**Tools and Vocabulary for 4 Year Plans**

**To view the Valley and Valley Southwoods course guides** [**Click Here**](https://www.wdmcs.org/cms/lib/IA50000653/Centricity/Domain/783/va-vs-course-catalog-2324-20230309.pdf)

**Definitions:**

**Prerequisite:** A course you need to complete *before* you can take another course. For example, Spanish 1 is a prerequisite to Spanish 2.

**Credit:** You earn 1 credit for passing 1 semester of a course. In order to graduate you need a certain number of credits in each subject area, and a total of at least 48 credits across all subjects (see the chart below). Some colleges look at *units*. One *unit* is the same as 2 credits.

**A.P Classes:** A.P. stands for Advanced Placement. A.P. classes are available to all students who have completed the required prerequisites, and are generally available to students later in high school. Once students take an A.P. course they can choose to take the A.P. test for that course. If they pass the test, they can receive college credit for the course. Not all students take the test, and not all kids pass, even if they pass the course. There are some colleges that will not accept A.P. credit. *Not all advanced classes are A.P. courses. Only classes with “A.P.” in the title offer A.P. tests for college credit.*

**DMACC Dual Enrollment classes:** Valley offers many classes that where students earn BOTH a high school credit and a college credit through DMACC. Student in these classes will generate a college transcript that they can transfer to college after high school graduation. These classes are not the same as A.P. classes, and students must take these courses for both high school and DMACC credit. Each individual college maintains unique policies about transferring credits from other colleges.

**Valley’s Graduation Requirements:** 48 credits (1 Semester = 1 Credit)

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| Subject | Requirements | Specific Class Requirements |
| English | 8 credits (4 years) | Must have a semester of Speech, or fulfill the requirement with other acceptable options |
| Mathematics | 6 credits (3 years) | Must include Algebra II |
| Science | 6 credits (3 years) | Must include Physical Science **or** 9th grade Biology. Must have Biology and Chemistry before graduation. |
| Social Studies | 6 credits (3 years) | Must include U.S. History, Economics, **and** Government |
| Fine Arts | 1 Credit (1/2 year) | Any course(s) from Art, Drama, or Music. Considered a required Elective credit |
| Foreign Language | **Not** required for HS  *graduation.* |  |
| Health | 1 Credit | Recommended to complete during 9th grade. Considered a required Elective credit. |
| PE | 4 credits (4 years)  1 semester each year |  |
| Total | 30 credits(**required**)  +18 **elective** credits  48 credits | Need at least **18** elective credits |