

UPDATES ON OHIO HONORS DIPLOMAS

CLASS OF 2026 AND BEYOND

From the Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy Academic Office

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH OHIO HONORS DIPLOMAS?

In the past few months, the state of Ohio has [made a few substantive changes](#) to the pathways for Ohio high school students to earn one of several designated “honors” diplomas. In view of several changes to the process, CVCA will no longer automatically review students’ high school transcripts during their senior year to audit whether a student qualifies for a particular state-defined honors diploma. However, students at CVCA may still seek one of Ohio’s honors diplomas, and the school will award this honor to any CVCA student who can verify that he or she has met all the requirements attached to that particular Ohio honors diploma.

WHAT IS CVCA’S POSTURE TOWARD STATE HONORS DIPLOMAS?

Like many other private schools, CVCA awards commencement honors to its students, which, in our view, equal or surpass the requirements to earn an honors diploma from the state of Ohio (3.5 cumulative GPA honor cord, School of Distinction, Royal Scholar, Latin Honors, etc.). It is also important to understand that an honors diploma from Ohio holds virtually no bearing on a CVCA student’s access to (or scholarship opportunities for) a specific college or university. For these reasons, the school does not emphasize or strongly promote the state’s honors diplomas. Nevertheless, for some CVCA students, achieving an honors diploma is an important objective. So, the Academic Office at CVCA has provided this document to explain our standard process for verifying and awarding an honors diploma to a CVCA graduate.

HOW CAN A CVCA STUDENT EARN AN HONORS DIPLOMA?

The state of Ohio has defined six varieties of honors diplomas and distinct paths to earn each one of them (graph with additional information included below). Any student who wishes to earn one of Ohio’s honors diplomas must review this information with his or her family and set out to meet each of the requirements pertaining to the honors diploma upon which the student has set his or her sights.

WHAT TYPES OF HONORS DIPLOMAS CAN BE EARNED?

Ohio currently offers a standard Academic Honors Diploma, an International Baccalaureate Honors Diploma, a Career Tech Honors Diploma, a STEM Honors Diploma, an Arts Honors Diploma, and a Social Science & Civic Engagement Honors Diploma.

WHEN SHOULD A STUDENT BEGIN WORKING ON HONORS DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS?

To meet each of the qualifications for earning an honors diploma, a student will likely have to set a course for eligibility in his or her freshman year. It is the student’s responsibility to be sure that all of Ohio’s requirements for the honors diploma he or she is pursuing have been met through scheduled coursework (see school counselor for more details on scheduling) and other learning opportunities provided at (or outside of) CVCA

by the time of graduation. The student will present this evidence to CVCA's academic office for consideration **at least three months prior to the date of the commencement service.**

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE OHIO HONORS DIPLOMAS?

An honors diploma informational document [can be viewed](#) on the Ohio Department of Education website or on a printed pamphlet available in CVCA's Academic Office. The key element of the handout is pictured here, where the state lays out the requirements for each honors diploma:

Requirements	Academic Honors Diploma	International Baccalaureate Honors Diploma	Career Tech Honors Diploma	STEM Honors Diploma	Arts Honors Diploma	Social Science & Civic Engagement Honors Diploma
1.	4th Math must be greater than Algebra 2	4th Math must be greater than Algebra 2	4th Math must be greater than Algebra 2	4th Math must be greater than Algebra 2	4th Math must be greater than Algebra 2	4th Math must be greater than Algebra 2
2.	1 additional unit of Advanced Science ²	1 additional unit Advanced Science ²	Proficient pathway score on WebXams ³	1 additional unit Advanced Science ²	4 units fine arts	2 additional units Social Studies
3.	1 additional unit of Social Studies	1 additional unit Social Studies	4 units of Career-Tech Courses	2 units of additional STEM Courses as electives	Electives - 2 Units of Fine Arts (may overlap with general 4 units)	Meet the requirements to earn the Citizenship Seal
4.	3 sequential units of one world language, or no less than 2 sequential units of two world languages studied	3 sequential units of one world language, or no less than 2 sequential units of two world languages studied	2 units of one world language	3 sequential units of one world language, or no less than 2 sequential units of two world languages studied	3 sequential units of one world language, or no less than 2 sequential units of two world languages studied	3 sequential units of one world language, or no less than 2 sequential units of two world languages studied
5.	3.5 on a 4.0 scale	3.5 on a 4.0 scale	3.5 on a 4.0 scale	3.5 on a 4.0 scale	3.5 on a 4.0 scale	3.5 on a 4.0 scale
6.	27 ACT/1280 SAT ⁶	27 ACT/1280 SAT ⁶	27 ACT/1280 SAT ⁶ /WorkKeys ⁵	27 ACT/1280 SAT ⁶	27 ACT/1280 SAT ⁶	27 ACT/1280 SAT ⁶
7.	Earn 2 additional diploma seals, *not including the Honors Diploma Seal	Meet requirements to earn the Seal of Biliteracy	Meet the requirements to earn the Industry-Recognized Credential Seal or Technology Seal	Meet the requirements to earn the Industry-Recognized Credential Seal or Technology Seal	Meet the requirements to earn the Fine Arts Seal	Meet the requirements to earn the Community Service Seal
8.	Meet requirements of one of the Experiential Learning options ⁴	Meet requirements of one of the Experiential Learning options ⁴	Meet requirements of one of the Experiential Learning options ⁴	Meet requirements of one of the Experiential Learning options ⁴	Meet requirements of one of the Experiential Learning options ⁴	Meet requirements of one of the Experiential Learning options ⁴
Substitution	Students may replace one of the blue options with a "Student Strength Demonstration" ¹	Students may replace one of the blue options with a "Student Strength Demonstration" ¹	Students may replace one of the blue options with a "Student Strength Demonstration" ¹	Students may replace one of the blue options with a "Student Strength Demonstration" ¹	Students may replace one of the blue options with a "Student Strength Demonstration" ¹	Students may replace one of the blue options with a "Student Strength Demonstration" ¹

*Graduation "seal" requirements can still be met, even though CVCA, as a non-public Ohio school, does not formally award "seals" on diplomas.

**The [portfolio](#) option may often be met through activities completed in a CVCA school of distinction. See Mr. Ling (eling@cvcaroyals.org) for more information on this point.