available to students who are not currently identified as gifted provided there is available space. Your local school will have more detailed information about this subject and specific course offerings.

Math Options and High School Implications

Mathematics is a core course and required every year for middle school students. In Shelby County Schools, it is our default practice to enroll all seventh graders in Accelerated Mathematics 7. Understanding why we do this is critical. If a student completes Accelerated Mathematics 7 and 8, then he or she will be presented with greater freedom and more rigorous options for

mathematics study at the high school level. For example, a student who completes Accelerated Mathematics 7 and 8 may choose to pursue the following math track in high school: Geometry, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, and (AP) Calculus. Students who do not complete the accelerated math track in middle school, however, will be required to take Algebra 1 following Geometry. Their ability to access certain higher-end math offerings is thereby limited. In addition, a student's access to certain advanced science courses may also be impacted by their math track. Parents can expect to work collaboratively with their school regarding decisions about accelerated math in middle school.

Controversial Texts in the English Language Arts Classroom

Middle school students may encounter works of literature or nonfiction which encourage them to confront unpleasant realities, historical or otherwise. Reading, writing about, and discussing difficult topics may occur in any course but are especially likely in the English Language Arts classroom due to the nature of the subject itself. When this sort of instructional challenge arises, parents and students can expect the following from Shelby County Schools:

- Advance notice of the text(s) to be studied;
- Specific details about potentially objectionable language and/or content;
- Candid rationale as to why the text is important for whole-group study;
- Instructional practices and approaches that reflect awareness and sensitivity;
- Possible alternative texts/assignments.

Shelby County Schools is committed to developing an engaging, inclusive classroom culture by honoring the inherent value and life experiences of all our students.

Academic Writing

Writing is a fundamental skill necessary for developing prepared students and for fostering critical thinking. The following premises should guide writing instruction in our middle schools:

- Students should write often, both formally and informally;
- Teachers and students should discuss and define purposes and expectations for writing;
- Students should be given multiple and varied opportunities to practice and improve;
- Assessment should be focused on authentic growth rather than simple task completion;
- Teacher feedback should be communicated clearly and in a timely fashion.

Academic writing may seem like an intimidating task, but we are committed to equipping students as capable writers for further academic and workplace endeavors.

Athletic Participation

Seventh and eighth grade students may decide to participate on school-based athletics teams. The Alabama High School Athletic Association governs in all matters of athletic eligibility, and some sports will conduct player evaluations as part of selecting a team. Students are encouraged to remember that academic performance may impact their eligibility to participate in school-based sports. For more detailed information on this subject, speak with your local school's athletics director.

Transferring from Non-Traditional Setting

Some middle school students may transfer into the public school setting after having spent previous years in either a home or church school. When such transfers arise, the student evaluation will begin with a complete review of all relevant educational records. School leadership and parents will work collaboratively in determining the most appropriate placement for such students based on factors such as age and demonstrated educational achievement.

Non-Traditional Athletic Students

The Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) allows non-traditional students to participate in interscholastic contests and practices at the public school that serves the area in which the student's parent or legal guardian resides. Non-traditional students are subject to enrollment and eligibility requirements as determined by Shelby County Schools and the AHSAA. Some of the most critical information for non-traditional athletes enrolled in Shelby County School follows herein:

- Students must be enrolled at the start of the semester in the school for which they are physically zoned to attend;
- Middle school students must be enrolled in one course taken virtually;
- ACCESS, the state's virtual education option, will be used to deliver elective coursework to non-traditional athletes;
- Students will be expected to come to campus for testing when necessary so that exams in their course may be properly supervised;
- Non-traditional athletes are expected to abide by the Shelby County Schools Code of Conduct when on campus or participating in any school-sanctioned activity;
- Parents and students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with all eligibility guidelines by visiting the AHSAA website.

- Shelby County Schools supports individualized learning plans only for qualifying, full-time students who are traditionally enrolled. These individualized plans include the area of Special Education, Gifted Education, English as a Second Language, as well as areas covered by a 504 plan. Non-traditional students are not eligible for such support due to the limited nature of their enrollment.

For additional information, interested students should contact the school administration at the middle or high school in the zone of residence.

High School

ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS*(Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(8) and (9)(a))***GRADUATING CLASS OF 2026 and 2027
OPTION A**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		
English Language Arts	Four credits to include:	Credits
	English 9	1
	English 10	1
	English 11	1
	English 12	1
	English Language Arts credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
English Language Arts Total Credits		4
Mathematics	Three credits to include:	Credits
	Geometry or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra I or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra II, or its equivalent/substitute	1
	One credit from:	
	Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics or mathematics-credit eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses	1
Mathematics Total Credits		4
Science	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Biology	1
	A physical science (Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)	1
	Two credits from:	
	Alabama Course of Study: Science or science credit-eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses	2
Science Total Credits		4
Social Studies	Four credits to include:	Credits
	World History	1
	United States History I	1
	United States History II	1
	United States Government	0.5
	Economics	0.5
	Social Studies-credit eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
	Students are required to earn a passing score on the Civics Exam.	
Social Studies Total Credits		4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology or Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	1
Career Preparedness		1
Health Education		0.5
Arts Education		
Career and Technical Education		3
World Languages		
Electives		2.5
Total Credits		24
* Effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce: Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA. ** Effective with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the college and career readiness indicators approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.		

February 11, 2025

ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS*(Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(B) and (B)(a))***GRADUATING CLASS OF 2026 and 2027
OPTION B**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		
English Language Arts	<u>Four credits to include:</u>	<u>Credits</u>
	English 9	1
	English 10	1
	English 11	1
	English 12	1
	English Language Arts credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
English Language Arts Total Credits		4
Mathematics	<u>Two credits to include:</u>	<u>Credits</u>
	Geometry or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra I or its equivalent/substitute	1
Mathematics Total Credits		2
Science	<u>Two credits to include:</u>	<u>Credits</u>
	Biology	1
	A physical science (Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)	1
Science Total Credits		2
Social Studies	<u>Four credits to include:</u>	<u>Credits</u>
	World History	1
	United States History I	1
	United States History II	1
	United States Government	0.5
	Economics	0.5
	Social Studies credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
Civics Exam Requirement	Students are required to earn a passing score on the <i>Civics Exam</i> .	
Social Studies Total Credits		4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology <u>or</u> Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	1
Career Preparedness		1
Health Education		0.5
Career and Technical Education	Credits must be earned from an approved CTE Program of Study, resulting in CTE Completer status.	3
Electives		6.5
Total Credits		24
* Effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce: Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA. **Effective with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the college and career readiness indicators approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.		

