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ABSTRACT

This booklet is a self-help guide for students to help them think about some of the questions they need to ask themselves before they enter senior high school; consider what courses they will take to earn a high school diploma; and identify the wide range of opportunities that are available to them in senior high school. The first section, "Before You Start," presents questions which help the students to assess their goals, consider their strengths and difficulties, and explore their interests in activities. The second section, "Earning a Diploma," describes the types of diplomas offered, credit accumulation, and choosing courses. The third section, "Frequently Asked Questions," presents particular questions about spares, prerequisites, and courses in French. The fourth section, "Courses You May Be Taking," describes the core courses and some of the complementary courses which may be offered in the high schools. The final section, "Getting Your Program Together," presents diploma requirements and a chart to serve as a record of the courses students successfully complete. (ABL)

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Parents and students who would like more information about the new senior high school diploma requirements should contact their local school or school board, or nearest regional office of Alberta Education.

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Before You Start

You have your own needs, interests and talents. So it's a good idea to take some time now to do some thinking about your personal goals. It is also a good time to look at your abilities and potential realistically. This will help you plan your high school program. This booklet will help you see how you can keep your options open and explore areas that interest you.

You may want to discuss your plans with people who know you well — your parents, teachers, counsellors and friends. It's also a good idea to spend some time investigating the high school you may be attending and the occupations in which you may be interested.

Consider the following questions:

1. *What do you want to do when you graduate from high school?*

In Grade 9 you won't plan your whole adult life. But beginning senior high school is the time to start thinking about the directions you plan to take. These decisions will help you decide which high school programs and course sequences will be your best choice.

Many options are open to you when you leave high school. Which of the following are you presently considering:

- go to college or a technical institute
- go to university
- get a job right after graduating from high school
- start a business
- other _____

Perhaps, like many students, you are not sure what you want to do when you leave high school or which occupation you want. Don't worry! High school is a time to explore and investigate.

Even if you have already decided which occupation you want, it is a good idea to consider alternatives. If your first career plan doesn't work out, you will have a back-up plan ready for action.

Name some of the occupations in which you are interested now. (Did you know that there are over 7,500 occupations from which to choose?)

2. *What are your strengths? In what areas do you have difficulty?*

What's important is that you aim to be the very best you can be. Don't sell yourself short. But don't set yourself up for failure, either. Think back over your past years in school.

- In which courses were you most successful?

- Which courses did you enjoy the most?

- Which courses did you enjoy the least?

- Which courses did you find the most difficult?

- Could you have earned better marks in your junior high classes?

Yes No

- What do you think you could do to improve your marks in high school?

3. *What activities are important to you?*

Everyone needs a balance among the various parts of their life. High school offers many opportunities for fun and learning, both inside and outside the classroom. It is a good time to explore your interests and aptitudes.

- What activities do you enjoy now and want to continue?

- What activities would you like to try?

- Find out which activities are available in the high school you will be attending. Try to include them in your schedule to participate in some of them.

sports _____

clubs _____

student government _____

social _____

other _____

Earning a Diploma

What is a diploma?

A high school diploma is given to those students who successfully complete specified courses and earn a minimum of 100 credits. You may choose between two high school diplomas:

- General High School Diploma
- Advanced High School Diploma

How do the two diplomas differ?

The Advanced Diploma tends to be more difficult. It has more **Core** requirements (courses you must take) and less opportunity to take **Complementary** courses (courses you choose to take).

The General Diploma requires the same core subjects as the Advanced Diploma. There is more choice in the level of difficulty of core courses, and there are fewer courses in mathematics and science. There is also more opportunity to take complementary courses.

It is important to note that if you select your courses carefully, you can qualify for admission to university, technical school or college with either of the two diplomas. If you already know the college or university you plan to attend when you leave high school, it is a good idea to find out its entrance requirements now. This will help you know which courses you need.

What is a credit?

Each course is worth a specific number of credits, usually 3 or 5, although some courses are as high as 15 credits. With more credits, more content is covered and more time is spent on that course. One credit usually takes approximately 25 hours of instruction.

Credits are earned by achieving a final course mark of 50%.

You must earn a minimum of 100 credits to obtain either of the high school diplomas. However, many students earn over 120 credits. This would reduce the number of spares you would have, but would allow you to explore a wider variety of courses.

