A.3.2 COURSE OFFERINGS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

This section will identify graduation requirements that will meet State requirements and describe a viable and adequate process and criteria for awarding course credit. It will ensure consistency with Area II of the Academic Systems Plan found in section A.5 and provide a menu of course offerings which include course titles and brief descriptions of classes consistent with State requirements and clearly demonstrate alignment to the Program of Instruction. All content will ensure consistency with the Program of Instruction and alignment with the Business Plan as presented in the application package.

A. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE CREDITS

Description of Graduation Requirements

FES graduation requirements are aligned to and surpass Arizona minimum graduation requirements and are aligned to the school's mission to provide motivated students the opportunity to achieve academic excellence and develop life skills in a technology-rich, career-focused, and safe learning environment taught by caring and knowledgeable educators.

The following chart shows AZ state requirements for High School graduation as defined by the Arizona Department of Education as well as Focus High graduation requirements. Focus High graduates will meet and exceed all state graduation requirements.

Discipline	State Requirement	Focus Requirement
English Language Arts	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits	4 credits
Science	3 credits	3 credits
Social Studies/History	3 credits	3 credits
Personal Finance		1 credit
CTE/Vocational Ed or Fine Arts	1 credit	1 credit
College and Career Preparation		1 credit
Other Electives	7 credits	7 credits *3 of which must include career & technical education or fine arts credits*
Total	22	24

Requiring 24 credits for graduation exceeds the AZ Department of Education minimum graduation requirement of 22 credits[1]. The rationale for requiring students to complete a personal finance course, an additional career and/or vocational arts course, and 3 career and technical education credits or fine arts as part of their required elective courses is to better prepare students for college and career readiness[2]. Focus High's curriculum and instructional methods will help better serve our target demographic by:

- (A) Developing relevant life and financial skills through a semi-autonomous, blended learning environment that promotes personal accountability.

[1] Arizona Department of Education graduation requirements = 22 credits. Retrieved from: www.azed.gov/state-board-education/high-school-graduation-requirements.
[2] ACT (2012). The Condition of College and Career Readiness. Retrieved from: http://media.act.org/documents/CCCR12-NationalReadinessRpt.pdf

- (B) Helping students improve scores and pass rates on state standardized exams.
- (C) Preparing students for college readiness. Focus will offer Honors and AP courses aligned to AP exams. Passage of AP exams will help students earn college credits. Additionally, Focus will offer a path for students to complete up to 8 College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP) exams in their junior and senior years. These credits can be applied at over 2,900 colleges and universities in the United States, including all Maricopa County Community Colleges and AZ's three public state colleges (ASU, UofA, and NAU). Earning college credits while still in high school will help students significantly reduce the cost and time needed to earn their college degree.
- (D) Preparing for career readiness. Focus CTE courses will help students develop relevant vocational skills. Focus High will offer a sequence of four (4) CTE elective courses designed to prepare students for IT industry certification exams. These industry-recognized certificates will help improve the marketability and employability of students by demonstrating a standard of competency to prospective employers. These concentration topics and certificates include[3]:

CTE Concentration Sequence Topic	Certificate of Alignment
Desktop Support	CompTIA (A+)
Cisco Networking	Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA®)
Cyber Security	CompTIA (Security+) (ISC)[2] Systems Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP®)
Multimedia Development	ACA Print and Digital Media Publication Using Adobe InDesign ACA Video Communication Using Adobe Premiere ACA Visual Communication Using Adobe Photoshop ACA Web Authoring Using Adobe Dreamweaver
Programming	C++ Institute Certified Associate Programmer Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (Database)
Web Administration	CIW® Certifications - Internet Business Associate CIW® Certifications - Network Technology Associate CIW® Certifications - Site Development Associate CIW® Certifications - Web Foundations Associate

The following shows the suggested path to graduation and course descriptions for grades 9-12.

Discipline	9	10	11	12
English / Language Arts (4)	High School English I*	High School English II*	Survey of American Literature*	College Prep English*
Mathematics[4] (4)	Algebra I*	Geometry*	Algebra II*	Pre-Calculus*
Science[5] (3)	Physical Science*	Honors Biology*	Honors Chemistry* or H Physics*	

[3] Available CTE courses and sequence concentrations may change based on campus need and market demand.
[4] AZ High School Graduation Requirements state, "Math courses shall consist of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II (or its equivalent) and an additional course with significant math content as determined by district governing boards or charter schools. Students who have not earned formal credit in Algebra I and Geometry but who have covered the course content described in State Board of Education administrative rule are deemed to have met the requirement for graduation."
[5] AZ High School Graduation Requirements state, "(3) Three credits of science in preparation for proficiency at the high school level on the Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) test."