February 11, 2025

ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS*(Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(8) and (8)(a))***GRADUATING CLASS OF 2028 AND BEYOND
OPTION A**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		
English Language Arts	Four credits to include:	Credits
	English 9	1
	English 10	1
	English 11	1
	English 12	1
	English Language Arts credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
English Language Arts Total Credits		4
Mathematics	Three credits to include:	Credits
	Geometry or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra I or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra II or its equivalent/substitute	1
	One credit from:	
	Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics or mathematics credit-eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses	1
Mathematics Total Credits		4
Science	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Biology	1
	A physical science (Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)	1
	Two credits from:	
	Alabama Course of Study: Science or science credit-eligible courses from Career and Technical Education/Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses	2
Science Total Credits		4
Social Studies	Four credits to include:	Credits
	World History	1
	United States History I	1
	United States History II	1
	United States Government	0.5
	Economics	0.5
	Social Studies credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
Civics Exam Requirement	Students are required to earn a passing score on the Civics Exam.	
Social Studies Total Credits		4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology <u>or</u> Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	1
Career Preparedness	Students are required to complete an accompanying financial literacy examination as part of this course.	1
Health Education		0.5
Arts Education Career and Technical Education World Languages		3
Electives		2.5
Total Credits		24
<i>*Effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce: Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA.</i> <i>**Effective with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the college and career readiness indicators approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.</i>		

February 11, 2025

ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

(Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-02(8) and (8)(a))

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2028 AND BEYOND OPTION B

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		
English Language Arts	Four credits to include:	Credits
	English 9	1
	English 10	1
	English 11	1
	English 12	1
	English Language Arts credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
English Language Arts Total Credits		4
Mathematics	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Geometry or its equivalent/substitute	1
	Algebra I or its equivalent/substitute	1
Mathematics Total Credits		2
Science	Two credits to include:	Credits
	Biology	1
	A physical science (Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)	1
Science Total Credits		2
Social Studies	Four credits to include:	Credits
	World History	1
	United States History I	1
	United States History II	1
	United States Government	0.5
	Economics	0.5
	Social Studies credit-eligible options may include Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/postsecondary courses/SDE-approved courses.	
Civics Exam Requirement	Students are required to earn a passing score on the Civics Exam.	
Social Studies Total Credits		4
Physical Education	Beginning Kinesiology or Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)	1
Career Preparedness	Students are required to complete an accompanying financial literacy examination as part of this course.	1
Health Education		0.5
Career and Technical Education	Credits must be earned from an approved CTE Program of Study, resulting in CTE Completer status.	3
Electives		6.5
Total Credits		24
* Effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce: Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA. **Effective with the graduating Class of 2026, the Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the college and career readiness indicators approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.		

February 11, 2025

Additional High School Guidance

- All students must receive one full year of the Beginning Kinesiology curriculum. Waivers are offered through one year of JROTC, one year of show choir, or two fall semesters of marching band (including Visual Ensemble).
- Students who fail a course are strongly encouraged to pursue credit recovery during the summer since opportunities to do so during the academic year are not guaranteed.
- Students are required to earn credit for both Career Preparedness A and Career Preparedness B with Financial Literacy (including a state-mandated exam). We will help our students meet this state mandate in a combination of ways including credit acceleration and both virtual and traditional course options as deemed necessary. Career Preparedness A and B will be treated as a pass/fail course and will not be reflected in a student's GPA calculation.
- Beginning with the graduating class of 2026, all students will be required to earn a College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCR) in one of the following ways:
 - Benchmark score in any subject on the ACT College Entrance Exam;
 - Qualifying score of three or higher on an Advanced Placement (AP) Exam;
 - College credit while in high school (dual enrollment);
 - Silver or gold level on the ACT WorkKeys Exam;
 - Career technical industry credential;
 - Career and Technical Education (CTE) completer status (three qualifying courses in one career pathway, minimum average of 70 in each of the three);
 - Military enlistment;
 - Completion of an in-school apprenticeship program;
 - Qualifying score of four or higher on an International Baccalaureate (IB) Exam.
- In partnership with the University of Montevallo, Shelby County Schools will provide a DE/DC health offering which fulfills the state requirement and allows students to earn one hour of college credit at no cost to the student or parent. Qualifying students will be enrolled in this health course by default.
- All high school seniors are required to complete a comprehensive civics exam. The test consists of 100 multiple-choice items and will be administered during the student's required government course. Unless exempted via waiver, students are required to pass the comprehensive civics exam.
- Students who wish to pursue extended learning opportunities (ELOs) in areas not currently supported at their local school may speak to their counselor about the application process. ELOs may neither compete with or replace established school-based offerings or programs. For more detail, see *Alabama Administrative Code* Rule 290-3-1.03.
- Graduates who demonstrate proficiency in both English (qualifying ACT subtest score) and at least one other world language (qualifying exam score) are eligible to receive the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. For more information, speak with your school's counselor.

