



**NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

*James C. Williamson, Ph. D.*

*President*

July 20, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Basic Skills Directors, Adult High Coordinators/Directors

**FROM:** Gilda Rubio-Festa, Associate Vice President for College and Career Readiness

**RE:** Adult High School Implementation Guide and Agreement of Affiliation

Please see attached updated *Adult High Implementation Guide* and *Agreement of Affiliation*. These documents provide the framework and guidance for implementing the educational programming and standards adopted by both the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's respective state boards to govern the Adult High School Program.

This *Adult High Implementation Guide* and *Agreement of Affiliation* replace the former *Adult High School Diploma Program Procedures Manual* and *Agreement of Affiliation* adopted by the NC State Board of Community Colleges and the NC Department of Public Instruction in 1994.

For questions or guidance, please contact Ms. Diane Steinbeiser, Director of Professional Development & Instructional Support and High School Equivalency Programs at 919-807-7214 or at [steinbeiserd@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:steinbeiserd@nccommunitycolleges.edu).

**CC16-030**  
**Email Copy**

cc: Presidents  
Chief Academic Officers  
Continuing Education Senior Administrators  
June Atkinson, State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction



# **Adult High School Implementation Guide**

**July 2016**

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## Adult High School Implementation Guide

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### Documentation of Revision

Version	Date	By Whom	Title
1	April 1, 1994	Delane Boyer	GED State Administrator and AHS Coordinator, NCCCS
2	July 1, 2016	Dr. Amy Cooke Diane Steinbeiser AHS Focus Group	Director of Program Compliance & Monitoring, NCCCS Director of Professional Development & Instructional Support and High School Equivalency Programs, NCCCS Community College Directors & Coordinators

**This document contains the policies and procedures that govern the implementation and operation of an Adult High School program in North Carolina**

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## Chapter 1 Program Governance

### A. WIOA-Title II – Core Purpose

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In accordance to Section 202 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II-Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), it is the purpose of this title to create a partnership among the Federal Government, States, and localities to provide, on a voluntary basis, adult education and literacy activities, in order to:

- (1) assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- (2) assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that--
  - (A) are necessary to becoming full partners in the educational development of their children; and
  - (B) lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
- (3) assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, including through career pathways; and**
- (4) assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in--
  - (A) improving their--
    - (i) reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English; and
    - (ii) mathematics skills; and
  - (B) acquiring an understanding of the American system of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

**To meet the purpose outlined in WIOA-Title II, Section 202(3), North Carolina has two Adult Secondary Education credentials (1) an adult high school diploma, and (2) a high school equivalency diploma.**

- Adult High School (AHS)
  - The Adult High School program is offered cooperatively with a local public school system to offer adults an opportunity to earn an Adult High School diploma. Course and graduation requirements are in alignment with the standards established by the State Board of Education, the local education agency, and the local community college. The AHS diploma is issued in cooperation between the local boards of education and community college trustees with appropriate signatures representing both educational systems (See Attachment G).
- High School Equivalency (HSE)
  - North Carolina offers instruction to assist learners to successfully pass a designated high school equivalency assessment. A high school equivalency diploma is issued from the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges upon successful completion of the complete battery of tests.

### B. State Board of Community Colleges

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ID SBCC 200.3 Program Classification

(2)(d) Basic Skills Programs. The State Board and the community college system shall encourage persons to complete high school rather than seek testing for the High School Diploma Equivalency.

### C. Adult High School (AHS)-Recommendations

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The principles that govern the issuance of an Adult High School diploma was adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in December 1992, and by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges in January 1993. The required recommendations listed below have been amended to address the programmatic federal funding updates for adult literacy education and the policies governing the operation of an AHS program in North Carolina.

Recommendations:

1. The AHS diploma and transcript shall represent the same quality and appearance as issued by the local education agency. The names of both educational agencies shall be listed on the official AHS diploma.
2. The minimum number of graduation credits shall be the same as the number adopted by the State Board of Education. Community colleges will follow the graduation requirements as documented in the Future Ready Core graduation requirements (See Attachment A); however, NC Department of Public Instruction policy states that high school students may complete the course and credit requirements that were in effect the year they first entered ninth grade, provided that the student was enrolled in a North Carolina high school within the past 5 years.
3. The AHS curriculum shall be competency-based, consisting of the core and elective credits required for high school graduation. Electives shall be selected from a variety of program offerings as defined in the local Agreement of Affiliation and structured, so that students develop a range of skills which prepare them to succeed in the labor market or to enter technical, vocational, or college transfer programs.
4. Students may be granted elective credit for post-secondary courses, military training, apprenticeship programs, business and industry training from which competencies can be documented and evaluated.
5. Students shall earn credit based on mastery of competencies demonstrated through assessments evaluated by the local community college. A student must earn at least one credit from the community college for an AHS diploma to be awarded.
6. While graduation requirements shall be standardized, methods of instruction can be offered face-to-face, online, or hybrid and will be determined by the local community college.
7. Faculty or instructors who teach AHS courses shall, at a minimum, hold a Bachelor's Degree and have the knowledge and skills that enable them to meet the needs of adult learners.
8. Local community colleges may charge, as appropriate, costs for student textbooks, student activity fees and other fees including parking and graduation fees. Charges shall not include fees for registration.
9. Community colleges shall maintain permanent records for AHS graduates, and provide transcript evaluation services for incoming or returning AHS students. Incoming students are required to provide community colleges with an official high school transcript signed by a principal or administrative designee in order to gain credit for previously earned credits.
10. The North Carolina Community College System shall provide an Adult High School Implementation Guide. This document will be distributed to the Department of Public Instruction, the community college, and the local education agency.
11. The North Carolina Community College System, in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction, shall establish a process to:
  - Review Agreements of Affiliation between community colleges and local education agencies every three years, or when changes occur, for policy and procedural compliance
  - File Agreements of Affiliation with the North Carolina Community College System
  - Maintain a list of AHS graduates by college each program year

