

THE BENEFITS OF GRADUATING WITH AN ENDORSEMENT

The State of Texas, the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board all recommend that all students graduate with at least one endorsement to better prepare him/her for post-secondary education and/or workforce. In fact, Chaparral Star Academy **encourages all students who graduate from CSA to graduate not only with an endorsement, but also at the distinguished level** (along with performance acknowledgements). As a school focused on a college-preparatory curriculum, a student graduating with an endorsement and a distinguished seal best aligns with our model. It provides students with an additional means of demonstrating excellence to college admissions officials.

An endorsement on a student's diploma denotes that they have deliberately set out to develop their knowledge more deeply in that subject, and confirms that they have achieved proficiency in that subject according to the state's criteria. In-state colleges and universities will understand the significance of endorsements, and even out-of-state schools will recognize that an endorsement marks deliberate study relevant to a student's prospective major.

Many colleges and universities minimally require the FHSP with an endorsement for admission. In addition, students ranked in the top 10 percent of their graduating classes from an accredited Texas public high school are eligible for automatic admission to most Texas public universities if they have completed the Distinguished Level of Achievement. The University of Texas at Austin is an exception to the top 10% rule as it will automatically admit all eligible freshman applicants who rank in the top tier of their high school graduating class (with an annually-variable percentage typically around 7%), with the remaining spots to be filled through holistic review.

The Foundation High School Program seal will be affixed to the Academic Achievement Record (AAR), or transcript, of students graduating under the FHSP. The Endorsement will be affixed to the transcript upon graduation as well.

Research suggests that students who take additional English, math, social studies, and science courses make higher scores on the SAT® or ACT® college entrance exams. The Distinguished Level of Achievement requires four credits in each of these core subject areas.

TEA provides a graduation toolkit found at <http://tea.texas.gov/communications/brochures.aspx>. This toolkit is designed to guide students and families through the benefits of each pathway [endorsement] to increase the likelihood of preparation and success in college and the workforce. It also includes information on various workforce resources provided through the Texas Workforce Commission. All of these resources are geared toward assisting students and parents in planning for any postsecondary goals for college or career.

Besides the knowledge gained through earning an endorsement, the student will gain valuable skills and character traits that can benefit him/her in all areas of employment.