



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 23, 2021

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El Monte Union Eases Graduation Requirements for Class of 2021

EL MONTE – El Monte Union High School District Board of Trustees voted to adjust the graduation requirements for the Class of 2021, easing the path for seniors who have struggled to complete their schoolwork since the introduction of distance learning in March 2020.

The credit requirements for graduation will be reduced from 220 to 190 and students will have until Aug. 15 to complete their coursework. The one-time adjustment in credits is applicable only to Class of 2021 candidates, benefiting more than 170 El Monte Union seniors who are approaching the end of the school year with 175 to 190 credits.

“El Monte Union continues to provide the best educational opportunities for our students,” Superintendent Dr. Edward A. Zuniga said. “Distance learning has presented a myriad of obstacles that have greatly affected El Monte families and reduced the opportunity for our students to stay current with their studies. We are mindful of their struggles and feel this is the best course of action for the benefit of our community.”

Throughout the pandemic, students have encountered an array of obstacles through distance learning, including limited internet access, the responsibility of caring for siblings, the lack of school structure, not having a quiet place to work on assignments, difficulty in adapting to an online environment, or social-emotional struggles that prevent students from being successful in distance learning.

The adjusted graduation requirements mirror the California Department of Education (CDE) mandated requirements for high school graduation. The CDE requires only 130 credits for a student to graduate, a mandate that does not require a student to complete elective classes.

El Monte Union’s credit adjustment eases graduation requirements by eliminating a required fourth year of English credits, one semester of health credits, and 15 elective credits. Graduation requirements for math, science, social science, physical education, and the combined credits of visual or performing arts, foreign language or career technical education remain the same.

“El Monte Union’s requirements for graduation are more stringent and rigorous than what is mandated by the state of California,” Assistant Superintendent of Education Services Larry Cecil said. “The District requires four years of English and 75 elective credits, on top of what the CDE requires. In this extraordinary year we feel it is equitable to ease these standards to ensure our seniors graduate with their peers.”

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Seniors who are unable to complete the adjusted graduation requirements by the end of the school year will be able to gain additional credits during summer school. Seniors who do not meet the adjusted requirements by Aug. 15, 2021 will need to meet the current graduation requirement of 220 credits. El Monte Union will add a third class to its summer schedule to better accommodate these students.

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The vision of the El Monte Union High School District is to empower and motivate our students to be resilient, college and career ready, lifelong learners and contributing members of our global society.