D. State Board of Community Colleges Code References

SBCCC	NAME
1D SBCCC 200.3 (2)(D)(I)	Program Classification/Basic Skills/High School Equivalency
1G SBCCC 200.94 (E)	Adult High School Diploma/Work Experience

Date of Approval	Citation	Comments
Dec. 1992	State Board of Education	Adult High School diploma program criteria adopted
Jan. 1993	State Board of Community Colleges	Adult High School diploma program criteria adopted
Apr. 1994	Numbered Memo CC94-129	Adult High School Procedures Manual adopted
July 2016	Memo to Colleges	Adult High School Implementation Guide updated

## E. Agreement of Affiliation

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The purpose of the AHS is to provide a curriculum of instruction that will enable an individual to earn the Adult high School diploma secondary credential. The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, must include the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in the Adult High School program. The principles that govern the AHS diploma program were adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in December 1992 and by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges in January 1993. Cooperation between the local education agency and the community college is vital to the success of this program. Accordingly, local education agencies may have an Agreement of Affiliation with only one community college. The Agreement of Affiliation must be signed by both educational systems to operate an Adult High School diploma program. This agreement must be reviewed and signed every three years (see Attachment B).

Below are the minimum components that must be provided in the Agreement of Affiliation:

- Required template for signatures
- Attribution of both parties assuring that the AHS diploma and transcript will represent the same appearance and quality as issued by the local education agency (See Attachment G).
- Total number of credits needed to graduate including any additional local exit requirements
- Attestation that both parties have a copy of the current *Adult High School Implementation Guide*.

If either party to the agreement wishes to withdraw or alter in any way the Agreement of Affiliation document, it is understood that notice of at least four months shall be given to the cooperating agency, and that students enrolled in the program at the time of notice shall be given the opportunity to complete the courses for which they are currently enrolled.

## F. Fiscal Management

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### **Books for Adult High School**

Colleges may suggest that Adult High School students purchase textbooks, but should make free books available for classroom use. Programs do not have to provide free books for students to write in, only to read. It is highly recommended that all books used are made available in a laboratory or library setting for students to use outside of class.

### **Tuition for Adult High School Courses**

Colleges may not require students to pay tuition for other college programs and transfer credits into the Adult High School program.

## Chapter 2 Program Operational Guidelines

### A. Student Eligibility Criteria

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#### Eligible Individual – WIOA Definition

All students enrolled in an Adult High School diploma program must meet the WIOA-AEFLA definition of “eligible individual” as reference in Section 203(4) of the Act.

The term “**eligible individual**” means an individual—

- (A) who has attained 16 years of age;
- (B) who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; **and**
- (C) who-- (i) is basic skills deficient; (ii) does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not an equivalent level of education; **or** (iii) is an English language learner.

Below are considerations for documenting this student eligibility criterion:

- State regulations require that individuals under 18 years of age must provide proof of withdrawal from their last high school attended to enroll in an Adult High School. As such, minors age 16 or 17, must provide two verification documents:
  - Minor Release Form – This verifies they meet the requirement of not being enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law. This form, at a minimum, contains the following information: name, address, date of birth, last school attended, and official withdrawal date. This form is signed by school superintendent, or designee.
  - Minor Applicant Notarized Petition – This form must be completed by the person or agency having legal custody of the student seeking enrollment into the program. This form acknowledges that the minor has withdrawn from high school and provides the student’s intent of enrolling in a community college.
- Emancipated minors, age 16 or 17, do not have to provide a Minor Applicant Notarized Petition to verify eligibility. Instead, they must provide one of the following official documents: 1) marriage certificate or 2) judicial decree of emancipation.
- Colleges must consult with the local public school superintendent, or designee, to establish a procedure for verifying eligibility for minors who have never been enrolled in the local public school system in North Carolina.
- Individuals who were previously enrolled in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) pathway in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction may be eligible for the Adult High School program. While the credits are transferable, the OCS pathway is not available in the AHS program.
- Individuals, age 18 or older, are not required to obtain proof of withdrawal from their last high school attended to enroll in an Adult High School.

#### Residency and Citizenship Requirements

Proof of residency or citizenship is not required to enroll in AHS. Please note that the following:

- Minors may enroll in an AHS without regard to a particular public school administration area. Admission requirements for an emancipated minor shall be the same as for an applicant 18 years old or older. Provisions with respect to admission of minors are set forth in 1D SBCCC 200.95 and 1D SBCCC 300.99.