How do I choose my courses in Grade 10?

There are two types of courses:

- Core Courses** - courses you must take
- Complementary Courses** - courses you choose to take

In Grade 10 you will probably take from 34 to 40 credits (8 to 10 courses), depending on the school you attend. Of those, 21 credits will be **Core** courses and from 13 to 19 credits will be in **Complementary** courses.

To plan for Grade 10, follow these 3 steps:

1. Decide which diploma you would like to earn:

- General High School Diploma
- Advanced High School Diploma

Remember:

You can change your mind and switch to the other diploma later if you wish, but it is a good idea to start your program with the goal of earning one of the diplomas. The charts at the back of this handbook describe the two diplomas in detail.

Note:

There is a lot of flexibility in the high school program. You can change your mind at any time. But, as in any other activity, making a change may require some extra time and effort.

2. Decide which CORE courses you will take.

For General Diploma students, core courses are available at two or three levels of difficulty:

- “10” - highest academic challenge
- “13” - less academic challenge
- “14” - least academic challenge

Review the course descriptions on page 8. Make your decision on the basis of your past success in these subjects and on the diploma you want to earn.

If you have decided that you want a **General Diploma**, in Grade 10 you need to take:

Core Courses	Minimum Credits	
English	5	English 10 or 13
Social Studies	5	Social 10 or 13
Mathematics	5	Math 10 or 13 or 14
Science	3	Biology 10
		Chemistry 10 } select one
		Physics 10 }
		Science 14 }
Physical Education	3	Phys. Ed. 10

If you have decided that you want an **Advanced Diploma**, in Grade 10 you need to take:

Core Courses	Minimum Credits	
English	5	English 10
Social Studies	5	Social 10
Mathematics	5	Math 10
Science	3	Biology 10
		Chemistry 10 } select one
		Physics 10 }
Physical Education	3	Phys. Ed. 10

3. **Decide which COMPLEMENTARY courses you want to take to complete your Grade 10 program.** You will have approximately 13 to 19 credits (4 to 6 courses) available for complementary courses. You may select from the **Complementary** courses which are offered in your school, or from other **Core** courses (for example, additional science courses).

Remember:

Students in the Advanced Diploma route will need to take a minimum of 10 credits (including a Grade 12 level course) in fine arts, second languages, home economics, business education, industrial education or vocational education. You will need to select a complementary course in Grade 10 or Grade 11 to ensure you can take the Grade 12 course.

- **What complementary courses are available?**

Each senior high school offers different complementary courses, depending on the facilities available in Alberta high schools in Grades 10, 11, and 12. The courses are grouped into the following specialties. Circle those you would be interested in taking.

Physical Education

Fine Arts: Music, Art, Drama

Second Languages: French, Ukrainian, German, Italian, Latin, Spanish

Home Economics: Clothing and Textiles, Food Studies, Personal Living Skills

Business Education: Accounting, Basic Business, Computer Processing, Law, Marketing, Office Procedures, Shorthand, Typewriting, Word Processing

Industrial Education/Vocational Education: Graphic Communications, Drafting, Mechanics, Autobody, Building Construction, Machine Shop, Piping, Sheet Metal, Welding, Electricity, Beauty Culture, Food Preparation, Health Services, Horticulture

Social Science Options: Psychology, Sociology, Geography, Philosophy, Ethics, History, Economics

Science Options: Agriculture

Language Arts Options: Reading, Communications, Literature

In addition, there are a number of complementary courses which have been locally developed. These include such courses as Religious Studies, languages, fine arts programs, vocational programs and international baccalaureate programs.

- **Things to consider when choosing complementary courses:**
 - Which complementary courses will help me prepare for my career?

- Which complementary courses seem interesting and would broaden my personal skills?

- Which complementary courses will help me prepare for my studies in university, college or technical school?

Some complementary courses will help you build skills suitable for employment or apprenticeship. Approximately 25 to 35 credits of study in a particular area will give you a good basis for getting a job in such fields as automotives, drafting or secretarial work. If you carefully plan which complementary courses you take, you can earn an Advanced or General Diploma as well as prepare for a job.

