

[SCHOOL LOGO/TEMPLATE]

Dear Eighth Grade Family,

At Denver Public Schools, our vision is that Every Child Succeeds. That starts with the belief that all students will achieve at the highest levels, and proudly cross the graduation stage ready for college, careers and life. One of our five goals in the district's strategic plan — the Denver Plan 2020 — is to ensure our students graduate college- and career-ready. Our DPS graduates will take many paths to pursue their dreams, and our schools must prepare them for their future.

When students graduate from a DPS high school, their diploma must be a diploma of possibility that opens the door of opportunity for their success. Life beyond high school is different than what it used to be. Most jobs in Colorado now and in the future require training or education beyond high school. In order to best prepare our graduates to be successful in any path they choose, DPS has redefined our expectations for earning a DPS diploma.

Beginning with the Class of 2021 (this year's eighth graders), there will be new requirements for students to demonstrate competency (or what they know how to do) in courses that reflect Colorado academic standards and 21st century skills in order to graduate from high school.

Students will need to complete three key requirements to earn a diploma:

- Planning for the future through the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)
- 24 units of course credit in required areas
- Competency demonstrations in English and math through college and career assessments, a capstone to show mastery of the standards or by attaining an approved career certification

This new approach is less about the time spent in a classroom, and more about students demonstrating they are truly prepared for the world after high school. Students will continue to engage in a rigorous course of study that includes English, math, science, social studies, physical education, the arts, and electives.

While students will have consistent requirements at each school, the Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAPs) they develop and revisit throughout high school give them the opportunity to identify and explore their passions through various courses. ICAPs also help students understand courses and other requirements to prepare for specific careers or for attending the college of their choice.

We encourage you to learn more about the new graduation requirements and the supports we have available to ensure your student crosses the graduation stage on time in 2021:

- Visit collegeandcareer.dpsk12.org
- Attend the **Great Schools Expo** from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 9 at Sports Authority Field at Mile High, 1701 Bryant St., Denver
- Talk to your school counselor

Thank you for your support of your eighth grade student on their journey to graduation and beyond!

Sincerely,

[NAME]

Principal