Social Studies / History[6] (3)	US History I* and II*	World History* /Geography*	Economics/ U.S. Govt*	
Personal Finance (1)				Personal Finance*
CTE/Vocational Ed or Fine Arts (1)		Varies, including STEM or Fine Arts (options)		
College and Career Preparation (1)				Varies
Elective (7) **General (4)**	Varies, including SAT/ACT/CLEP Prep, Internship, and/or Physical Education (options)	Varies, including SAT/ACT/CLEP Prep, Internship, and/or Physical Education (options)	Varies, including SAT/ACT/CLEP Prep, Internship, and/or Physical Education (options)	Varies including SAT/ACT/CLEP Prep, Senior Advisory, and/or Physical Education (options)
Focus CTE (3)	Varies, including STEM or Fine Arts (options)		Varies, including STEM or Fine Arts (options)	Varies, including STEM or Fine Arts (options)
Total	6	6	6	6

Table A.3.2.1 - FHS Recommended Path to Graduation[7,8]

Personal Finance – 1 credit

FES believes that one of the most valuable skills a high school graduate should possess is the ability to responsibly manage personal finances. A recent study by ORC international surveyed 505 U.S. High School students to assess their financial acumen. The study found that as a whole, high school-aged students know very little about credit, taxes, interest, investments, and basic money management. 83% of high school students believe personal finance should be mandatory to graduate. 63% of students believe it is the responsibility of their parents to teach them about finances, yet only 26% of parents feel up to the task.[9] Focus High believes that sound personal financial management is one of the most valuable skills a young adult can possess and for this reason will require one (1) credit of personal finance in order to graduate. This finance course is developed by the National Academy of Science and incorporates relevant, life-specific examples throughout the curriculum. In addition, much of FES' math curriculum is also centered on applicable financial principles that will further develop students' ability to understand and manage personal finances.

CTE/Vocational Education or Fine Arts - 1 credit (+ 3 of the 7 required elective credits)

Consistent with Focus' educational philosophy and vision and mission statement, Focus' curriculum will seek to prepare students for college and career readiness by requiring four (4) credits of career and technical education or fine arts. The rationale for this as described above is to help students develop relevant vocational

[6] AZ High School Graduation Requirements state, "Social Studies shall consist of one credit of American History, one credit of World History/Geography, one-half credit of government and one-half credit of economics."

[7] *Denotes courses supported by Acellus Courseware and the International Academy of Science. These courses include access to web-based software that provides supplemental course material, self-paced instructional videos, and deficiency diagnostics (assesses areas of weakness and responds by providing additional feedback, practice problems, and video tutorials for a more customized, holistic learning experience.)

[8] Graduation requirements exceed those set by the Arizona Department of Education (22 credits) found at www.azed.gov/state-board-education/high-school-graduation-requirements.

[9] DoughMain, (2012). Study Reveals Need for Tools to Help Parents Teach Kids About Savings, February 17, 2012. Retrieved from: http://www.doughmain.com/odmpublic/includes/footer/about/docs/Help%20Parents%20Teach%20Kids%20About%20Savings.

skills for life after high school. Students will have the opportunity to choose from a variety of IT-specific courses designed to lead to industry certification and licensure (see Exhibit A.3.2: Menu of Course Offerings).

English Language Arts Courses – 4 credits

All English Language Arts courses will be designed to prepare students for success on CLEP exams. Courses will align to the Common Core State Standards and, where applicable, the AP course requirements. The courses offered are:

Subject	Course	Description
English Language Arts	High School English I	The English I course provides a detailed investigation of literary techniques and devices, using classics from American and English literature as examples.
English Language Arts	High School English II	English II helps students to achieve college-readiness in the areas of literary techniques, vocabulary, and grammar. This course uses examples from classics of literature to help students learn to identify and use these skills.
English Language Arts	Survey of American Literature	Survey of American Literature uses the works of the masters to give the student a well-rounded look at American Literature, beginning with Native American lore and continuing on through the Modernist Movement.
English Language Arts	College Prep English	The College Prep English course teaches practical strategies for effective writing in college or on the job, including how to write scholarly essays, concise technical reports, compelling resumes, and professional business emails.

Social Studies Courses – 3 credits

All social studies courses will be rigorous and ensure students have a broad background of historical, civic, and economic events. Courses will align to the Arizona state standards. The courses offered are:

Subject	Course	Description
Social Studies	US History I	Advanced US History I is the first in a two-part series that provides high school students with a good foundation in the history of this country.
	US History II	Advanced US History II is the second in a two-part series that provides high school students with a good foundation in the history of this country.
Social Studies	World History I	World History I is a stimulating and informative discussion of world civilizations from Pre-history through 1200 AD.
	World History II	World History II is a stimulating and informative discussion of world civilizations from 1200 AD to the present.
Social Studies	US Government	The US Government course presents the history, theory, structure, and mechanics of the United States Government, as well as the responsibilities and impact of its citizens.
	Geography	The Advanced Geography course investigates the lands, the features, the inhabitants, and the phenomena of the Earth.

Science Courses – 3 credits

All science courses will ensure that students have a broad background of scientific knowledge in the fields of biology, chemistry, and physics. Courses will align to the Arizona state standards and, where applicable, the AP course requirements. The courses offered are:

Subject	Course	Description
Science	Physical Science	Physical Science discusses foundational science topics such as: properties of matter, forms of energy, magnetism, electricity, waves, sound, light, forces, and motion.