- Individuals who are in this country on a student (F-1, M-1) visa are not allowed to participate in a federally-funded adult education program. *The law prohibits the issuance of F-1 visas to attend publicly funded adult education programs. Publicly funded adult education is defined as: 'Education, training or English as second language programs operated by, through, or for a local public school district, system, agency or authority, regardless of whether such a program charges fees or tuition.' Programs under this definition cannot accept students in F-1 status, even if tuition is charged.* <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange/student/foreign-students-in-public-schools.html>

## B. Enrollment and Registration Procedures

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Admission to an AHS shall be in accordance with local college enrollment and registration policies. To attract students and increase the educational attainment of the college's service area, colleges are encouraged to implement outreach and recruitment strategies. The following are suggested best practices to reach potential students:

- Advertise on community college website and other social media platforms
- Distribute marketing materials to all workforce and community partners
- New and returning student orientation should include information about AHS
- Advertise student success stories in the local newspaper and on social media
- Offer flexible delivery options to meet the busy schedule of working adult students
- Offer AHS classes at the workplace, churches, libraries, and at one-stop centers when appropriate

### High School Transcript Evaluation

To enroll in an AHS, incoming students are required to provide colleges with an official high school transcript signed by a principal or administrative designee. The purpose of this document is to validate the following:

- Date withdrawn from previous high school
- Date student first entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade
- Credit should be awarded for all previously earned high school courses earned with a grade of D or above
- Partial credit may be combined when comparable to yield a full credit
- Official transcripts of high school courses from accredited out-of-state high schools and post-secondary institution adult high school programs may be accepted for direct transfer of credit if the courses meet Future Ready Core graduation requirements
- Official transcripts of high school level courses from foreign schools with official translation into English may be accepted for credit upon determination that the courses meet Future Ready Core graduation requirements.
- Official transcripts from an approved home school may be accepted for credit upon determination that the courses meet Future Ready Core graduation requirements.
- Official transcripts of high school courses from correspondence schools accredited by a regional accrediting agency may be accepted for transfer of credit if the courses meet Future Ready Core graduation requirements.

### National Reporting System (NRS) Placement Assessment

All students entering the AHS must be assessed using a standardized assessment approved by the National Reporting System (NRS) to place students in the appropriate federal Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) and to report gain measures for the NRS. Assessment data are used to place learners at appropriate levels of instruction, to diagnose

learner strengths and weaknesses, to monitor progress, and to certify learner mastery at specific levels of instruction or readiness to exit adult education. National Reporting System approved tests appropriate for use in the AHS program include Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN), and Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Most AHS students will place in the ASE Low or ASE High EFL, however, there is no minimum EFL placement requirement for AHS enrollment.

## C. Maintenance of Records Requirement

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### **North Carolina Records Retention Schedule**

The information that the college retains serves as evidence of functions executed and activities performed. Quality maintenance of records is paramount in the effective management of the AHS. Maintained student records are to be authentic, reliable and complete. According to G.S. §121-5 and G.S. §132-8, the college must ensure that all student records are protected, maintained and preserved according to the North Carolina Records Retention Schedule as established by the North Carolina Community College System. Please see below:

#### **Item 45536. ADULT HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS RECORDS FILE**

Complete transcript records for students, including transfer credits, enrolled in adult high school programs. (Comply with applicable provisions of 20 USCA 1232g regarding confidentiality of student records.) Amended 09-25-03.

DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS: Colleges must maintain records permanently. Colleges may store records electronically. A college representative will update routinely. When college replaces "old" technology, it must either retain its old technology sufficient to retrieve and print information or if a conversion is made to a new technology, the new technology must have the capability to generate a printed copy of transcripts, transfer transcript records when administrative value ends to the College Archives for permanent retention. Transfer a duplicate photocopy of the transcript and records to an offsite location for security storage. Note: Colleges that do not have an Archives should establish an Archives program or store the records concerned in a secure, protected, environmentally stable area.

### **Degree Audit**

Degree Audit for Adult High School is a records maintenance program in Colleague that allows colleges to create local work processes in the administration and maintenance of Adult High School student records. Implementation of Degree Audit allows colleges to accurately pull the data for AHS graduates as well as to provide consistent data for use in meeting State Performance Measures. Degree Audit allows each local college to monitor their own Program of Study - the series of courses required for students to earn an Adult High School diploma. Degree Audit enables colleges to set up multiple AHS Programs of Study to accommodate those schools which serve multiple Local Education Agencies, each of which may have different graduation requirements per each Affiliation Agreement. Degree Audit enables monitoring of student progress through credit hour completion and calculating grade point average. Training for Degree Audit is provided throughout the year from the System Office through the College User Support team. *AHS Degree Audit* and *AHS Transfer Non Course Work* are two trainings recommended for basic skills staff who are responsible for the set up and tracking of AHS program requirements and who record transfer work, challenge exams, credit for life experience and placement exams, respectively. For training go to: <http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/college-user-support/college-staff-training>

### **Graduation Readiness Checklist**

Periodically the State Board of Education changes graduation requirements to better reflect the skills and knowledge that students need for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The NC Department of Public Instruction's policy states that high school students may complete the course and credit requirements that were in effect the year they first entered ninth

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grade. The intent of this policy is to grandfather students into the graduation requirements of their graduating class cohort, provided that the student was enrolled in a North Carolina high school within the past 5 years. A Graduation Readiness Checklist is provided. (See Attachment A).

**AHS Transcript**

The AHS transcript shall represent the same appearance and quality as issued by the local education agency. This is most easily accomplished through the use of Degree Audit. Colleges that have not yet implemented Degree Audit into their AHS program may issue transcripts through their Registrar’s office or as a Word document; however, handwritten transcripts are not permitted.

**D. Program Accountability Reporting Requirements**

NRS is the accountability system for the federally funded, State-administered adult education program. It addresses the accountability requirements of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. The *2016 NRS Implementation Guidelines* provide accountability guidance regarding (1) the NRS measures that allow assessment of the impact of adult education instruction, (2) methodologies for collecting the measures, (3) reporting forms and procedures, and (4) training and technical assistance requirements to assist states in collecting and reporting the measures.