- Through the aggressive pursuit of dual enrollment/dual credit (DE/DC) courses, some students may find themselves eligible for graduation ahead of their cohort classmates. In such instances, students should coordinate closely with their school's counselor in advance and will be required to make formal application for early graduation.
- Students who earn the required 24 credits to receive an Alabama high school diploma and attain a College and Career Readiness Indicator are eligible to graduate early. All early graduates are invited to attend the commencement ceremony in May of the academic year during which the final credits are earned. Students graduating in three years of high school or less must forego participation in senior activities other than the graduation ceremony.
- In Alabama, all students earn the same diploma regardless of the pathway they follow. Students choosing to follow the recently created **Workforce Pathway** (Option B) have different requirements than those students on Option A. Key differences and important information about Option B are listed below:
 - Two credits of math and two credits of science (as opposed to four on Option A)
 - CTE completer status (three credits in a CTE program, grade of 70 or higher)
 - Remaining elective credits may be used to take other courses
 - Option B is designed to prepare students for direct employment in their chosen field upon graduation.
 - As such, students who choose to transition to Option B should be aware that most four-year colleges and universities require upper-level math and science beyond what is required on this pathway. It is the responsibility of students and parents to verify admission requirements for a particular college or university.
 - Students pursuing Option B will not be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian honors at graduation.
 - At present, Option B may be pursued by general education students only.
 - Students on this pathway will be required to participate in mandatory state testing.
 - Students wishing to transition to Option B will be required to meet with their local school counselors and discuss ramifications. Parent approval is also required.
- Beginning with the graduating class of 2032, students will be required to earn one full credit in an approved computer science course or complete a course with embedded computer science skills and experiences.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Selection

The Shelby County School district encourages all students to attempt the most challenging coursework available. The following criteria are used in the selection of the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Honors Graduates:

- **Valedictorian** – The student at each Shelby County high school who satisfies the requirements for the Advanced Endorsement and who attains the highest cumulative grade point average in his/her graduating class. Students transferring into a Shelby County school during their senior year are not eligible for Valedictorian designation.
- **Salutatorian** – The student with the next highest cumulative grade point average who satisfies the requirements for the Advanced Endorsement.
- **Honors Graduates** – Students who satisfy the requirements for an Alabama High School Diploma or Advanced Endorsement and who also attain a cumulative grade point average of 4.0, or are in the top 5% of the graduating class, which includes the Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Class rank is determined by ranking each student's overall weighted grade point average within the graduating class. Final senior class ranking is calculated at the end of the first semester of the senior year. Valedictorian and Salutatorian determination will be announced after the posting of first semester grades. Only traditionally enrolled students pursuing Option A will be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian honors.

Shelby County Schools Advanced Endorsement Requirements

The following coursework is required to receive the ***Shelby County Schools Advanced Endorsement***:

- 3.0 minimum GPA
- Option A diploma pathway
- Pre-Calculus
- Chemistry
- At least two credits among AP, Dual Enrollment, or IB, one of which must be earned in a core area
- At least one credit of world language AND a second credit from either world languages or fine arts.

The graduating classes of 2026 and 2027 may qualify for the Shelby County Schools Advanced Endorsement under either new or previously published guidelines. See your counselor if you have any questions.

Grading Plan

Because students' grades should reflect academic achievement in the classroom, classroom teachers will measure academic achievement in a variety of ways over the course of a given grading period. To foster a consistent, equitable method of classroom assessment, Shelby County high school teachers will implement the following categorical grading plan for computing nine week averages:

- GOLD Grades = Major tests and work products/projects will comprise 60% of a student's grade;
- SILVER Grades = Quizzes and secondary assignments will comprise 30% of a student's grade;
- BRONZE Grades = Homework and minor classwork will comprise 10% of a student's grade.

Semester averages will be comprised of two nine week grading periods each accounting for 40% of the final average and a cumulative semester exam accounting for 20% of the final average.

Grade Point Average Calculation

The grade point average (GPA) is computed using the following table:

Regular Courses	Honors Courses	Dual Credit Courses	AP Courses
A = 4.0	A = 4.5	A = 4.5	A = 5.0
B = 3.0	B = 3.5	B = 3.5	B = 4.0
C = 2.0	C = 2.5	C = 2.5	C = 3.0
D = 1.0	D = 1.5	D = 1.5	D = 2.0
F = 0.0	F = 0.0	F = 0.0	F = 0.0

Grade point average and credits for transfer students cannot exceed Shelby County graduation credits and GPA calculation policies.

Shelby County Schools Semester Exam Policy

Because Shelby County Schools believes that students need experience taking summative exams, all of our high schools will administer semester exams to students in all grades, 9-12. Semester exams are cumulative and will comprise 20% of a student's final semester average.

Seniors who earn a final average of 80% or higher in a given course are considered **exempt** from the second-semester exam in that particular course. Seniors taking an AP course and choosing not to sit for the AP exam may also qualify for this exemption if academic requirements are met. Additionally, any senior who earns an approved Alabama State Department of Education College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCR) will be allowed to exempt one exam during the second semester regardless of his or her average in the course. Finally, local school principals may choose to offer targeted, exam-based incentives as deemed appropriate by the superintendent or his or her designee.

Guidelines for Students Transferring Into Shelby County Schools

Students who transfer to a Shelby County high school from another school must meet the Alabama graduation requirements to receive a diploma from the State of Alabama.

1. Transfer students coming in with Honors, AP/IB, or DE/DC courses:
 - Students receive the weight indicated on the transcript for Honors/AP/IB/DE/DC courses. The transcript is not changed. Credit awarded cannot exceed 1.0 for AP/IB and .5 for Honors.
 - Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit courses will receive an additional .5 GPA weight. Dual Enrollment credit weight cannot exceed .5 per three hour course.
 - Weighted credit of 1.0 will be given for AP/IB courses even if former school did not award additional quality point.
 - If former school did not award additional quality points for Honors courses, no additional quality points will be awarded by Shelby County Schools.
2. Middle school transfer credits from an accredited transfer school will be accepted as they appear on the official transcript and will count towards GPA and graduation credit.
3. Transfers from Non-Accredited Schools (to include home/church/virtual schools)*:
 - The evaluation of any student entering a Shelby County high school from a non-accredited institution shall begin with a thorough review of all available standardized test data. In the absence of a transcript from an accredited school, such data provides an objective snapshot of the student's abilities and achievement. Standardized test data that may be considered include the following: ACT and any of its products, SAT, and any other nationally-normed standardized instrument that may be deemed appropriate;
 - Elective credits (defined as any credits earned in non-core courses) will be accepted without any validation beyond the transcript;
 - Credits earned in core courses shall be validated in the following way(s):
 - Any student whose standardized test results demonstrate benchmark-level proficiency in a given core area will be awarded credit for courses completed in that subject area. For example, if a student has scored a 19 on the English subtest of the ACT, his or her English credits earned at the non-accredited school will be deemed valid;