Science	Honors Biology	Honors Biology provides an in-depth introduction to biology, the study of life.
Science	Honors Chemistry	Honors Chemistry provides students with an in-depth introduction to chemistry.
Science	Honors Physics	The Honors Physics course was developed to help students build a strong foundation in basic physics prior to taking Advanced Placement Physics.

Mathematics Courses

All mathematics courses will align to the Common Core State Standards and, where applicable, the AP course requirements. The courses offered are:

Subject	Course	Description
Math	Algebra I	Algebra I teaches students the basic principles, rules, and operations of working with expressions containing variables.
Math	Geometry	Geometry provides students with a basic knowledge of Euclidean Geometry.
Math	Algebra II	Algebra II builds upon the algebraic concepts taught in Algebra, continuing on to functions, expressions, etc. and providing students with a more in-depth understanding of algebraic concepts.
Math - Advanced	Trigonometry	In Trigonometry, students learn about the relationships between the sides and the angles of triangles and how to make calculations based on them using trigonometric functions.
	Pre-Calculus	Pre-Calculus covers topics that students must understand to tackle the rigorous AP Calculus AB course.
	AP Calculus AB	AP Calculus AB is an advanced placement course providing students with the curriculum required by the College Board for AP Calculus AB. Students completing this course will be able to take the AP Calculus AB exam, enabling them to earn college credit for taking this course while still in high school.
	AP Calculus BC	AP Calculus BC is an advanced placement course providing students with the curriculum required by the College Board for AP Calculus BC. Students completing this course will be able to take the AP Calculus BC exam, enabling them to earn college credit for taking this course while still in high school.

B. PROCESS AND CRITERIA FOR AWARDING CREDIT

Students demonstrate mastery of standards for a given course based upon the following factors: (1) grades on homework (not to be more than 10% of the grade for a given class); (2) grades on in-class participation (not to be more than 20% of the grade for a given class); (3) grades on tests, quizzes, and Quarterly Formative Assessments that measure student performance on Common Core State Standards or Arizona State Standards; and (4) grades on classwork and projects (including group or team projects).

FES will ensure grades are consistent and valid between instructors in a course by holding at least one professional development session at the beginning of each academic year regarding how to norm grading policies among collaborative teams.

The following details the grading policy for Focus High to be used by teachers in determining final grades for courses based upon a combination of scores from the factors mentioned above. Note that according to the below scale, a score of 80% or better denotes mastery of course content, while a score of 60% of better denotes proficiency of course content. “Proficiency” means students have enough working knowledge of course content to move on to the next units or next course; “mastery” means students have demonstrated sufficient knowledge of course content as to be on track to eventually pass the Advanced Placement exam in that content area.

Grade	Percentage	Definition
A+	97-100	Students have demonstrated master of course content
A	93-96	
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	

Grade	Percentage	Definition
C+	77-79	Students have demonstrated proficiency of course content
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	

Grade	Percentage	Definition
F	0-59	Students have not demonstrated proficiency of course content

Final grades will be calculated by totaling the points earned from each quarter. Depending on when state assessment results are received, state assessment results may also be included in the student's final grade, per applicable state statute and Department of Education requirements.

In grades 9 through 12, credit decisions will be based upon the following factors: (1) a student earning a final grade of at least 60% in the course; (2) and attendance, for which a student must be present for 90% or more of the meetings of the course.[10]

At the midpoint of each course, teachers will review student performance to determine which, if any, students are not meeting the above listed criteria. Parents (in this document referring to the student's legal guardian(s) will then be initially notified of the risk for not achieving credit). Parents, teachers, and the student will meet in a Credit Conference the next week to determine a Credit Action Plan for the student. The plan will include a variety of interventions on the part of the student, the family, and the teachers to encourage improvement in the student's grades, achievement, or attendance. The Credit Action Plan will be documented, signed, and submitted to the School Principal. Teachers will then document progress and keep parents informed regarding the interventions throughout the second half of the course. At the end of the course, teachers will review the final progress of all students who were placed on Credit Action Plan. If the above listed criteria are not met for any students, teachers will submit those students' names and relevant documentation of Credit Action Plans to the Principal or appropriate Director.

The Principal, Director(s), and special education interventionist(s) will then determine if any of the following factors are true that may serve as exceptions to the promotion criteria: (1) the student's lack of progress is due to the student's qualification for special education services; (2) the student's lack of progress is due to the student's level of English proficiency as measured by the AZELLA test.

If a student does not meet the stated criteria for credit determination nor any of the above exception criteria, the student will not receive credit. A student who fails to earn credit for a course required for graduation must retake and pass that course (or its equivalent) to graduate. Equivalent courses include, but are not limited to, summer-school or community-college courses.

[10] In exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to extraordinary family or personal needs or prolonged illness, this requirement may be waived