It is important to remember that one school can not offer all of these complementary courses. If there is a course in which you are particularly interested that is not offered at the high school you will attend, ask your counsellor about courses offered by the Alberta Correspondence School.

Note:

Some students have the opportunity to choose the high school they will attend. This is most often the case in Edmonton and Calgary. Your teachers or counsellors can provide additional information about choosing a high school.

Frequently Asked Questions



What is a spare?



You may have some open spaces, or "spares" in your timetable. This time is provided for study, research or homework. In some schools you will be expected to be in the library or study area during these times.

How are the classes timetabled in high school?



Class periods in high schools usually range from 40 minutes to 80 minutes. Students usually take from 35 to 42 credits per year. Courses which are numbered at the "10" level (Math 10, Social 13, Drafting 12) are usually taken when you are in Grade 10; "20" level courses are usually taken in Grade 11 and "30" level courses are usually taken in Grade 12.

A large number of Alberta high schools offer courses in the semester system. In this system, courses in Semester I start in September and finish in January; in Semester II they start in February and finish in June. In a semestered school, a 5-credit course (125 hours) could be scheduled daily, for 80-minute periods, from September through January. A 3-credit course will take approximately half the time of a 5-credit course and is often taught every second day.

What are prerequisites?



Most high school courses are organized in to sequences which are taught in Grade 10, Grade 11 and Grade 12. To move to the next level you must earn a final mark of at least 50% in the lower level course (e.g., the prerequisite for Math 23 is Math 13; for Typewriting 30 the prerequisite is Typewriting 20).

What happens if I fail a course?

Earning less than 50% in a course will mean that you do not have the necessary prerequisite to register in the next level of that course sequence. For example, failing Math 10 would mean that you did not earn the 5 credits assigned to Math 10, and you would not be able to take Math 20.

However, high school provides a lot of flexibility. If you fail a course, you may do one of the following:

- retake it and try to improve your mark
- if it is a core course, move to a different course sequence that has less academic challenge. (For example, after failing Mathematics 10, you may, with the permission of the principal of the school, move to Math 23. If you are successful in Math 23, you would then earn credits in both Math 23 and Math 13.)
- take a course from a different program area.

Remember:

If you run into problems with a course or in any other part of your school life, be sure to talk to a teacher or a school counsellor. They want you to enjoy high school and to do as well as you possibly can.

What if I want to take my high school courses in French?

In some Alberta high schools, students may take some of their courses in French. Your counsellor can advise you about where courses in French are offered.

What is the difference between the Francophone and French immersion programs?

The Francophone program is intended for students for whom French is a first language (and who qualify under Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms). If French is your first language, you will find that this program meets your linguistic and cultural needs. All of your classes would be taken in French (with the exception of English 10-20-30). You would take both English 10-20-30 or English 12-23-33 and Langue et littérature 10-20-30.

French immersion programs are for students who are not Francophone by legal definition. In this program students gain a greater knowledge of the French language and develop an appreciation for French culture. Some of their courses are conducted in French. Students in the French immersion program also take English 10-20-30 or English 12-23-33.

What if my high school doesn't offer all the courses I need or want to take?

The Alberta Correspondence School offers correspondence courses in all core high school courses and some complementary courses. Your school counsellor will be able to give you more information.

If You Were...

If you were Carol, what would you do?

While Carol's parents are both teachers, the classroom has never been her favourite place. She finds academic courses such as mathematics and English very difficult, she dislikes reading and studying, and her marks have usually been below average -- at times she barely passes. Carol enjoys gardening and would like to work with plants. She feels that her parents would be very proud of her if she were to go to university. However, Carol has heard about a college course that prepares students to work in horticulture. The college accepts students who have completed the minimum requirements of a General High School Diploma.

8 Courses You May Be Taking

.....

The following describes the core courses and some of the complementary courses which may be offered in the high school you attend. Contact your counsellor or teacher for more information on the courses that are available. Circle the course numbers you think you might take.

Core Programs

.....

Career and Life Management (CALM) 20 - minimum 3 credits

Every student will take Career and Life Management 20 at some point during high school. In this course, you will learn about and build upon your personal strengths. You will discuss issues that are relevant to you, that deal with well being, relating to others, careers, and living independently. Depending on the school you attend, CALM may also include consumer and investment choices, entrepreneurship, dealing with crises, human sexuality, and how to relate to other cultures.