- In the absence of satisfactory standardized test data, students will be required to earn a passing score on targeted exams to demonstrate proficiency in various core academic areas. For example, if a student coming from a non-accredited school has most recently completed Geometry, he or she would be asked to take a cumulative exam provided by the school in which the student wishes to enroll;
- Whenever possible, the most advanced courses completed in each core academic area will be used to validate the credits earned in the respective natural prerequisites. For example, if a student earns a passing score on a Chemistry exam, then his or her Physical Science credit would also be considered valid without an additional exam because both are physical sciences;
- When courses in the same academic area are qualitatively different based on standards associated with the subject, additional exams shall be required to validate credits. For example, if a student earns a passing score on a Chemistry exam, his or her credit for that course will be accepted. However, a Biology exam will be required to validate the credit earned for that course because the two courses focus on separate standards. While Chemistry was taken more recently, the additional exam is necessary because the two courses are qualitatively different; one is a physical science while the other is a life science. This may be true of other courses regardless of the grade level taught.

***Shelby County Schools are accredited by Cognia, and transfer credits from properly accredited schools will be accepted without further validation. Any school or school setting not accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education or other organizations approved by the Alabama State Board of Education shall be considered a non-accredited school for the purpose of transfer of credit. Shelby County Schools follows guidelines set forth in the *Alabama Administrative Code* for validating and awarding credit to students coming from a non-accredited school or school setting.**

High School Gifted Education Program

High school students identified for gifted services according to the *Alabama Administrative Code* will be served indirectly in Shelby County Schools. The program goals are as follows:

- The maintenance of each student's gifted identity;
- Meeting students' academic needs through advanced core curriculum course offerings provided by qualified regular or gifted educators;
- Providing counseling services for college and career preparation through the local school guidance department.

Middle School Offerings for High School Credit

Any student who transfers into Shelby County with high school credit awarded during his or her middle school years will have that credit honored and recorded on the high school transcript, provided the previous school is properly accredited.

While middle schools currently use yearly averages, high schools use semester averages. Therefore, a student's transcript will be recalculated to reflect a semester grade. Semester grades are a simple average of the two grading periods within a given term.

Controversial Texts in the English Language Arts Classroom

High school students may encounter works of literature or nonfiction which make them confront certain unpleasant realities, historical or otherwise. Reading, writing about, and discussing controversial topics may occur in any course but are especially likely in the English Language Arts classroom due to the nature of the subject itself. When this sort of instructional challenge arises, parents and students can expect the following from Shelby County Schools:

- Advance notice of the text(s) to be studied;
- Specific details about potentially objectionable language and/or content;
- Candid rationale as to why the text is important for whole-group study;
- Instructional practices and approaches that reflect awareness and sensitivity;
- Possible alternative texts/assignments.

Shelby County Schools is committed to developing an engaging, inclusive classroom culture by honoring the inherent value and life experiences of all our students.

Writing Practices in Shelby County Schools

Shelby County Schools believes that writing is a fundamental skill necessary for developing truly prepared students and for fostering critical thinking skills. While recognizing that both the teaching of writing and the practice of writing may employ multiple approaches, the system firmly endorses the following uniform premises and strongly encourages their implementation in every school:

- Routine practice using both formal and informal writing is necessary to a student's developing skills as a learner.
- Teachers and students should discuss and differentiate among the diverse purposes and expectations of writing in each specific content area.
- Students should be offered multiple and varied opportunities to practice and hone their skills as a writer in every subject area, every year.
- Teachers should strive to create a classroom environment which values students' growth rather than simple task completion.
- A teacher's expectations accompanied with teacher feedback for writing assessments should be communicated clearly to students.

Although a seemingly daunting task, Shelby County Schools is committed to equipping students as writers for further academic or workplace endeavors.

Dual Enrollment and Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit

The Alabama State Board of Education has authorized the establishment of dual enrollment programs between public colleges and universities and local boards of education.

The following dual enrollment options may be offered:

- Dual enrollment (DE) is available to students who would like to earn college credit. DE students may take college courses and will receive college credit hours for all coursework. DE students' courses and grades will not be reflected on the high school transcript.
- Dual enrollment/dual credit (DE/DC) is available to students who would like to earn both high school and college credits for the same course. DE/DC credit courses which contribute toward graduation requirements will be added to the high school transcript and will be calculated into the GPA.

Shelby County Schools currently has a dual enrollment/dual credit agreement with the following colleges and universities:

- Auburn University
- Auburn University in Montgomery
- Central Alabama Community College
- Jefferson State Community College
- Lawson State Community College
- The University of Alabama
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- University of Montevallo
- University of North Alabama
- University of South Alabama
- University of West Alabama
- Wallace State Community College

DE/DC coursework, assessment, and grading are consistent with college level instruction.

Students participating in DE/DC courses are required to follow college procedures and complete required college forms and applications.

Students participating in DE/DC courses are required to adhere to Shelby County Board of Education's Student Code of Conduct and Attendance.

Students interested in participating in DE/DC must meet the criteria, and the student and his/her parent/guardian must complete and sign the required forms for participation.

Dual Enrollment and Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Requirements

A student is eligible for Dual Enrollment or Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit in the Shelby County School System, if the student meets the following criteria:

1. The student must meet and maintain the entrance requirements and prerequisites for admission established by the post-secondary school.
2. The student must satisfy both GPA and any other admission standards required by the sponsoring college or university.
3. The student must coordinate all Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit coursework with his or her counselor. Additionally, all required paperwork must be completed and signed in a timely fashion. Forms may be found in the counselor's office.
4. Students may earn DE/DC credit during the school year (on- or off-campus) or during the summer. In either case, advance coordination with a school counselor is required. For students who pursue DE/DC aggressively, scheduling accommodations may be necessary.

Students who aggressively pursue Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit opportunities may in some cases find themselves presented with the opportunity to complete all necessary high school graduation requirements in less than four full years (eight semesters). In such cases, those students who wish to pursue early graduation must work with their counselors in advance to indicate their intention and discuss their plan for finishing early. This is best done during the course selection process in the year prior to the student's anticipated early graduation. In such cases, students and their parents will be required to complete and submit a signed document indicating their intent to graduate early. Counselors and administrators will oversee this process at each high school. Students who graduate early are not eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors, but they are invited to attend regular graduation observances in May. Students who graduate early are not eligible to participate in other school-sponsored senior activities.

