




GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A high school student's progress toward graduation and receiving a diploma is determined by completing required coursework, earning the necessary credits, and passing the state-mandated tests. It is the student's responsibility to keep in contact with their counselor and educators to ensure that all requirements are being met. Information about credit, course, and graduation requirements are available via our counseling office or on its web page found [→ HERE ←](#)

Earning a diploma is traditionally completed in four (4) years. In order to receive a diploma and graduate, a student will need to meet the school requirements for basic course work and earn the minimum number (26) of credits. Other noteworthy details are listed below:

-  Each semester course is worth ½ credit.
-  A student may repeat a class for a better grade if the current grade is a B- or lower - although credit cannot be earned for both courses. A student can also repeat a class after earning a B or above, but a grade increase will not occur and credit cannot be earned.
-  A fourth-year math credit - or an Algebra II credit - is available for Career Technical Education (CTE) students, along with the possibility of earning 2 elective credits.

Seniors who have failed to meet graduation requirements are not allowed to participate in commencement ceremonies - unless they have completed all of their service-learning hours and are within two (2) academic credits of graduating. In such cases, students may walk with their class, but will not receive their diploma until all requirements have been met.

LAUDE (HONORS) SYSTEM

The primary purposes of switching to the Laude system - Summa, Magna, and Cum Laude - are that we want to design a system that allows students to have greater freedom in selecting courses of study, reduces student stress and anxiety, and still allows us to recognize outstanding academic achievement. In eliminating our class ranking system, colleges and universities will take a more holistic approach to evaluating our students - by reviewing their extra-curricular, volunteerism, and service-learning activities, for example.

For those wondering if we will still have a valedictorian, the answer is both “yes” and “no”. We will not have a student who earns that distinction based solely on academic achievement - which is not what ‘valedictorian’ means anyway. Valedictorian comes from the Latin “valedicere” which means “to bid farewell...” Thus, a valedictorian is the person who gives the farewell speech. This meaning has evolved over time into the student with the highest grade-point-average. Yet, in the truest sense of the word, any student could give the farewell address.

At PWMHS, any student graduating ‘Summa Cum Laude’ will be eligible to give the valedictory speech. Every Summa Cum Laude student may apply to give the speech and then the entire group of Summa Cum Laude students - along with a panel of educators - will choose one student to make the farewell address at graduation... earning them the title of “Valedictorian”.

Additionally, in order for a student to be considered for Laude (Honors) status, they must earn a spot on the 1st Semester Honor Roll during their senior year - as well as matriculate as a student of PWMHS, taking P-W coursework during both junior and senior years. Our Laude (Honors) seniors will be announced following the 3rd Marking Period.

SERVICE LEARNING






Service Learning is a graduation requirement for all Pewamo-Westphalia students. This program is the integration of education, service, and citizenship into our curriculum. Service Learning teaches students how to interact in real life settings - using the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom - by giving back to their community and world via acts of servitude. Providing service to others facilitates the transition from the dependency of childhood, to the status of an independent, caring adult. Our goal is to help students become people who seek solutions to problems, rather than people who wait for others to respond.

Requirements for graduation include the completion of 40 service hours at approved locations / activities - which may start the summer prior to a student's freshman year. These hours must be properly documented and verified by a member of the organization / event where service took place within one's Helper-Helper application as a prerequisite to validation by the student's class advisor.

When a student is completing their 'Service Learning Log' and reflection piece, proper grammar and full sentences must be used. Summertime Service Learning should be submitted by December 1, while all other Service Learning should be turned in by May 31.


Class Advisors and school leadership reserve the right to approve / deny any and all service learning submissions. Improperly submitted or incomplete service hours may be deleted after the May 31 deadline. Any disputed service hours may be reconciled by requesting a meeting with the Class Advisor and any other educators deemed essential by school leadership.




A student's 'reflection piece' is an essential part of the service learning process and must contain detailed descriptions of the following:

-  A description of the event
-  What was learned from the event
-  How the service specifically benefited the student
-  How the service benefited the community / organization... 

Note: Service learning hours must come from at least 3 different sites / experiences.











Ways to earn service-learning hours include:

-  Regularly-Scheduled Times... meaning that a student commits to volunteer a specified number of service hours over predetermined periods of time - every Tuesday from 3 - 5p, for example.

-  Special Events... meaning that a student makes a commitment to volunteer with an organization holding a one- or two-day event to benefit the community - such as a fair for children, a charity walk, neighborhood clean-up, etc.
-  Student-Developed Service Projects... meaning that a student-generated idea to help a specific organization or group of people - with each project obtaining approval from the Class Advisor prior to implementation.
-  Classroom-Based Service Projects... meaning a service project linked to the curriculum of a class but not completed during school hours.

Students that transfer to PWMHS will be prorated ten (10) hours for each year missed - or five per semester.

The ‘Do’s and Don’ts’ of Service Learning:

-  Students cannot receive payment nor financial compensation for Service Learning work.
-  Do not ‘volunteer’ for family members. Rather, one should help family members at all times.
-  Acts or service that are an obligation / responsibility to another organization will not be counted.
-  Volunteer hours must benefit the community and not a business.
-  Do not work for a company and just refuse to be paid. This does not qualify as Service Learning.
-  Participation in a rally, demonstration, or march (political, religious, etc) does not constitute Service Learning.
-  Do not stop volunteering just because you have met the requirement.
-  Volunteer hours must be completed outside of school hours.
-  Submit all hours performed - they will become part of your permanent record; and you are not limited to the number of hours per site.
-  Students are encouraged to complete ten (10) hours during each of their high school years.

Students who have met the following required number of hours may be recognized at our High School Awards Night - so long as documented time is turned in by April 15 of that school year to their respective Class Advisor...

Seniors = 100 hours Juniors = 75 hours Sophomores = 50 hours Freshmen = 25 hours

In order to walk at graduation, all service hours - demonstrated within the ‘Service Learning Log’ for each site - must be properly documented, turned in, approved by the site coordinator(s) within the Helper-Helper application, and presented to the one’s Class Advisor no later than the last day of January of a student’s senior year.

In order to receive a diploma, all of the aforementioned criteria must be complete and submitted no later than June 1.

INJURY, ILLNESS, CASUAL- / NON-CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the Front Office. The teacher and / or office will fill out an accident report and submit it to Central Office. If the injury is minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedures. Please note that a student's emergency contact / release forms must be filled out at the beginning of the year and have a phone number where a parent / guardian, etc can be reached at all times.

Students who become ill during the school day should request permission from the teacher to go to the Front Office. The office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission and sign out.

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a casual-contact communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice. Other diseases include diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the local and state health departments. Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines.

In cases of non-casual-contact communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have their status reviewed by a panel of resourceful personnel - including the County Health Department - to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion. Examples of non-casual- contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV, HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C), and others that may be specified by the State Board of Health. As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES & SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the district's programs and facilities. A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact Mrs. Julie Farmer,