**LEIS Documentation: Adult High School EFL Progression**

Students in the AHS program are subject to extra documentation to track their progress through the AHS program. The documentation is used to aid with accountability. While AHS students are working on course credits, they are required to make educational functioning level (EFL) gains as well. The box below contains information taken from the current LEIS form which lists the information required to track AHS student progress towards the Adult High School diploma. Additional clarification is provided below.

**Adult High School LEIS Information**

<b>Adult High School Only (update #16 - #19 each program year)</b>	
14. HS credits required to graduate	_____
15. # AHS credits transferred in	_____
16. # AHS credits earned this program year (July 1 – June 30)	_____
17. Date first AHS course was attempted this program year	___/___/___
18. Date first AHS course was completed this program year	___/___/___
19. Date AHS diploma was earned	___/___/___

14. HS credits required to graduate  
The total number of high school credits that are needed to graduate based on the local Agreement of Affiliation.

15. # AHS credits transferred in  
The number of high school credits accepted as transfer as well as AHS credits accepted as transfer.

16. # AHS credits earned this program year (July 1 – June 30)  
The number of Adult High School credits a student earns that count toward obtaining an Adult High School diploma between July 1 and June 30 of the current program year. This is to be updated each program year. These credits can be updated in Colleague each semester and the system will check the dates for the program year that the credits apply to.

17. Date first AHS course was attempted this program year \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

The date (month/day/year) a student begins the first Adult High School course between July 1 and June 30 of the current program year. This is to be updated each program year.

18. Date first AHS course was completed this program year \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

The date a student is credited with completing the first AHS course between July 1 and June 30 of the current program year. This is to be updated each program year.

19. Date AHS diploma was earned \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

The date in which a student officially completes all his/her Adult High School requirements as determined by the local affiliation agreement. For a student to come up in the LEIS file, this date must be in a semester in which a student is registered to and attending a class.

Adult High School students are included in all state and federal measures of EFL progression, and literacy gains are expected to be made. For AHS students, there are two possible ways to achieve an EFL gain.

- (1) As with all Basic Skills students, AHS level gains are achieved by improving an initial placement by at least one EFL level. As such, it is important that all AHS students are administered a post-test each program year. A pre-test can come from 90 days back for continuing students.
- (2) Students with an initial placement of Adult Secondary Low (ASEL) will be credited with an EFL gain when they have: (a) completed at least one AHS course in the program year **AND** (b) completed at least 50% of the credits required to complete the AHS program. In this situation, the student does not need a post-test. See example below:

### Initial Placement

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**Example: EFL Gain by AHS Credits:** A student who needs a total of 21 credits to graduate begins the program year. This student takes NRS-approved pretests and places at the ASE Low level. This student transfers in nine high school credits. The student completed three AHS credits in a previous program year. Since the 12 total credits earned are already over 50% of the total credits required to graduate, when the student completes at least one course in the current program year he or she will be credited with making an EFL gain.

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- (1) All students must have an initial placement each program year – including AHS students. A potential oversight with the AHS program comes when a student has placed at the ASE Low or ASE High level in the previous program year and the assumption is that their EFL gain will be accomplished through the AHS credit completion; or that they are already placed at the highest EFL level possible so there is no need to retest the student. This is faulty reasoning because, unless there is a score to be pulled forward for the student that places them at the ASEL or ASEH level, then neither of the two scenarios mentioned above can occur. If there is not a placement to be pulled forward, then the student can't be counted in NRS outcomes measures. Any EFL gain that may have been achieved and any follow-up measures that may have been achieved will not be credited to the program.

### Documentation and Recording of the AHS Classes

In order for a student to achieve an automatic level gain based on AHS credits, the information must be entered correctly and updated each program year.

- AHS students can make a level gain from ASEL to ASEH if they:
  - Have an initial placement of ASEL for the program year
  - Have completed 50% of their required credits
  - Complete at least one AHS credit in a program year

## Program Operational Guidelines

- AHS data is entered on XLGA and when the placement from a NRS assessment is ASEL, then the level gain is automatically given.
- AHS students who do not graduate, but continue the next program year will need a new NRS assessment.

A student can repeat an EFL each year depending on the initial placement. A student who begins a program year at the ASE Low level and makes a gain due to the completion of AHS credits may then also make the same gain the following program year based on the completion of more AHS credits if placed at ASEL at the start of the new program year.

### Error checks to employ before submitting LEIS/AHS data in Colleague

The following checks prior to graduating students in Degree Audit or submitting LEIS/AHS data are recommended to avoid having to correct data errors later:

- (1) Ensure that the total number of earned credits from those transferred in and those earned at the Community College is greater than or equal to the total number of required graduation credits.
- (2) Check that all AHS graduates have attempted and completed at least one credit (as indicated on XLGA) for the program year.
- (3) Check that any student one who has credits earned in a program year also has a 1st class attempt date and 1st class complete date for the program year on XLGA.
- (4) Students classified as AHS have the fields "required credits" and "credits transferred in" filled and are not blank on XLGA.
- (5) Check XLEAHS to confirm that all AHS students for the program year are listed.
- (6) Check XLAGRA to confirm that it is accurate for all AHS graduates at the time the report is submitted.

## Chapter 3 Teaching and Learning

### A. Curriculum Standards

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#### Required Program of Study

The required program of study for an Adult High School diploma program will be the same as North Carolina's *Standard Course of Study* that defines the appropriate content standards for each grade level and each high school course. These standards can be accessed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/>.

