



High School Graduation Requirements

Cognia-Accredited Diploma

Effective for students entering high school in 2026–2027

Purpose

This document sets out the credits and courses a student must complete to earn a Red Comet high-school diploma. It is structured to mirror the familiar Texas Foundation High School Program so the diploma is recognizable to colleges and families. Red Comet is a private, Cognia-accredited school; it sets its own graduation requirements and is not bound by the public-school Foundation Program.

This document applies to students who enroll full-time at Red Comet and are working toward a Red Comet diploma. Students who take individual Red Comet courses on an à la carte basis to transfer credit to another school are not Red Comet diploma candidates and are governed by Red Comet's Course Enrollment Terms.

The Diploma and the Graduation Plan

Red Comet confers its own Cognia-accredited high-school diploma. Every high-school student is assigned time with Red Comet's Graduation Specialist, who develops an individualized graduation plan mapping the student's coursework to these requirements and keeping the student on track. The plan is created when a student enrolls in 8th grade or higher and reviewed as the student progresses. The plan is reviewed at least once a year and may be amended with Head of School and parent involvement.

Credit Requirements

Red Comet offers two diploma pathways: the Standard Diploma and the Premium Career-Ready Diploma. The Premium Career-Ready Diploma adds credits in mathematics, science, and electives, and includes a SkillSoft license — provided through Red Comet's partnership with the National Education Foundation (NEF) — that prepares students for industry-recognized certification exams. The Premium Career-Ready Diploma mirrors the credit rigor colleges typically expect; it does not guarantee admission to any college. See *Industry Certifications* below for what the license does and does not include.

Subject Area	Standard	Premium Career-Ready	Typical required courses / notes
English Language Arts	4	4	English I (one credit), English II (one credit), English III (one credit), and English IV (one credit).
Mathematics	3	4	Algebra I (one credit), Geometry (one credit), and Algebra II (one credit) required. Premium Career-Ready adds one more advanced math.
Science	3	4	Biology (one credit) required, plus additional lab-based sciences. Premium Career-Ready totals four. A science course counts as a lab credit only if the student attempts at least one lab.
Social Studies	3	3	U.S. History (one credit) required, U.S. Government (one-half credit) required, Economics (one-half credit) required. Additional credits can come from World History (one credit) or World Geography (one credit).

Subject Area	Standard	Premium Career-Ready	Typical required courses / notes
Language Other Than English	2	2	Two credits in the same world language.
Physical Education	1	1	Delivered online through Red Comet's online PE course.
Fine Arts	1	1	Any fine-arts course offered in Red Comet's course catalog.
Electives	5	7	Premium Career-Ready electives could include the courses that build the student's focus area.
TOTAL	22	26	—

How Credit Is Earned

Credit toward the diploma is awarded when a student completes a course with a passing score of at least 60%. A course completed with a score below 60% is recorded on the transcript as "Completed (no credit)" and does not count toward the diploma. Grading is governed by Red Comet's grading policy.

Grade Scale and GPA

Grades are recorded as percentages and converted to letter grades and grade points as shown below.

Percentage	Letter grade	Grade points
89.5% to 100%	A	4.0
79.5% to 89.5%	B	3.0
69.5% to 79.4%	C	2.0
59.5% to 69.4%	D	1.0
0.0% to 59.4%	F	0.0 (no credit)

Red Comet calculates a cumulative grade point average (GPA) on an unweighted 4.0 scale. Advanced Placement (AP) courses are identified as "AP" on the transcript.

Industry Certifications (Premium Career-Ready Diploma)

Students on the Premium Career-Ready Diploma receive a SkillSoft license through Red Comet's partnership with the National Education Foundation (NEF). The license provides online training modules, study materials, and practice tests that prepare students for industry-recognized certification exams in areas such as IT, cybersecurity, cloud computing, project management, and business — for example, CompTIA A+, Network+, and Security+, Cisco CCNA, AWS Cloud Practitioner, and PMI CAPM.

What Red Comet provides: The SkillSoft license/User Account, training modules, study materials, and practice tests.

What Red Comet does not provide: The certification exams themselves. Students study for and register for exams on their own schedule and pay the exam fees charged by the issuing body (typically \$100–\$500 per exam). Earning a certification is optional, is not guaranteed just by using the Skillsoft account and is not a requirement for the diploma.

Diploma Pathways and Focus Areas

The Premium Career-Ready Diploma requires 26 credits and includes the SkillSoft license described above. A focus area is an *optional* way to organize a student's Premium Career-Ready electives around an interest; it is not a separate requirement. Pathways are available in the below industry-oriented clusters:

- Agriculture
- Arts, Entertainment, & Design
- Digital Technology
- Education
- Healthcare & Human Services
- Hospitality, Events, & Tourism Career Cluster
- Management & Entrepreneurship
- Manufacturing
- Marketing & Sales
- Public Service & Safety
- STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics)

Refer to Red Comet's Texas Pathways to find electives that build each focus area.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Red Comet does not provide special-education services, does not implement IEPs, and does not operate a Section 504 process; these are public-school functions that do not apply to a private school. If a family submits an IEP or a Section 504 plan, Red Comet's Head of Teachers reviews it to determine which platform-based accommodations Red Comet can reasonably provide online (extended time, flexible pacing).