5. Only those dual enrollment credits that contribute toward graduation may be applied to a student's high school transcript for dual credit. However, students may work with their counselor to pursue dual enrollment courses during the regular school day.
6. When choosing college coursework for DE/DC purposes, students must be selective and thoroughly informed to ensure that they are not duplicating the content and standards of a course they have already taken for credit in high school. For example, a student who has completed AP U.S. History may take an introductory college course covering the same content and standards, but he or she should NOT expect high school credit for the course since credit in that very specific area has already been awarded previously. Discuss this issue with your school counselor if you need more guidance.

7. Any approved Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit course, whether core or elective, will receive an additional .5 quality point adjustment and will be calculated into high school cumulative GPA.
8. Three credit hours at the postsecondary level shall equal a 1.0 credit at the high school level.
9. Payment of the current rate of tuition and fees per credit hour, books, transportation, and equipment will be the responsibility of the student.
10. The student must notify the school counselor of any changes to his/her DE/DC schedule, including any decisions to withdraw from a DE/DC course during the semester.
11. For more information regarding DE/DC options, see your school counselor.

Advanced Placement Program Guidelines

The Advanced Placement Program (AP) is an academic program of college-level courses and examinations for high school students. Students enrolled in AP courses may take the College Board AP Exam and have an opportunity to earn college credit based on accepted exam scores. Participation in Advanced Placement courses also offers a competitive advantage in college admissions. All students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses are strongly encouraged to take the AP Exam which may be administered online.

The Advanced Placement curriculum offers a variety of courses allowing students to take advanced classes based on their areas of interest. AP courses require students to use advanced research and communication skills as they exercise their creative, problem-solving, and analytical acumen. College readiness is fostered as students develop various academic habits in response to the accelerated rigor and pace.

Considerations and Necessities

1. Review your transcript for prerequisite courses as specified in the academic guide;
2. Value academic achievement and rigor as evidenced by your GPA;
3. Possess good study habits, strong motivation, and above-average reading and writing skills;
4. Be prepared to complete summer reading and assignments;
5. Discuss your AP decisions with your parent or guardian;
6. Sign an AP agreement outlining expectations.

Grading

For students enrolled in an AP course, weighted GPA is awarded at the end of each semester:

A = 5 points	D = 2 points
B = 4 points	F = 0 points
C = 3 points	

The grading policies for individual AP courses will be distributed during the first week of school.

Academic Integrity

The nature of AP work often requires that students complete graded assignments outside of class. Students are expected to complete their own work (assignments and homework included) without the assistance of others unless the instructor specifically allows collaboration.

Parent/Teacher/Student Expectations

AP classes are college-level courses; as such, students are expected to be responsible for their own behavior, assignments, and relationships. Parents are welcome to conference with AP teachers, but students are expected to use this opportunity to develop the independence needed in the college setting they will soon encounter. The goal of all AP classes is to give students the opportunity to develop the academic and personal skills needed for success in high school and college. Parents need to encourage their children to plan their schedules wisely so that they do not take an excessive number of AP courses during any one year.

Exam Policy for Advanced Placement Courses

- Students are strongly encouraged to take the AP exam in May for each AP course in which they are enrolled or completed earlier in the year.
- Students in certain AP courses may be REQUIRED to take the AP exam or complete summative portfolios or projects (this information will be made available during course selection).
- The College Board's AP exam schedule will be made available at the beginning of the school year; the AP exam schedule is also on the school system's website. It is the student's responsibility to plan his or her schedule to avoid conflicts.
- Exam fees are the responsibility of the parent or guardian and are due by October 1st.
- Students who opt to not take an AP exam in a given course will complete an end-of-course final examination which will comprise twenty percent of their second semester grade; the current exam exemption policy for second-semester seniors also applies to AP courses.

AP Program Agreement

Students (and their parents/guardians) who wish to enroll in AP coursework must complete, sign, and submit the AP program agreement found here:

<https://forms.gle/TL2nSW4x3yxPZBcu5>

Virtual Shelby County

Remote Learning in Shelby County Schools

Overview

In accordance with state law, Shelby County Schools will offer a virtual option for students in grades 9 - 12. Course options for Virtual Shelby will be based on Alabama state standards. Options will be limited as compared to those offered in the traditional setting; however, the courses will provide a pathway to the state-approved high school diploma. High school students participating in Virtual Shelby will have the option to attend the Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) in the traditional format.

Admission Requirements

Students who wish to participate in Virtual Shelby must meet the following criteria:

Rising 9th Graders:

- Cumulative 80 average;
- No failed courses;
- Full-year commitment to the Virtual Shelby remote learning format;
- Signed parent agreement and orientation;
- Transportation to attend in person for mandatory state assessments when required.

Rising 10th - 12th Graders:

- Cumulative 2.5 or greater GPA at year-end;
- No credit deficiencies in required courses;
- On-track to graduate with their academic cohort;
- Full-year commitment to the Virtual Shelby remote learning format;
- Signed parent agreement and orientation;
- Transportation to attend in person for mandatory state assessments when required.

Virtual Instruction

Certified teachers from Shelby County Schools and/or ACCESS will serve as the designated virtual teachers using a virtual platform to provide content. Content will be released quarterly, and virtual students will be expected to progress through their courses independently. Students will be expected to engage with their content teachers during the school day as scheduled and directed. Teachers will monitor student progress, clarify instructional content, and conference with students. Students seeking NCAA eligibility should talk with a counselor or speak directly with the NCAA Clearinghouse. Students on individualized learning plans (i.e., 504, IEP, LEP, GEP) will receive support and accommodations as stipulated in the student's plan.

Grading, Assessment, and Attendance

For virtual learners, adequate academic progress constitutes attendance. Adequate progress may be defined in the following specific terms:

- Maintain an actual grade above 60% for each course;
- Be no more than 5% below the target completion for each course;
- Work actively in each course on a weekly basis.

