



FernLeaf High School Resources & Planning Guide



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The High School Years at FernLeaf

FernLeaf graduates are prepared not just for college and work, but to navigate the complexities of adult life beyond high school.

FernLeaf High School students are encouraged to use their own unique passions and aptitudes to explore the world and start asserting their independence as learners, doers and people. FernLeaf's hand picked staff are eager to promote this deep learning through rigorous academic experiences, meaningful fieldwork opportunities, promotion of self exploration, after-school extracurricular activities, travel opportunities, and diverse elective choices.

High school is a time many students have been waiting for. Since FernLeaf strives to nurture the WHOLE person, not only will your high school student work academically towards graduation, but they will also have opportunities to engage as thoughtful and compassionate members of their greater communities. Whether through employment, apprenticeship, college, trade school, entrepreneurship or other avenues, FernLeaf will guide them on their way!

FernLeaf also recognizes the importance of friendships and relationship building during the teenage years. Numerous opportunities for students to socialize both in and outside of the school day are provided. Even little things like intentional team building activities, extended lunch periods, and increased time between classes offer FernLeaf high schoolers opportunities to develop meaningful relationships during a critical juncture in their lives. Outside of the school day, students are provided with numerous fun and engaging social activities that provide supervised, safe, and structured environments for them to socialize, build relationships, and hone interpersonal skills that they will carry with them throughout their lives. The choices they make, the friends they connect with, and the relationships they develop during their high school experience have lifelong implications and the FernLeaf Community stands ready to support them.

High school academic programming at FernLeaf becomes increasingly specialized and complex while building on the content, knowledge, and skills developed during the middle school years. New levels of understanding, confidence, and academic capacity emerge and students become more capable and accomplished than ever before. Students use their increasingly sophisticated place in life to meet graduation requirements as well as earn recognition for their achievements through a variety of Endorsements and Certifications. Whether earning a North Carolina Academic Scholars Endorsement, a College/UNC Endorsement, an Outdoor Leadership Endorsement, or anything in between, FernLeaf High School students are supported in their individual pursuits and endeavors.

In addition to Core Academic and Elective courses needed to meet state graduation requirements, FernLeaf provides advanced opportunities including Honors, Advanced Placement courses, Dual Enrollment options, Independent Study opportunities, as well as support in finding or creating internship, workforce development, and/or certification opportunities.

FernLeaf's rich and meaningful High School experience culminates in the unfurling of a student who is not only ready to meet their post graduation goals, but also LOVES learning and is a thoughtful, compassionate and engaged member of their community!

FernLeaf Community Charter School Courses of Study and Graduation Requirements

Future-Ready and FernLeaf Courses of Study

The state of North Carolina has established a set of minimum requirements for graduation from a NC Public High School. These are referred to as the Future-Ready Course of Study and they are designed to prepare students for success beyond high school. FernLeaf Community Charter School's course offerings and graduation requirements meet the Future-Ready Course of Study requirements while also honoring this important and meaningful time in students' lives by providing not just high levels of academic rigor but also preparation for college, real world experiences, safe social opportunities, and support in the development of healthy relationships. Students leave FernLeaf prepared for college, work, and life beyond high school as they move into adulthood.

Future-Ready Graduation Requirements

Subject	Credits	Course Requirements
English	4 Credits	Four sequential English credits which shall be: 1. English I 2. English II 3. English III 4. English IV
Mathematics	4 Credits	Four sequential credits which shall be either: 1. Math 1 2. Math 2 3. Math 3 4. A fourth mathematics course to be aligned with the student's post high school vision and goals
Science	3 Credits	Three Science credits which shall be: 1. A physical science course 2. Biology 3. An earth/environmental science course
Social Studies	4 Credits	Four Social Studies credits which shall be: 1. Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy 2. Economics and Personal Finance 3. American History 4. World History
Health/PE	1 Credit	One Health and Physical Education credit: 1. Students are required to successfully complete CPR instruction to meet Healthful Living Essential Standards as a requirement for high school graduation
Specific Electives	6 Credits	<u>Two Elective credits</u> of any combination from either: 1. Career and Technical Education (CTE) 2. Arts Education 3. World Language 4. Additional Core Elective Classes (ie: elective english or science course). Note: For clarification, possible elective combinations may include 2 World Language credits; or 1 CTE credit and 1 Arts Education credit; or 2 CTE credits; or 1 Arts Education credit and 1 World Language credit; or other combinations from 1, 2, 3, and 4. <u>Four Elective credits</u> from the following (four-course concentration recommended): 1. Career and Technical Education (CTE) 2. Arts Education (ie. dance, music, theater arts, visual arts) 3. Any other subject area of cross-disciplinary courses (ie. mathematics, science, social studies, English, World Languages and dual enrollment courses) For students beginning High School in the year 2024 or later one credit of Computer Science Instruction must be obtained for graduation.