Since Red Comet is a self-paced online program, much of the flexibility that a traditional school would arrange as a formal accommodation is simply how Red Comet works for every student. Course content is available 24/7, and students may study whenever they choose. Students may learn from any location that is convenient for them, as long as they have a reliable broadband connection. Lessons can be completed in short chunks and blocks at the student's own pace, and excluding assessments, a student may revisit a lesson as many times as they wish.

Providing a platform accommodation does not mean Red Comet is implementing the IEP or 504 plan, and Red Comet does not represent that it can provide every accommodation listed in a student's plan.

Red Comet does not lower the passing standard or the content a course requires, because that would change the credit the diploma certifies.

NCAA-Bound Student-Athletes

A student pursuing NCAA eligibility should work with the Graduation Specialist to select NCAA-approved courses and to meet NCAA's course, timing, and performance requirements. Not every course is NCAA-approved, so NCAA-bound students should plan their course selection accordingly.

Points to Note

Red Comet follows these positions as a private school in the State of Texas:

No STAAR/EOC testing requirement. Public-school students must pass state end-of-course exams to graduate. Red Comet is a private school and does not administer STAAR/EOC. Graduation is based on completing Red Comet's credits.

No FAFSA/TASFA graduation mandate. The requirement that a senior submit a financial-aid application (or opt-out) is a Texas public-school rule. Red Comet does not mandate financial-aid applications as a condition of the diploma.

No ARD/IEP graduation provisions. Public schools graduate special-education students under IEP-modified requirements decided by an ARD committee. Red Comet does not provide special education or operate IEPs, so those provisions are not included.

No state 'Distinguished Level of Achievement' label or automatic-admission promise. Those are designations tied to completing the public Foundation Program. Red Comet issues its own diploma and does not represent it as conferring the state designation or Texas automatic-admission (top-10%) benefits.

College admission requirements are set by each college. Red Comet awards its own high-school diploma, accredited by Cognia, and like other private schools, sets its own graduation requirements. Each college and university sets its own admission requirements, and some may ask applicants to have completed specific courses. A student may occasionally need additional coursework to meet a particular college's requirements. Families planning for a specific college should review that college's admission requirements early and plan course selection with the Graduation Specialist accordingly.

Transfer Credit and Recognizing Prior Learning

Transfer credit from accredited schools. Red Comet accepts transfer credits from a prior accredited school. A prior private school must be accredited by an organization recognized by the [Texas Private School Accreditation Commission](#) (TEPSAC) or the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Recognizing prior homeschool grades. Like most accredited schools, Red Comet does not place homeschool grades directly on a Red Comet transcript, because homeschool coursework is not issued by an accredited institution. Instead, Red Comet recognizes prior homeschool learning by validating mastery: a student may earn credit by examination (CBE) by earning a minimum score of 80% in a core subject (English, mathematics, science, or social studies). Credit by examination is not available for other

subjects. Validated credit counts toward the maximum transfer credits. Subjects that cannot be validated are earned by completing the corresponding Red Comet course.

Minimum Credits and Residency

To earn a Red Comet diploma, a student must

- (1) complete all required diploma credits and
- (2) meet Red Comet's residency requirement.

Credits. A student must complete all credits required for the pathway: 22 for the Standard Diploma or 26 for the Premium Career-Ready Diploma. Up to **16** of these may be transferred from prior accredited schools (including homeschool credit validated through Red Comet's credit-by-examination process). The remaining credits must be earned in Red Comet courses.

Residency. Every diploma candidate must be enrolled full-time at Red Comet for at least one full school year, and that year must be the student's **12th-grade (senior) year**. A Red Comet diploma is awarded only to students who complete their 12th-grade year enrolled at Red Comet.

What this means. A student who transfers the maximum allowable credit and enrolls full-time for the 12th-grade year can complete the **Standard Diploma** in that year. Because the **Premium** diploma requires additional credits and certification prep, it typically requires more than one year to earn all the qualifying credits.

Credit Recovery

Students may NOT repeat a Red Comet High school credit bearing course. If a student fails a high school credit bearing course, student must take the credit recovery pathway to complete the required credits for graduation. The Credit Recovery attempt will appear as 'Credit Recovery' on the transcript along with the failed original attempt, so a failed-then-passed sequence is visible to colleges. Credit is earned once, for the passing attempt.

Graduation Approval, Timing, and Early Graduation

A diploma is awarded only when the Graduation Specialist and the Head of Teachers jointly confirm that all requirements are met. Red Comet confers diplomas once each year: at the end of the spring semester (June). Every diploma candidate must have been enrolled at Red Comet for at least one full school year, as described under Minimum Credits and Residency.

TEFA funding note. For students whose tuition is funded through TEFA, program funding ends when the student graduates from high school.

Catalog Rights

A student graduates under the graduation requirements in effect for the school year in which they graduate. This means students are held to the requirements established for their graduating year, not the requirements that existed when they first enrolled or entered 9th grade. Requirements are fixed at

the start of each school year; if Red Comet updates its requirements mid-year, the changes take effect the following school year and do not apply to students already enrolled for the current year.