Physical Education - minimum 3 credits

In Physical Education 10 you will be involved in activities selected from each of the following categories: aquatics, dance, fitness, games, gymnastics, individual activities and outdoor pursuits. You will not be expected to become an expert at each of the activities, but you will develop a better understanding of your personal fitness. You will also discover activities that you will enjoy in your leisure time. Students will be exempted from certain dimensions where medical or religious reasons warrant.

You may continue to take physical education in Grades 11 and 12. In the higher level courses, you will concentrate on developing your skills in specific activities. Taking physical education throughout high school is a good balance with your academic courses.

Language Arts - minimum 15 credits

English 10-20-30

English 10-20-30 is a challenging academic course. You will study great works of literature, will develop your writing and reading skills, and will learn to analyze the literature you read.

English 13-23-33

In English 13-23-33 you will study a variety of novels, plays and short stories that address situations in life that you may be familiar with. You will develop your writing skills in a practical way: by writing business correspondence, and by researching and writing about topics that may be related to your other courses.

Langue et littérature 10-20-30

Students for whom French is a first language (who qualify under Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms) are required to take Langue et littérature 10-20-30 and English 10-20-30 or English 13-23-33.

Social Studies - minimum 15 credits

Students in the General High School Diploma route may take either Social Studies 10-20-30 or 13-23-33. Students in the Advanced High School Diploma route will take Social Studies 10-20-30. Your school counsellor and teacher will help you decide which sequence is best for you.

Social Studies 10-20-30

Social Studies 10-20-30 is the best choice for students who are good at working independently. You will develop your inquiry skills, and will be asked to form opinions and to defend them. You will write research papers and will participate in class discussions and presentations.

Social Studies 13-23-33

Students in Social Studies 13-23-33 will study similar issues and topics to those of students in Social Studies 10-20-30. Social Studies 13-23-33 may be a good choice for you if you have had difficulty with social studies in junior high school.

10 Second Languages

Students may take French, German, Italian, Latin, Spanish or Ukrainian depending on which high school they attend. Some schools offer other languages as well. Again, your counsellor can help you find more information about your choices.

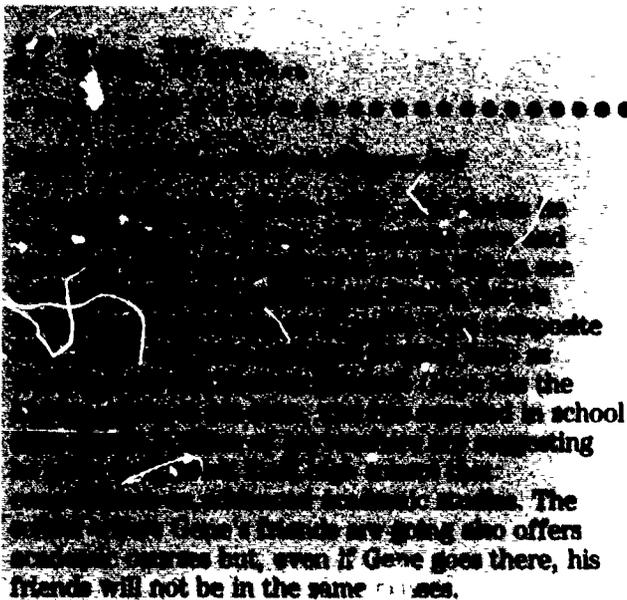
If English is a new language for you, courses in English as a Second Language are also available

Practical Arts

Practical arts courses include industrial arts, vocational education, home economics, and business education. The practical arts courses help prepare you for a job when leaving high school, develop your personal skills and interests, or prepare you for post-secondary programs.

Other Complementary Courses

You may also take additional courses in physical education, social science options, science options and language arts.



Getting Your Program Together

Now that you know a bit more about the high school program, use the planning worksheet on the back cover of this booklet to plan your program. Check the course numbers you think you might want to take. You can use the chart on the inside cover to serve as a record of the courses you successfully complete.

Remember that the Alberta high school program is quite flexible; you can change your route without too much difficulty. There is enough room to repeat a course if necessary. You can also move from a 10-20-30 series of courses to a 13-23-33 series of courses. Or, you can move from a 13-23-33 series to a 10-20-30 series. You can change your mind if your plans have altered.