While the *Standard Course of Study* is set by the State, local community colleges will determine the curriculum materials they will use to deliver instruction. Adult High School programs should align the *Standard Course of Study* with each core credit to ensure consistency and rigor.

#### Course Content and Delivery Methods

The framework for AHS courses shall be competency-based and reflect the skills and knowledge students need to meet the content standards of the required program of study.

Colleges must have on file a course plan for all course offerings. At a minimum, course plan must include the following: course title, course description, student learning outcomes, and evaluation methodologies.

Methods of instruction should be flexible and determined by the local community college. Methods may include, but are not limited to direct instruction, a lab setting, or distance learning.

Students shall earn credit based on mastery of established competencies. Credit will not be earned through Carnegie units or on a pre-determined number of instructional hours. As such, the number of hours of instruction per course offering may vary from college to college.

The minimum number of students required in order to offer a particular class shall be determined by the local community college.

#### Technology

Under WIOA guidelines, colleges shall consider the degree to which their literacy activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning, and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance.

### B. Awarding Credit

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The AHS student shall complete the same number of credits and specified courses adopted by the State Board of Education that is required for graduation from the local public high school. These requirements differ depending on when students first entered ninth grade. Students may follow the graduation requirements of their high school cohort up to five years from the beginning date of their first enrollment into ninth grade. Beyond that time frame, all AHS students will follow the current Future-Ready Core graduation requirements. To determine course and credit requirements, see Attachment A. Credit is based on mastery of established competencies rather than on a certain number of hours of instruction.

### **Units of Credit – Electives**

A student may be granted elective credit from a variety of sources for which competencies can be documented and structured, so that students develop a range of skills which qualify them to succeed in the labor market or to enter technical, vocational, or college transfer programs in the community colleges.

#### Military

Elective credit may be awarded for military experience as documented by Department of Defense Form 214.

### **Advanced Placement – Honors Courses**

The AHS program does not offer advanced placement (AP) or honors courses. Colleges may award credit for previously earned AP or honors courses. Please note that Degree Audit cannot calculate weighted grade point averages.

### **Occupational Course of Study Transfer Credits**

Individuals who were previously enrolled in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) pathway in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction may be eligible for the Adult High School program. While the credits are transferable, the OCS pathway is not available in the AHS program.

### **Challenge Testing**

Local community colleges may permit a student to prove mastery of a core course through challenge testing. Challenge tests shall apply to core courses only and shall measure demonstrated mastery of course competencies. A minimum passing grade of 80/B is required for demonstrating mastery. A maximum of two credits may be earned through challenge testing.

### **Biology, Chemistry and Other Laboratory Courses (Optional)**

- Local community colleges may use their laboratory facilities to satisfy laboratory learning outcomes.
- A student may earn credit to satisfy the AHS program laboratory course competencies through laboratory science simulations or participating in laboratory learning experiences that will result in outcomes which will qualify the student to enter a local community college curriculum program.
- Local community colleges and local educational agencies may enter into cooperative agreements to use public school laboratory science facilities to satisfy biology, chemistry and other laboratory learning outcomes.
- Procedures on desired learning outcomes, costs, safety and liability for experiments conducted by the student inside and outside the classroom should be established.

C. Common Grading System

The North Carolina State Board of Education voted on January 8, 2015, to implement a 10-point grading scale for all high school students beginning in fall 2015. To be consistent with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), as of January 1, 2016, all adult high school programs will implement the 10-point grading scale. This new numeric system will replace the seven-point grading scale. The NC Department of Public Instruction states that the new grading scale will not be applied retroactively to grades from prior years. However, incoming student transcripts could list both numerical scores and letter grades and note that the seven-point grading scale was used through the 2014-15 school year.

Standard scale — Numeric Grades with a letter grade legend.

90-100 = 4.0	80-89 = 3.0	70-79 = 2.0	60-69 = 1.0	< 59 = 0.0	WF = 0.0
FF = 0.0	WP = 0.0	INC = 0.0	AUD = 0.0	P = 0.0	

Traditional letter grades shall be assigned by the local community college where the student has taken or is given credit for course work in the Adult High School diploma program.

Below are the numeric grades with a letter grade legend:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	< 59
I	Incomplete
W	Withdrawal

**Attachments**

**Attachments**

- A. Future-Ready Core Course and Credit Graduation Requirements Checklist
- B. Agreement of Affiliation - Template
- C. AHS Program 2015-2016 Updates
- D. Dr. Lisa Chapman, Memo to Colleges, Nov.4, 2014
- E. Numbered Memo CC11-035
- F. Numbered Memo CC94-129
- G. Sample AHS Diploma & AHS Transcript

**Attachment A**

## Future-Ready Core Course and Credit Requirements Checklist\*

For Ninth Graders Entering in 2012-13 and Later

<b>ENGLISH (4 Credits)</b>	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
<b>MATHEMATICS (4 Credits)</b>	Algebra I OR Integrated Math I <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Geometry OR Integrated Math II <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Algebra II OR Integrated Math III** <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
				1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
<b>SCIENCE (3 Credits)</b>	a physical science course <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Biology <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Earth/Environmental Science <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED		
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES (4 Credits)</b>	Civics and Economics <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	US History I and US History II OR AP US History*** <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	World History <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	additional social studies course*** <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
<b>HEALTH &amp; PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1 Credit)</b>	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED				
<b>ELECTIVES OR OTHER REQUIREMENTS (6 Credits)</b>	2 Elective credits of any combination from either: – Career and Technical Education (CTE) – Arts Education – Second Languages		4 Elective credits (four course concentration) strongly recommended from one of the following: – Career and Technical Education (CTE) – JROTC – Arts Education (e.g. Dance, Music, Theatre Arts, Visual Arts) – Any other subject area (e.g. mathematics, science, social studies, English)		
	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED
<b>SECOND LANGUAGE</b>	Not required for graduation. A two credit minimum is required for admission to a university in the UNC system. <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22 TOTAL CREDITS PLUS ANY LOCAL REQUIREMENTS</b>				

\* State course and credit requirements may be one of several requirements students may need to meet in order to receive a high school diploma. Local districts and schools may impose additional graduation requirements. Students are encouraged to meet with their school counselors to make sure they are on track to earn a high school diploma.

