

High School BASICS

Brought to you by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority



How can my GPA help pay my way?

Good grades can mean money for college as you increase your odds of getting more scholarships. As a Kentuckian at a KEES-eligible school, each year you make at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA), you are eligible for a Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES).

There are also thousands of college scholarships available and many have minimum GPA requirements to qualify. More colleges will be interested in admitting you if you have higher grades, and may increase your financial aid offer with additional scholarships depending on your planned course of study. Some research shows higher grades in high school can also lead to higher-paying jobs.



What are credits?

A credit is what you earn for passing a class. In most cases, you earn one credit if you pass a class that lasts a year and half a credit for a class that lasts one semester (like PE or Health). If you're in a public school, the state requires you to have a number of credits in certain areas to get your diploma. Minimum diploma requirements, are the absolute least you can do to graduate, while the Pre-College Curriculum outlines the types of classes that four-year public universities in Kentucky expect you to have taken before you can enroll.

You're better off if you start with Pre-College Curriculum courses now, even if you don't think you'll go to a four-year college. You could end up changing your mind. Here are the requirements:

Subject	Minimum Diploma Requirements* Source: Kentucky Department of Education	Pre-College Curriculum Source: Council on Postsecondary Education
English/Language Arts	4 credits: English I, II, and two additional English/Language Arts credits aligned with the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP)	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
Mathematics	4 credits: Algebra I, geometry, and two additional mathematics credits aligned with the student's ILP	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
Science	3 credits (at least 1 aligned with the student's ILP)	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
Social Studies	3 credits (at least 1 aligned with the student's ILP)	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
Health	1/2 credit**	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
Physical Education	1/2 credit**	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
History and Appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts	1 credit	Same as minimum high school graduation requirements.
Foreign Language		2 credits of a single world language or demonstrated competency (requirement may be completed as part of college coursework)
Electives	6 credits (at least 4 aligned with the student's ILP)	6 credits

*Other Graduation Requirements:

- Pass state-mandated civics test
- Successfully complete a course or program in financial literacy standards
- Receive instruction in essential workplace ethics
- Demonstrate performance-based competency in technology
- Complete an annual ILP (6th to 12th grade)

**Either the health or physical education credit must include CPR training.

Calculating your GPA

GPA stands for grade point average. It's based on your grades divided by the number of credits you take. Here's how it works:

English:	1.0 credit	x	3.0 points	=	3.0 points
Science:	1.0 credit	x	2.0 points	=	2.0 points
Geometry:	1.0 credit	x	2.0 points	=	2.0 points
Social Studies:	1.0 credit	x	1.0 points	=	1.0 points
Agriculture:	1.0 credit	x	4.0 points	=	4.0 points
PE:	0.5 credit	x	4.0 points	=	2.0 points
Health:	0.5 credit	x	4.0 points	=	2.0 points
Total	6.0 credits				16.0 points

Grade Key	
Grade	Points
A.....	4.0
B.....	3.0
C.....	2.0
D.....	1.0
F.....	0.0

In order to calculate your GPA divide the total points, **16**, by the total credits, **6**, to find that your GPA for your freshman year is **2.67**.

1. Find the sum of points earned.

$$3 + 2 + 2 + 1 + 4 + 4 = 16$$

2. Divide points earned by credits to get GPA.

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Points} \\ 16 \end{array} / \begin{array}{r} \text{Credits} \\ 6 \end{array} = \mathbf{2.67 \text{ GPA}}$$

Sample freshman year

	Course Name	Grade	Credits	Points
1st	English	B	1	3
2nd	Science	C	1	2
3rd	Geometry	C	1	2
4th	Social Studies	D	1	1
5th	Agriculture	A	1	4
6th	Health and PE	A	1	4

Use the grade key and directions above to calculate your high school GPA per year.

Freshman year

	Course Name	Grade	Credits	Points
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				
5th				
6th				

Freshman GPA = _____

Sophomore year

	Course Name	Grade	Credits	Points
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				
5th				
6th				

Sophomore GPA = _____

Junior year

	Course Name	Grade	Credits	Points
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				
5th				
6th				

Junior GPA = _____

Senior year

	Course Name	Grade	Credits	Points
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				
5th				
6th				

Senior GPA = _____

Add your GPA's together and divide by number of years in high school to get your current high school GPA.

$$\underline{\quad} + \underline{\quad} + \underline{\quad} + \underline{\quad} / \text{by } 2, 3 \text{ or } 4 = \underline{\quad} \text{ high school GPA}$$

Understanding your transcript

The classes you take, the grades you get and your GPA are recorded on your transcript, along with your scores on tests like the PSAT and the ACT. Colleges look at your transcript when they decide how much financial aid to give you — or whether to admit you as a student in the first place.

A sample transcript is illustrated to the right. We haven't shown the top of the transcript. It will contain information about your school as well as your personal information: name, address, date of birth and other data. Your transcript won't look exactly like this, but this should help you get a general understanding.

The weighted GPA includes any extra points earned for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge Advanced International (CAI) programs or dual credit classes. The AP Biology Class this student took as a junior gets a higher weight because it is more difficult than a normal high school class.