Failure to make adequate academic progress may result in required intervention or even a mandatory return to the traditional setting. Virtual learners are also expected to complete their

own work without undue help from any other person. Giving or receiving inappropriate help constitutes academic misconduct and will be addressed accordingly. Virtual Shelby students enrolled in the system's proprietary virtual provider (such as Edgenuity) will be graded on the same scale as traditional students and according to the system's categorical grading plan defined elsewhere in this document. Students participating in state-sponsored ACCESS courses will follow the grading guidelines set forth by the teachers of record for those classes. All students are expected to participate in state assessments.

Extracurricular Participation

Athletic eligibility for virtual learners will be determined just as it is for traditional students. Residency requirements and adequate academic progress both impact eligibility for all students who wish to participate in school-sanctioned sports. Virtual learners will be allowed to participate in clubs and other activities before and/or after school hours as determined by the local school and its programs. Additionally, virtual learners who participate in school-sanctioned sports may come to campus during the school day for any scheduled athletic period associated with their given team(s).

Virtual Shelby Agreement

Students (and their parents/guardians) who wish to enroll in Virtual Shelby must complete, sign, and submit the program agreement found here:

<https://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/o/scs/page/virtual-shelby>

Credit Recovery and Summer School

Credit Recovery

Credit Recovery during the academic school year is intended for seniors and select freshmen. Sophomores, juniors, and most freshmen are expected to attend summer school for failed courses. As an initial guideline, a maximum of one (1) credit per academic year may be earned through Credit Recovery during a student's academic career.

Summer School

Shelby County Schools will provide a summer school option aimed primarily at recovering skills, standards, and/or credits for students who have failed to make adequate progress during the academic year. Summer school decisions will be made on an annual basis and predicated on the needs of students throughout our district.

Non-Traditional Athletic Students

The Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) allows non-traditional students to participate in interscholastic contests and practices at the public school that serves the area in which the student's parent or legal guardian resides. Non-traditional students are subject to enrollment and eligibility requirements as determined by Shelby County Schools and the AHSAA. Some of the most critical information for non-traditional athletes enrolled in Shelby County School follows herein:

- Students must be enrolled at the start of the semester in the school for which they are physically zoned to attend;
- High school students must be enrolled in two courses at the local school, one of which will be an athletics-specific physical education course;
- High school students will be expected to attend their athletics course in person;
- ACCESS, the state's virtual education option, will be used to deliver elective coursework to non-traditional athletes;
- Students will be expected to come to campus for testing when necessary so that exams in their courses may be properly supervised;
- Non-traditional athletes are expected to abide by the Shelby County Schools Code of Conduct when on campus or participating in any school-sanctioned activity;
- Parents and students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with all eligibility guidelines by visiting the AHSAA website.
- Shelby County Schools supports individualized learning plans only for qualifying, full-time students who are traditionally enrolled. These individualized plans include the area of Special Education, Gifted Education, English as a Second Language, as well as areas covered by a 504 plan. Non-traditional students are not eligible for such support due to the limited nature of their enrollment.

For additional information, interested students should contact the school administration at the middle or high school in the zone of residence.

NCAA Division I, II and III Eligibility

Each high school maintains a current list of NCAA core courses on the individual school's NCAA High School Portal. Students who plan to pursue athletic eligibility after high school should register with the NCAA Clearinghouse by creating an account at www.eligibilitycenter.org. Additional information regarding specific eligibility requirements can be found online at www.ncaa.org/studentfaq. To learn more about different NCAA Divisions, visit www.ncaa.org/divisions. Counselors and coaches may also provide assistance with course selection and eligibility questions. Eligibility for collegiate athletics including appropriate course selection, GPA and admissions tests requirements, and NCAA Clearinghouse registration is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents.

Core Courses for Students on the Essentials Pathway

(An IEP team may determine to substitute with general education core classes.)

Course Name	Length/Credit/Fee
English Essentials-9	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
English Essentials-10	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
English Essentials-11	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
English Essentials-12	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
Essentials: Geometry w/Data Analysis	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
Essentials: Algebra I w/Probability	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
Essentials: Algebra II w/Statistics	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
Essentials: Mathematical Modeling	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
Essentials: Biology	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
Essentials: Physical Science	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
Essentials: Earth and Space Science	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
Essentials: Environmental Science	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
Essentials: Human Anatomy and Physiology	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: Yes
Essentials I: World History	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No

Essentials II: U.S. History to 1877	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
Essentials III: U.S. History from 1877	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
Essentials IV: Economics	1 term/½ credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
Essentials IV: U.S. Government	1 term/½ credit Grade: 12 Fee: No

Required Courses for Students on the Essentials Pathway

Course Name	Length/Credit/Fee
Essentials Career Preparedness	2 terms/1 credit Grades: 9-12 Fee: No
Transition Services	2 terms/1 credit Grades: 9-12 Fee: No

Required Core Courses for Students on the Alabama Alternate Standards (AAS) Pathway

Course Name	Length/Credit/Fee
AAS: English Language Arts-9	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
AAS: English Language Arts-10	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
AAS: English Language Arts-11	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
AAS: English Language Arts-12	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics-9	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics-10	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics-11	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics-12	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
AAS: Science-9	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
AAS: Science-10	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
AAS: Science-11	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
AAS: Science-12	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
AAS: Social Studies-9	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
AAS: Social Studies-10	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No

AAS: Social Studies-11	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
AAS: Social Studies-12	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No

Required Non-Core Courses for Students on the AAS Pathway

Course Name	Length/Credit/Fee
AAS: Life Skills Career Preparedness	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
AAS: Life Skills Health	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
AAS: Life Skills	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
AAS: Prevocational	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No
AAS: Vocational	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
AAS: Community Based Instruction (CBI)	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 12 Fee: No
Beginning Kinesiology*	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 9 Fee: No
AAS: Elective**	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No

*Kinesiology is staffed with a certified Kinesiology teacher.

Elective courses that are only accommodated (not modified) are staffed with a certified elective teacher. Accommodated courses are the original course title (i.e., Art, FACS, etc.). Modified elective courses are titled 600... AAS Elective.