\*\* A student, in rare instances, may be able to take an alternative math course sequence as outlined under State Board of Education policy. Please see your school counselor for more details.

\*\*\* A student who takes AP US History instead of taking US History I and US History II must also take an additional social studies course in order to meet the four credits requirement.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to: Dr. Rebecca Garland, Chief Academic Officer :: Academic Services and Instructional Support  
6368 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6368 :: Telephone: (919) 807-3200 :: Fax: (919) 807-4065

**Attachment A**

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Future-Ready Core Course and Credit Requirements Checklist*</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">For Ninth Graders Entering in 2009-10 – 2011-12</p>					
<b>ENGLISH</b> (4 Credits)	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
<b>MATHEMATICS</b> (4 Credits)	Algebra I OR Integrated Math I <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Geometry OR Integrated Math II <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Algebra II OR Integrated Math III** <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
				1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	
<b>SCIENCE</b> (3 Credits)	a physical science course <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Biology <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	Earth/Environmental Science <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED		
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b> (3 Credits)	Civics and Economics <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	US History <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	World History <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED		
<b>HEALTH &amp; PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b> (1 Credit)	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED				
<b>ELECTIVES OR OTHER REQUIREMENTS</b> (6 Credits)	2 Elective credits of any combination from either: – Career and Technical Education (CTE) – Arts Education – Second Languages		4 Elective credits (four course concentration) strongly recommended from one of the following: – Career and Technical Education (CTE) – JROTC – Arts Education (e.g. Dance, Music, Theatre Arts, Visual Arts) – Any other subject area (e.g. mathematics, science, social studies, English)		
	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED	1 Credit <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED
<b>SECOND LANGUAGE</b>	Not required for graduation. A two credit minimum is required for admission to a university in the UNC system. <input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21 TOTAL CREDITS PLUS ANY LOCAL REQUIREMENTS</b>				

\* State course and credit requirements may be one of several requirements students may need to meet in order to receive a high school diploma. Local districts and schools may impose additional graduation requirements. Students are encouraged to meet with their school counselors to make sure they are on track to earn a high school diploma.

\*\* A student, in rare instances, may be able to take an alternative math course sequence as outlined under State Board of Education policy. Please see your school counselor for more details.



# **Adult High School Agreement of Affiliation**

Contact Information

Phone: (919) 807-7214

E-mail: [adulthoodliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:adulthoodliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

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Community College

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Local Education Agency

**Attachment B**

The purpose of the Adult High School (AHS) program is to provide a curriculum of instruction that will enable an individual to earn the Adult High School diploma secondary credential. The principles that govern the AHS diploma program were adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in December 1992 and by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges in January 1993. The following recommendations address the programmatic federal funding updates for adult literacy education and the state policies that govern the operation of an AHS program.

**Recommendations:**

1. The AHS diploma and transcript shall represent the same quality and appearance as issued by the local education agency. The names of both educational agencies shall be listed on the official AHS diploma.
2. The minimum number of graduation credits shall be the same as the number adopted by the State Board of Education. Community colleges will follow the graduation requirements as documented in the Future Ready Core graduation requirements (See Attachment B); however, NC Department of Public Instruction policy states that high school students may complete the course and credit requirements that were in effect the year they first entered ninth grade, provided that the student was enrolled in a North Carolina high school within the past 5 years.
3. The AHS curriculum shall be competency-based, consisting of the core and elective credits required for high school graduation. Electives shall be selected from a variety of program offerings as defined in the local Agreement of Affiliation and structured so that students develop a range of skills which prepare them to succeed in the labor market or to enter technical, vocational, or college transfer programs.
4. Students may be granted elective credit for post-secondary courses, military training, apprenticeship programs, business and industry training from which competencies can be documented and evaluated.
5. Students shall earn credit based on mastery of competencies demonstrated through assessments evaluated by the local community college. A student must earn at least one credit from the community college for an AHS diploma to be awarded.
6. While requirements for graduation shall be standardized, instruction may be offered through face-to-face, online, or hybrid and will be determined by the local community college.
7. Faculty or instructors who teach AHS courses shall, at a minimum, hold a Bachelor's Degree and have the knowledge and skills that enable them to meet the needs of adult learners.
8. Local community colleges may charge, as appropriate, costs for student textbooks as well as student activity fees and other fees including parking and graduation fees. Charges shall not include fees for registration.
9. Community colleges shall maintain permanent records for AHS graduates and provide transcript evaluation services for incoming or returning AHS students. Incoming students are required to provide community colleges with an official high school transcript signed by a principal or administrative designee in order to gain credit for previously earned credits.
10. The North Carolina Community College System shall provide an AHS Implementation Guide. This document shall be distributed to the Department of Public Instruction, the community college, and the local education agency.
11. The North Carolina Community College System, in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction, shall establish a process to:
  - Review Agreements of Affiliation between community colleges and local education agencies every three years, or when changes occur, for policy and procedural compliance
  - File Agreements of Affiliation with the North Carolina Community College System
  - Maintain a record of AHS graduates by college each program year

