



**Policy: Graduation Requirements**  
**Approved April 27, 2023**

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

As a guiding principle, we want every student to complete the entire academic program at MacLaren. The program is a unified whole which expresses our vision of education. Reasonable adjustments and special arrangements for specific students are made only for serious reasons. In these situations, the Head of School may make a recommendation to the Executive Director to adjust graduation requirements, and adjustments will be determined on an individualized basis. As part of this process, the Head of School needs to outline implications for college admissions to the student and the family as well as ensure alignment with student's post-secondary transition plan if applicable before final approval is given.

Seniors who fail a course in their last semester may be required to register for summer school for credit recovery to receive a MacLaren diploma.

One semester credit is awarded for a class that meets 5 times weekly for 55 minutes per meeting. One-half semester credit is earned for a class that meets 2 or 3 times a week.

Below is a table of MacLaren's graduation requirements for the high school. We have also listed for comparison the requirements from the Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR), which are the requirements set forth by Colorado as standards for college entrance beginning in the year 2010. As one can see, MacLaren clearly exceeds all Colorado admission requirements:

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>MacLaren</b>	<b>HEAR</b>
English Language Arts	8	8
Social Studies/History	8	6
Mathematics	8	8
Science	8	6
Physical Education	2	
Humanities	4	
Foreign Language	6	2
Fine Arts	10	
Academic Electives		4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	

## Thomas MacLaren's Division of Credit Hours

- Students will obtain their Physical Education requirements by documenting at least 24 hours of athletic activity per year; this could include participation in a team sport. This is required in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Students will receive one credit per year.
- Humane Letters seminars are counted at two and one-half (2 ½) units per semester. The ninth and tenth grade Humane Letters seminars are distributed as one unit of history, one unit of literature, and one-half unit of composition. The eleventh grade Humane Letters course is distributed as one unit of history, one unit of literature, and one-half unit of philosophy. The twelfth grade Humane Letters course is distributed as one unit of history, one unit of literature, and one-half unit of economics.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> grade American Studies Humane Letters includes civics and government.
- Science: 6 of the 8 credits with lab
- Fine arts credits: 6 credits music, 2 credits art, 2 credits drama

## Grading Scale

The school issues a grade for each course. The grade is a cursory but accurate summary of the written evaluation. Below is the grading scale used for all grades:

100-94	A	76-73	C
93-90	A-	72-70	C-
89-87	B+	69-67	D+
86-83	B	66-63	D
82-80	B-	62-60	D-
79-77	C+	Below 60	F

The following high school courses are weighted +1 in a student's cumulative GPA to reflect the rigor of the program:

- Humane Letters: 9-12
- Mathematics: 9-12
- Science: 9-12
- Language: Latin IV and Greek
- Fine Arts: Orchestra IV and above

## Compliance with College and Career Readiness (HB 07-1118)

### A. Completion of an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).

Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) - a multi-year process that intentionally guides students and families in the exploration of career, academic and postsecondary opportunities (see 1 CCR 301-81, 2.00(2)).

- B. Demonstration of one of the following: Below are the minimum scores required in both Math and English Language Arts assessments taken during high school from the Colorado Board of Education approved menu of College and Career Ready Demonstrations:

Demonstration	English	Math
ACT	18	19
SAT	470	500
Accuplacer or other state-approved equivalent*	62	61
Capstone project	Collection of student portfolio including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performance in 12<sup>th</sup> grade Humane Letters (with portfolio of assessments and essays as demonstration of performance)</li> <li>• performance in 12<sup>th</sup> grade Oral Exams (Humane Letters)</li> </ul>	Collection of student portfolio including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performance in 12<sup>th</sup> grade Math (with portfolio of assessments as demonstration of performance)</li> <li>• performance in 12<sup>th</sup> grade physics project for Project Week (rubrics available to assess performance)</li> </ul>

\*MacLaren does not offer the Accuplacer test, but students can take this test on their own and submit scores if they do not want to use their ACT or SAT scores.

- C. Students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may be provided accommodations in order to demonstrate these requirements, but the requirements may not be modified for any student on an IEP.