Additional Non-Required Available AAS Courses

Course Name	Length/Credit/Fee
AAS: Reading	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 11 Fee: No
Transition Services	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 10 Fee: No

AAS Super Seniors – Grades 13-15 (Optional)

Course Name	Length/Credit/Fee
AAS: Elective Beyond-1	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 13 Fee: No
AAS: Elective Beyond-2	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 14 Fee: No
AAS: Elective Beyond-3	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 15 Fee: No
AAS: Vocational Beyond-1	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 13 Fee: No
AAS: Vocational Beyond-2	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 14 Fee: No
AAS: Vocational Beyond-3	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 15 Fee: No
AAS: Community Based Instruction (CBI) Beyond-1	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 13 Fee: No
AAS: Community Based Instruction (CBI) Beyond-2	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 14 Fee: No
AAS: Community Based Instruction (CBI) Beyond-3	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 15 Fee: No
AAS: Life Skills Beyond-1	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 13 Fee: No
AAS: Life Skills Beyond-2	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 14 Fee: No
AAS: Life Skills Beyond-3	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 15 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics Beyond-1	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 13 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics Beyond-2	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 14 Fee: No
AAS: Mathematics Beyond-3	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 15 Fee: No

AAS: Reading Beyond-1	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 13 Fee: No
AAS: Reading Beyond-2	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 14 Fee: No
AAS: Reading Beyond-3	2 terms/1 credit Grade: 15 Fee: No

Career Technical Education (CTE)

Shelby County Career Technical Education offers programs that link core academics with careers projected to be in demand. Each program provides a rigorous and enriching curriculum and actively involves employers and postsecondary institutions. The goal is to ready students for both college AND career, while also providing them with a purpose for continued learning.

Each CTE program provides hands-on activities that require problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, including mathematics, science, and English. Also, they help students develop skills currently noted by business and industry as lacking in today's young workforce - such as customer service, teamwork, communication, and positive work ethic.

Students enrolled in some CTE classes will have the opportunity to earn industry credentials that significantly enhance future career options. These credentials also provide an enriched foundation to facilitate advancement in postsecondary studies. In addition, articulated postsecondary credit and/or dual enrollment options are available in some of the CTE programs. **Students who earn a credential earn a College & Career Readiness Indicator (CCR).**

A unique part of Career and Technical Education programs is the opportunity to participate in Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). These are co-curricular components of each CTE course. They serve to enhance classroom instruction while helping students develop leadership abilities, expand workplace-readiness skills, and broaden opportunities for personal and professional growth.

All CTE programs offered by Shelby County are Industry Certified through a rigorous process of on-site reviews administered by the Alabama State Department of Education and local businesses.

Alabama Career and Technical Education programs and pathways are aligned with the 14 National Career Clusters.

Students who complete three {3} courses In the same pathway with a "C or better" average will attain Completer status which earns a College & Career Readiness Indicator (CCR).

Shelby County Career Clusters

Advanced Manufacturing

Agriculture

Arts, Entertainment, & Design

Construction

Digital Technology

Education

Energy & Natural Resources

Financial Services

Healthcare & Human Services

Hospitality, Events, & Tourism

Management & Entrepreneurship

Marketing & Sales

Public Service & Safety

Supply Chain & Transportation

NOTE: PROGRAMS AND COURSES VARY BY SCHOOL

<https://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/o/scs/page/career-clusters>

Approved Career Technical Education Course Substitutions

The Career Technical Education courses listed below have been approved by the Alabama State Department of Education in the areas of math, science, health, and PE as additional courses that meet requirements for graduation. Substituted credit can only be counted for one credit area.

The following courses could fulfill a student's fourth credit in math and/or third and/or fourth credit in science; however, one computer science course may not be used to satisfy both science and mathematics credits:

- Computer Science A, AP (10157E1000)
- Computer Science Principles, AP (10019E1000)
- Introduction to Computer Science-TEALS (10012G1000)
- Introduction to Digital Literacy & Computer Science --ACCESS (10011G1000)
- Programming Foundations (10152G1001)

The following courses could fulfill a student's fourth credit in math:

- Applications of Engineering and Technology (21002G1000)
- Environmental Engineering (21014G1000)
- Introduction to Engineering Design--PLTW (21017G1000)

Upon completion of biology and a "physical science" course, students may choose the following courses to potentially serve as their third and/or fourth credit in science:

- Chemistry of Food (19254G1001)* - similar content as Chemistry
Note: Chemistry of Food does not count as the "physical science" option.
- Food Safety & Microbiology (19254G1000)
- Forensic Science and Crime Scene Investigation (15055G1000)
- Human Body Structures and Functions (14299G1001)* - similar content as Human Anatomy and Physiology
- Human Body Systems--PL TW (14299G1002)
- Principles of Engineering--PLTW (21018G1000)

**A student may not receive science credit for a Career Technical Education course that duplicates credit already awarded in a science course.*

The following courses will fulfill a health requirement:

- Family Wellness (19259G0S00)
- Foundations of Health Science (14002G 1001)

The following course will fulfill a PE Life requirement:

- JROTC

Revised 2/19/2025

Fees

HIGH SCHOOL FEES

FEE	
AP Classes	
AP Biology (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$25.00
AP Pre-Calculus (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Calculus – AB (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Calculus – BC (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Chemistry (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$25.00
AP Computer Science A (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Computer Science Principles (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP English, Language and Literature (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Environmental Science (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$25.00
AP European History (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP French (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Latin (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Macroeconomics (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Music Theory (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Physics 1 (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$25.00
AP Physics C: Mechanics (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$25.00
AP Psychology (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Seminar	\$20.00
AP Spanish (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Statistics (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP Studio Art: Drawing, 2-Dimensional Design, and 3-Dimensional Design (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$40.00
AP U.S. Government and Politics (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
AP U.S. History (<i>plus cost of AP exam in Grade 11</i>)	\$20.00
AP World History (<i>plus cost of AP exam</i>)	\$20.00
English/Language Arts	
Broadcast Journalism I	\$20.00
Creative Writing I, II	\$15.00
Journalism I, II, III, IV	\$20.00
Literary Magazine	\$20.00
Mythology Literature	\$20.00
Newspaper	\$20.00
Shakespearean Literature	\$20.00
Southern Literature	\$20.00
Yearbook II	\$20.00
Mathematics	
Introduction to Computer Science-TEALS	\$20.00