**Attachment B**

**Agreement of Affiliation**

It is mutually agreed between \_\_\_\_\_ Community College and the \_\_\_\_\_ Board of Education that the policies and recommendations of the State Board of Community Colleges and the State Board of Education which are documented in the Adult High School Implementation Guide shall govern the administration and supervision of the cooperative Adult High School program, students, and instructors. If either party to the agreement wishes to withdraw or alter in any way this cooperative agreement, it is understood that notice of at least four months shall be given to the cooperating agency and that students enrolled in the program at the time of notice shall be given the opportunity to complete the courses for which they are currently registered.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Community College President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Director or Coordinator of AHS program

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Attachment:**

Core course and credit requirements required for the Adult High School diploma

**Distribution:** The community college will electronically submit the *Agreement of Affiliation* to the North Carolina Community College System at [adultliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:adultliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

**Copies:**

1. Cooperating Board of Education
2. Cooperating community college and Board of Trustees



## Adult High School Diploma Program

Director's Institute  
Embassy Suites Cary, NC

July 27, 2015

### 2015-2016 Updates

- Adult High School/DPI New Cohort Graduation Rate Calculation:** At its meeting on March 4, 2015, the North Carolina State Board of Education recommended to adopt the inclusion of students who have completed the requirements for a standard diploma through collaboration with community colleges in the four-year and five-year cohort graduation rates. As such, any student who receives a standard diploma awarded in collaboration with a community college and signed by a local superintendent shall be considered a high school graduate and shall be included in the four-year and five-year cohort as appropriate. Please note that the adoption of this policy will not affect the workflow of the community colleges since the local education agency is notified of all AHS graduates when presented with diplomas for the signature of the local superintendent
- Adult High School Diploma/DPI New GPA Calculations for 2015-2016:** The State Board of Education voted on January 8, 2015, to implement a 10-point grading scale for all high school students beginning in fall 2015. As such, starting fall semester 2015, all adult high school programs will implement the 10-point grading scale in which scores between 90 and 100 earn an A. This will replace the seven-point grading scale in which scores between 93 and 100 earn an A. The NC Department of Public Instruction states that the new grading scale will not be applied retroactively to grades from prior years, however, transcripts could list both numerical scores and letter grades and note that the seven-point grading scale was used through the 2014-15 school year.

Standard scale — Numeric Grades with a letter grade legend.

90-100 = 4.0	80-89 = 3.0	70-79 = 2.0	60-69 = 1.0	< 59 = 0.0	WF = 0.0
FF = 0.0	WP = 0.0	INC = 0.0	AUD = 0.0	P = 0.0	

### Questions? Please don't hesitate to contact either Diane or Amy:

Diane Steinbeiser, HSE Director, Coordinator of ASE  
steinbeiser@nccommunitycolleges.edu

Amy Cooke, Coordinator of ABE/ASE Professional Development  
cookea@nccommunitycolleges.edu



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

*R. Scott Ralls, Ph.D.*

*President*

November 4, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Adult High School Coordinators/Directors and Basic Skills Directors

FROM: Dr. Lisa Chapman, Senior Vice President for Programs & Student Services/CAO

SUBJECT: Clarification - Adult High School Diploma & Graduation Requirements

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has expressed concern that our community colleges are issuing Adult High School diplomas without the required attribution and signatures. Please note that the diploma is issued jointly by the Local Education Agency (LEA) and the local community college. Accordingly, attribution of both educational institutions is to be on the diploma as well as signatures of joint parties of the community college and administrative unit of the local Board of Education. Additional information regarding the Adult High School diploma can be found in the *Adult High School Diploma Program Procedures Manual, 1994, page 10*:

AHS Diploma

1. The title of the AHS program credential shall be: Adult High School Diploma.
2. The AHS diploma shall be awarded in cooperation between the local boards of education and community college trustees with appropriate signatures representing both educational systems.
3. The credential shall be similar in appearance and quality to the regular high school diploma awarded locally (See Attachment G).

Another area of concern is the number of high school credits required for graduation. Periodically the State Board of Education changes graduation requirements to better reflect the skills and knowledge that students need for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

DPI's policy states that high school students may complete the course and credit requirements that were in effect the year they first entered ninth grade for the first time. The intent of this policy was to "grandfather" students (who are currently enrolled and attending high school) into the graduation requirements when they first enrolled in high school; not to circumvent new graduation standards. As such, DPI is requesting that community colleges follow the current graduation requirements as noted in the Future-Ready Core graduation requirements for our Adult high School students rather than the historical graduation requirements. Those AHS students who are currently enrolled and attending classes may continue to follow the historical graduation requirements in their program of study. However moving forward, students may follow the graduation requirements of their high school cohort up to five years from the beginning date of their enrollment into ninth grade. Beyond that defined time-frame, all new AHS students who enroll should follow the current Future-Ready Core graduation requirements.

Please contact Dr. Randy Whitfield at [whitfieldr@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:whitfieldr@nccommunitycolleges.edu) or Ms. Diane Steinbeiser at [steinbeiserd@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:steinbeiserd@nccommunitycolleges.edu) if you have any questions regarding these procedures.