You should also realize that there are turning points in your education. If you change certain decisions, some extra effort may be required. Picking up courses you've missed may mean summer school or extra time in high school.

So plan carefully. Don't be afraid of a little trial and error, and to experiment. And don't sell yourself short!

Transitional General High School Diploma Requirements

Students Entering Grade 10 in 1988-89¹

Subject	Credits (minimum)	Course(s) (minimum)	Eligible Courses ² and Credits ³	Diploma Exam
English	15 Credits	2 Courses	ENG 10(5) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
			ENG 13(5) 23(5) 33(5)	Yes
Langue et littérature⁴	15 Credits	3 Courses	LL 10(5) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
Social Studies	15 Credits	3 Courses	SOC ST 10(5) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
			SOC ST 13(5) 23(5) 33(5)	Yes
Mathematics	5 Credits	1 Course	MATH 10(5)	No
			MATH 13(5)	No
			MATH 15(5)	No
Science	6 Credits	2 Courses	SCIENCE 11(3, 5) 24(3, 5)	No
			BIOLOGY 10(3) 20(3)	No
			CHEMISTRY 10(3) 20(3)	No
			PHYSICS 10(3) 20(3)	No
Physical Education	3 Credits	1 Course	PHYS ED 10(3, 4, 5)	No
Career and Life Management	3 Credits	1 Course	CALM 20(3, 4, 5)	No
A minimum of two Grade 12 level courses other than English and Social Studies⁵	10 Credits	2 Courses	As specified in the Junior-Senior High School Handbook	No
57 Specified Credits		43 Unspecified Credits		

¹ Students are not deemed to be in Grade 10 until they have been promoted to Grade 10 in accordance with the **Junior-Senior High School Handbook**.

² Entry into all courses listed must adhere to the requirements outlined in the **Junior-Senior High School Handbook**.

³ Credits are indicated in parentheses.

⁴ Students of parents identified under Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms may present Langue et littérature 10-20-30 as a diploma requirement, but must also present English 10-20-30 or English 13-23-33. New course designations will replace Langue et littérature 10-20-30 in the future.

⁵ Students of parents identified under Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms may present English 30 or 33 as one of the Grade 12 level courses required in addition to Social Studies 30 or 33 and Langue et littérature 30.

Transitional Advanced High School Diploma Requirements

Students Entering Grade 10 in 1988-89¹

Category	Subject	Credits (minimum)	Course(s) (minimum)	Eligible Courses ² and Credits ³	Diploma Exam
A	English	15 Credits	3 Courses	ENG 10(6) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
	Langue et littérature ⁴	15 Credits	3 Courses	LL 10(5) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
	Social Studies	15 Credits	3 Courses	SOC ST 10(5) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
	Mathematics	15 Credits	3 Courses	MATH 10(5) 20(5) 30(5)	Yes
B	Science	11 Credits	3 Courses	BIOLOGY 10(3) 20(3) 30(5)	Yes
				CHEMISTRY 10(3) 20(3) 30(5)	Yes
				PHYSICS 10(3) 20(3) 30(5)	Yes
C	Second Languages Practical Arts or Fine Arts	10 Credits	2 Courses	As specified in the Junior-Senior High School Handbook	No
	Physical Education	3 Credits	1 Course	PHYS ED 10(3, 4, 5)	No
	Career and Life Management	3 Credits	1 Course	CALM 20(3, 4, 5)	No
		72 Specified Credits	28 Unspecified Credits		

¹ Students are not deemed to be in Grade 10 until they have completed the junior high program and have been promoted to Grade 10 in accordance with the **Junior-Senior High School Handbook**.

² Entry into all courses listed must adhere to the requirements outlined in the **Junior-Senior High School Handbook**.

³ Credits are indicated in parentheses.

⁴ Students of parents identified under Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms may present Langue et littérature 10-20-30 as a Category A diploma requirement. For these students, the Category C requirement is English 10-20-30. Students whose parents are not identified under Section 23 of the Charter may apply Langue et littérature 10-20-30 toward the Category C requirement. New course designations will replace Langue et littérature 10-20-30 in the future.