HIGH SCHOOL FEES

FEE	
<i>Physical Education and Other Electives</i>	
Athletic Trainer	\$20.00
Beginning Kinesiology (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$5.00
Driver and Traffic Safety Education	\$40.00
Physical Education (All Other Physical Education Electives)	\$10.00
<i>Science</i>	
Biology (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$15.00
Biology, Honors (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$20.00
Chemistry (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$20.00
Chemistry, Honors (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$20.00
Earth and Space Science (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$15.00
Environmental Science (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$15.00
Forensic and Criminal Investigations (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$30.00
Human Anatomy and Physiology (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$20.00
Human Anatomy and Physiology, Honors (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$25.00
Introduction to Computer Science-TEALS	\$20.00
Physical Science (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$10.00
Physics (<i>Suggested Donation</i>)	\$15.00
Principles of Engineering – (PLTW)	\$40.00
<i>Social Studies</i>	
Comparative Religion	\$15.00
Contemporary Issues/Global Studies	\$15.00
Psychology	\$15.00
Sociology	\$15.00
<i>Speech/Debate</i>	
Debate	\$15.00
Speech II	\$20.00
<i>Visual Arts</i> (<i>Additional fees may be collected as needed to cover costs of competition.</i>)	
Acting Technique	\$20.00
Advanced Theatre	\$20.00
Arts, Visual I, II, III, IV	\$40.00
Arts, Visual Sculpture I, II, III	\$40.00
Band/Music Theory (Concert, Jazz Ensemble, Percussion, Visual Ensemble)	<i>Fees Determined Locally</i>
Choir (Mixed, Men's, Women's, Chamber, Show)	\$25.00
Crafts	\$45.00
Digital Sound Design (Podcasting)	<i>Fees Determined Locally</i>
Graphic Design I, II	\$40.00

HIGH SCHOOL FEES

FEE	
<i>Visual Arts</i> <i>(Additional fees may be collected as needed to cover costs of competition.)</i>	
Interactive Game Design I	<i>Fees Determined Locally</i>
Media Arts I (Broadcasting)	<i>Fees Determined Locally</i>
Photography, Digital I, II, III, IV	\$45.00
Technical Theatre Production I	\$20.00
Technical Theatre Production II	\$20.00
Theatre I, II, III	\$20.00
Web Design I	<i>Fees Determined Locally</i>
<i>World Languages</i>	
American Sign Language I, II, III, IV	\$15.00
French I, II, III, IV	\$15.00
German I, II, III, IV	\$15.00
Latin I, II, III, IV	\$15.00
Spanish I, II, III, IV	\$15.00

2025-26 CAREER TECH HIGH SCHOOL FEES by CLUSTER***Course Fee Includes CTSO Dues**

CLUSTER	FEE
<i>Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources</i>	
Semester Courses	\$25.00
Year-Long Courses	\$50.00
<i>Architecture & Construction</i>	
Construction Technology (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$105.00/yr*
Construction Technology (<i>Calera HS</i>)	\$60.00/yr
Design Technology (<i>Chelsea HS</i>)	\$60.00/yr
Plumbing (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$75.00/yr*
Welding (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$130.00/yr*
<i>Arts, A/V Technology & Communications</i>	
Year-Long Courses (<i>Helena HS & Oak Mountain HS</i>)	\$40.00
<i>Business Management & Administration</i>	
Semester Courses	\$15.00
Year-Long Courses	\$30.00
Career Pathway Project / Ready To Work Program	\$25.00/yr
<i>Education & Training</i>	
Semester Courses	\$15.00
Year-Long Courses	\$30.00
<i>Finance</i>	
Semester Courses	\$15.00
Year-Long Courses	\$30.00
<i>Government & Public Administration</i>	
JROTC – Army (<i>Vincent HS</i>) — No Fee for LET I	\$10.00/yr
<i>Health Science</i>	
Biomedical Science (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$125.00/yr*
Health Science Foundations (<i>Calera HS & Chelsea HS</i>)	\$75.00/yr
Health Science, 2 nd Yr (<i>Calera-Diagnostic Services</i>) (<i>Chelsea-Operating Room Found.</i>)	\$100.00/yr
Health Science Internship (<i>Calera HS & Chelsea HS</i>)	\$125.00/yr
Kinesiology & Biomechanics Program (<i>Helena HS</i>)	\$50.00/yr
Nursing & Therapeutic Services (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$125.00/yr*
Sports Medicine Program (<i>Helena HS</i>)	\$25.00/yr
<i>Hospitality & Tourism</i>	
Culinary (<i>Montevallo HS</i>)	\$75.00
Cultural Foods (<i>Montevallo HS</i>)	\$50.00
Foundations (<i>Montevallo HS</i>)	\$50.00
Culinary (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$165.00/yr*

<i>Human Services (Cosmetology)</i>	
Cosmetology, 1 st Yr (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$250.00/yr*
Cosmetology, 2 nd Yr (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$150.00/yr*
<i>Human Services (Family & Consumer Sciences)</i>	
Courses Containing a Food Lab (Semester Courses)	\$25.00
Courses Containing a Food Lab (Year-Long Courses)	\$50.00
Other Semester Courses	\$20.00
Other Year-Long Courses	\$40.00
<i>Information Technology</i>	
All Courses (if an AP course, there will be an additional testing cost)	\$20.00
<i>Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security</i>	
Public Service Academy (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$75.00/yr*
<i>Marketing</i>	
Semester Courses	\$15.00
Year-Long Courses	\$30.00
<i>STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math)</i>	
Engineering Courses (<i>Oak Mountain HS</i>)	\$60.00/yr
Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Engineering Courses (<i>Oak Mountain HS</i>)	\$45.00/yr
<i>Transportation, Distribution & Logistics</i>	
Automotive Technology (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$150.00/yr*
Aviation (<i>Shelby County High School</i>)	\$50.00/yr
Collision Repair (<i>Career Technical Educational Center</i>)	\$150.00/yr*

***Course Fee Includes CTSO Dues**