### **Compliance with Concerning the Teaching of the Holocaust and Genocide Studies (HB20 – 1336)**

The following courses incorporate the standards on Holocaust and Genocide Studies adopted by the state board (C.R.S. 22-7-1005.2.7a):

- 9<sup>th</sup>-grade American Studies Humane Letters
- 10<sup>th</sup>-grade Modern European Studies Humane Letters

## **Other eligibility considerations to meet graduation requirements**

1. Credit from other institutions and home-based programs
  - a. All students entering from outside Thomas MacLaren School must meet with the College Counselor to discuss the impact of the transfer on their transcript.
    - i. The College Counselor, in consultation with the Head of School, shall determine whether credit toward graduation requirements shall be granted for courses taken outside of MacLaren.
    - ii. MacLaren will expect students to complete the course of study offered upon enrollment, but understands that as we only offer one course of study that some students may be missing certain courses. For example, many transfers coming in past 9<sup>th</sup> grade are missing Biology and American History. The College Counselor will explain the expectations of selective colleges and universities: in general, students will be required to make up credit expected according the HEAR standards and highly encouraged to make up MacLaren credit from outside institutions.
    - iii. However, all credit from outside institutions or through online programs must have prior approval from the school principal/designee. Exceptions to this policy must include permission from the College Counselor and the Head of School.
  - b. Thomas MacLaren School shall accept the transcripts from a home-based educational program. In order to determine whether the courses and grades earned are consistent with MacLaren requirements, MacLaren shall require submission of the student's work or other proof of academic performance for each course for which credit toward graduation is sought. In addition, transfers into our high school must take diagnostic testing to verify the accuracy of the student's transcripts.
  - c. Credits from outside institutions will be placed on the MacLaren transcript but will not be part of the cumulative MacLaren GPA.
2. Online/Correspondence Courses: Online and correspondence courses may be taken with the approval of the Head of School or College Counselor for make-up credit and for credit towards graduation requirements.
3. Credit Recovery: MacLaren does not offer credit recovery. It will accept credit recovery and reflect it as such on a student's transcript. The Head of School or College Counselor must approve all credit recovery courses.
4. Early Graduation: MacLaren does not offer early graduation due to the unique nature of our sequenced program.

## **Disclosure Policy**

Student discipline at Thomas MacLaren is predicated on the fact that learning takes place best in a safe and orderly environment. On those occasions when school rules are violated, the school administration acts in a manner that balances the needs of the learning community with that of the individual. Nevertheless, certain choices that students make can have consequences that extend into their future. Specifically, colleges are becoming increasingly concerned about

student behavior on their own campuses and now routinely ask both the student and the school about an applicant's high school discipline record.

Students who have had disciplinary or honor infractions (i.e., plagiarism) *prior* to the senior year are expected to respond honestly on any college application that asks questions such as "Are you currently or have you ever been charged with or subject to disciplinary action for scholastic or any other type of misconduct at any educational institution?" or "Have you ever been dismissed, placed on probation or suspended from an educational institution?" In those instances when the question is answered in the affirmative, the College Counselor will assist the student in developing a personal statement that will help contextualize the situation. Students and families need to be aware that many college applications require a counselor or administrator to complete a form that asks those same questions to confirm a student's discipline record.

In regards to the college application process, Thomas MacLaren's policy is to report any significant *change* in a candidates' academic status or qualifications, including conduct record, *between the time of recommendation and graduation*. These include but are not limited to a significant drop in grades, honor violations, probation, suspension and dismissal. Seniors who are guilty of violations during their senior year will be expected to notify their college(s) of the situation and a school representative will follow up with a letter. The student should work closely with the College Counselor to ensure that both accounts are communicated in a consistent and thoughtful manner.

While disciplinary matters are of a concern to colleges, our experience is that they understand that young people make mistakes. Admission committees are typically more concerned with the manner in which students respond to disciplinary sanctions than the actual event leading to the sanctions. A mature and thoughtful response to a discipline infraction can illustrate a student's growth and development as a young adult.