Many schools consider your weighted GPA for admissions and placement purposes but, use the unweighted GPA when awarding scholarships.

Ask your counselor about Kentucky eTranscript, the quick and secure way to send your transcript to the colleges of your choice.

Earn college credit early

Colleges and high schools work together to offer dual credit programs. With dual credit, you take courses which satisfy high school graduation requirements while earning college credit hours at the same time. Dual credit can put you ahead of the game and save you thousands of dollars in tuition, books and fees.

Kentucky's Dual Credit Scholarship Program is available to Kentucky high school students enrolled in dual credit courses through a participating Kentucky college or university. Students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible for up to two courses per year.

For more information about the **Dual Credit Scholarship Program**, visit the Scholarships and Grants section of kheaa.com.

Courses Taken 2024–2025 Grade 09

Course	Grade	GPA Value		Credit
		Unweighted	Weighted	
Soc. Studies	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
English I	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
Spanish I	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
Int. Science	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Geometry	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Health	A	2.0	2.0	0.50
Phys. Ed.	C	1.0	1.0	0.50
Total this year:		20.0	20.0	6.00
Unweighted GPA for 2024–2025:			3.33	
Weighted GPA for 2024–2025:			3.33	
Cumulative Unweighted GPA:			3.33	
Cumulative Weighted GPA:			3.33	

Courses Taken 2025–2026 Grade 10

Course	Grade	GPA Value		Credit
		Unweighted	Weighted	
World Civ.	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
English II	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
Spanish II	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
Biology	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Algebra II	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Arts & Hum.	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
Total this year:		20.0	20.0	6.00
Cumulative:		40.0	40.0	12.00
Unweighted GPA for 2025–2026:			3.33	
Weighted GPA for 2025–2026:			3.33	
Cumulative Unweighted GPA:			3.33	
Cumulative Weighted GPA:			3.33	

Courses Taken 2026–2027 Grade 11

Course	Grade	GPA Value		Credit
		Unweighted	Weighted	
U.S. History	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
English III	B	3.0	3.0	1.00
AP Biology	A	4.0	5.0	1.00
Chemistry	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Trigonometry	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Health Sciences	A	4.0	4.0	1.00
Total this year:		22.0	23.0	6.00
Cumulative:		62.0	63.0	18.00
Unweighted GPA for 2026–2027:			3.67	
Weighted GPA for 2026–2027:			3.83	
Cumulative Unweighted GPA:			3.44	
Cumulative Weighted GPA:			3.50	

Transcript Statistics

GPA Type	Class Rank
Weighted GPA	28 of 295
Unweighted GPA	39 of 295

KEES

During high school, you can earn money for college through the state's KEES program. After each year of high school, KHEAA will notify you if you have earned a KEES award.

KHEAA will also post KEES awards online at the end of each school year. You will have to create a MyKHEAA account to look at your data at kheaa.com for the first time. If you don't find a record or if your data is incorrect, tell your school counselor.

Students who graduate after three full years in a certified Kentucky high school will earn a KEES Early Graduate award to make up for the missing fourth year. The award amount is averaged from your previous three years of KEES earnings and will be added to your total scholarship.

You don't have to apply for your KEES award. It will be sent to your college when the school reports that you are enrolled. KEES awards are funded by Kentucky Lottery proceeds. For more information, see the KEES Frequently Asked Questions section on kheaa.com, call 800.928.8926, ext. 7395, or write kees@kheaa.com.



KEES Award Amounts

GPA	Bonus Amount	ACT Score	Bonus Amount
4.00	\$500	28 or above	\$500
3.90	\$475	27	\$464
3.80	\$450	26	\$428
3.75	\$437	25	\$393
3.70	\$425	24	\$357
3.60	\$400	23	\$321
3.50	\$375	22	\$286
3.40	\$350	21	\$250
3.30	\$325	20	\$214
3.25	\$312	19	\$179
3.20	\$300	18	\$143
3.10	\$275	17	\$107
3.00	\$250	16	\$71
2.90	\$225	15	\$36
2.80	\$200		
2.75	\$187		
2.70	\$175		
2.60	\$150		
2.50	\$125		

Amounts may change based on funding.

Earn even more money for your grades

If college may be in your future, you should check to see if your high school offers Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and/or Cambridge Advanced International (CAI) programs.

Students who are individually eligible for free or reduced-price lunches during any year of high school and make qualifying scores on AP, IB or CAI exams are eligible for bonus awards for exams. The chart at right shows the amounts that will be awarded for each score. There is no limit to the number of AP/IB/CAI bonus awards a student can receive.

AP, IB and CAI let you get a taste of college work because they are taught more like college courses. If you score well on AP, IB or CAI exams, you may also earn college credits before you graduate from high school, saving you time and money.

Students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch

AP Exam Score	IB Exam Score	CAI Exam Score	Amount
5	7	a*, a, b	\$300
4	6	c, d	\$250
3	5	e	\$200



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Funding Education.



Text OUTREACH to
800.928.8926 to stay updated.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers KEES and other financial aid programs and provides free information about college planning and financial aid.

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