C: Presidents

Senior Continuing Education Administrators

Chief Academic Officers

E-Mail



**NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

*Dr. R. Scott Ralls, President*

December 23, 2011

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Presidents  
Chief Academic Officers  
Senior Continuing Education Administrators

**FROM:** Dr. Sharon E. Morrissey, Senior Vice President and Chief Academic Officer  
Academic and Student Services

Dr. Sandra W. Williams, Senior Vice President and Chief  
Technology and Workforce Development

**SUBJECT: Enrollment of High School Students in Noncredit Courses**

This memorandum is a follow-up to a memorandum sent to you on November 14, 2011, on the subject “High School Students Taking Continuing Education Courses.” In that memorandum, we informed you that the System Office was pursuing legislative clarification to address high school students’ ability to take continuing education courses.

On December 8, 2011, the Governor signed into law HB 796 (Session Law 2011-419), which amends G.S. 115D-20 to allow high school students 16 years and older “to take noncredit courses, except adult basic skills, subject to rules promulgated by the State Board of Community Colleges.”

Pending the development of State Board rules to support this legislation, colleges may continue to enroll high school students 16 years and older in noncredit courses. High school students must pay registration fees for continuing education courses, except for students who qualify for a public safety agency fee waiver as defined by G.S. 115D-5(b).

SEM/SWW/

c: Kennon Briggs  
Jennifer Haygood  
Jennifer Willis  
Shante Martin  
Barbara Boyce  
Van Wilson

**CC11-035**  
**Email**



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

230 W. JONES STREET  
RALEIGH, NC 27603-1887

April 27, 1994

ROBERT W. SCOTT  
System President

919-733-7051

MEMORANDUM

TO: Presidents  
Superintendents

FROM: Robert W. Scott, President of Community College System  
Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Procedures Manual for the Adult High School Program

We are pleased to provide you with the attached Adult High School Diploma Program Procedures Manual that will give you guidance in implementing the new standards adopted by our respective state boards to govern the Adult High School Diploma Program. The new standards are to become effective with students entering this program in the fall term of 1994.

The manual was developed by the Department of Community Colleges in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction. The Agreement of Affiliation also has been updated to reflect the new standards. We are requesting that where the Adult High School Diploma Program is being offered, the local community college staff confer with their counterparts in the cooperating public school system on the procedures to implement the new standards.

Those students who will not complete their program of study by the fall term of 1994 may be permitted to qualify for graduation by the end of the 1995 summer term in accordance with the conditions of the Agreement of Affiliation under which they enrolled. In meeting graduation requirements under the new standards, students may be given credit for course work completed prior to the fall term of 1994.

We thank you for your continued cooperation and commitment to offer an opportunity to the citizens of this state who wish to complete their high school education.

DFB  
Attachment

CC 94-129  
"Paper copy"

**South Piedmont Community College**  
Board of Education, Union County Schools  
Monroe, North Carolina



*This Certifies That*



*Has Satisfactorily Completed The Course Of Study Prescribed By The Union County Board of Education  
In Cooperation With South Piedmont Community College And Is Therefore Entitled To This*

**HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**

*Presented on this 10th day of May, 2013*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent, Union County Schools

\_\_\_\_\_  
President, South Piedmont Community College

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Trustees





# **Adult High School Agreement of Affiliation**

Contact Information

Phone: (919) 807-7214

E-mail: [adulthoodliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:adulthoodliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

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Community College

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Local Education Agency

## Adult High School (AHS) – Agreement of Affiliation

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The purpose of the Adult High School program is to provide a curriculum of instruction that will enable an individual to earn the Adult High School diploma secondary credential. The principles that govern the AHS diploma program were adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in December 1992 and by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges in January 1993. The following recommendations address the programmatic federal funding updates for adult literacy education and the state policies that govern the operation of an AHS program.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The AHS diploma and transcript shall represent the same quality and appearance as issued by the local education agency. The names of both educational agencies shall be listed on the official AHS diploma.
2. The minimum number of graduation credits shall be the same as the number adopted by the State Board of Education. Community colleges will follow the graduation requirements as documented in the Future Ready Core graduation requirements; however, NC Department of Public Instruction policy states that high school students may complete the course and credit requirements that were in effect the year they first entered ninth grade, provided that the student was enrolled in a North Carolina high school within the past 5 years.
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5. Students shall earn credit based on mastery of competencies demonstrated through assessments evaluated by the local community college. A student must earn at least one credit from the community college for an AHS diploma to be awarded.
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10. The North Carolina Community College System shall provide an Adult High School Implementation Guide. This document shall be distributed to the Department of Public Instruction, the community college, and the local education agency.
11. The North Carolina Community College System, in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction, shall establish a process to:
  - Review Agreements of Affiliation between community colleges and local education agencies every three years, or when changes occur, for policy and procedural compliance
  - File Agreements of Affiliation with the North Carolina Community College System
  - Maintain a record of AHS graduates by college each program year

**Agreement of Affiliation**

It is mutually agreed between \_\_\_\_\_ Community College and the \_\_\_\_\_ Board of Education that the policies and recommendations of the State Board of Community Colleges and the State Board of Education which are documented in the Adult High School Implementation Guide shall govern the administration and supervision of the cooperative Adult High School program, students, and instructors. If either party to the agreement wishes to withdraw or alter in any way this cooperative agreement, it is understood that notice of at least four months shall be given to the cooperating agency and that students enrolled in the program at the time of notice shall be given the opportunity to complete the courses for which they are currently registered.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Community College President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Director or Coordinator of AHS program

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Attachment:**

Core course and credit requirements required for the Adult High School diploma

**Distribution:** The community college will electronically submit the *Agreement of Affiliation* to the North Carolina Community College System at [adultliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:adultliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

**Copies:**

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