Total Credits Required	22 Credits	Students typically earn 6 credits per year. To complete 24 credits, students must earn a minimum of 6 credits/year.
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Earning High School Credits

Credit is earned when a student passes a class and meets attendance requirements. Make-up time opportunities are provided for students who exceed the allowed number of absences. Credit cannot be given when a student has exceeded attendance limits. Credit Recovery is offered when a student has not passed a class, but has met attendance guidelines and has only a small portion of the course standards to master.

Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School

High school courses taken by middle school students meet North Carolina and FernLeaf requirements for graduation. Credits will appear on student transcripts but grades do not contribute to a student's cumulative high school Grade Point Average. FernLeaf offers Math 1, English I and Spanish I to 8th Grade students who meet eligibility criteria.

High School Promotion or Advancement Requirements:

For students enrolled in FernLeaf's High School program, specific credits must be earned in order to progress to the next grade level.

- **To qualify for the 10th Grade:** A student must have earned 5 or more credits, including English I and a Math credit.
- **To qualify for the 11th Grade:** A student must have earned 11 or more credits, including English I & II, two Math, one Social Studies, and one Science credit.
- **To qualify for the 12th Grade:** A student must have earned 16 or more credits, including English I, II, & III, three Math, two Social Studies, and two Science credits including Biology. Students must be in a position to complete a minimum of 22 credits required for graduation by the end 12th Grade.

Sample Path for Meeting Future-Ready Graduation Requirements

Please note that this is an example only and that numerous variations exist. The below outline meets requirements for admission to NC State Funded Universities, Private Universities, Military, Trade Schools, Community Colleges, Employment, Internships, and/or Gap Year pursuits.

Freshman Year	• Math 1 • English I • World History • Earth Science • Health/PE or Elective 1 • Elective 2
Sophomore Year	• Math 2 • English II • Founding Principles USA and NC: Civic Literacy • Biology • Health/PE (if not take in 9th Gr) or Elective 2 • Elective 3
Junior Year	• Math 3 • English III • American History • Physical Science • Elective 5 • Elective 6
Senior Year	• Math 4 • English IV • Economics and Personal Finance • Additional Science, Math, English, Social Studies, or Elective course of choice • Workforce Development or other allowing for job shadow or apprenticeship • If not yet achieved, one elective credit of Computer Science Instruction.

Occupational Course of Study

An Occupational Course of Study is available for students with disabilities who are specifically identified for the program by the student's IEP Team.

FernLeaf Graduation Requirements

In addition to the State credit requirements for graduation, FernLeaf High School students create a personalized digital portfolio that documents their accomplishments related to three core components of our school mission, becoming a thoughtful, compassionate, and engaged member of their community. Documentation of their experiences completing their community service requirements will also be contained in this portfolio. This process technically begins the moment a student enrolls at FernLeaf, but the formal process of creating this digital portfolio begins when students enter the 9th grade and is supported through regular lessons and support from their FLEX Class Teachers.

Sample Daily High School Schedule

(note: times and periods may vary)

8:00 - 8:50	1st Period
8:50 - 9:00	<i>FLEX</i> Passing Period*
9:00 - 9:50	2nd Period
9:50 - 10:00	<i>FLEX</i> Passing Period
10:00 - 10:35	<i>FLEX</i> Class Period**
10:40 - 11:30	3rd Period
11:30 - 12:10	Lunch
12:10 - 1:00	4th Period
1:00 - 1:10	<i>FLEX</i> Passing Period
1:10 - 2:00	5th Period
2:00 - 2:10	<i>FLEX</i> Passing Period
2:10 - 3:00	6th Period

***F**e**r**n**L**e**a**f **E**x**t**e**n**d**e**d Passing Period is an important time for socialization and rejuvenation where students can connect with friends, follow up with teachers, rest, have a snack, and generally reset and prepare for their next class. Typical High School passing periods are 3-5 minutes.

****F**e**r**n**L**e**a**f **E**x**p**l**o**r**a**t**i**o**n** Class Period provides students with a designated period for Advisory, additional support from teachers, study hall, and other structured activities and opportunities.

Advanced Course Offerings

Honors Level Courses

Honors Level courses offer students the opportunity to dig deeper into content, gain additional knowledge and skill sets, and to challenge themselves with more intensive workloads. They are designed for students who are looking for higher levels of academic pursuits and are ready to take on additional responsibilities with expanded content, additional homework, and greater depth in understanding. Many of FernLeaf's courses are offered at the Honors Level and student eligibility is based on a variety of data and teacher recommendations.

Advanced Placement Courses

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are defined by the College Board as "rigorous, college-level classes in a variety of subjects that give students the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school by scoring a 3 or higher (5-point scale) on the AP exam associated with that course". FernLeaf generally offers AP Courses to students beginning in the 11th Grade.

AP courses can result in earned college credit, which means they are indeed college-level courses. These courses move quickly, are extremely rigorous, and cover substantially more material than a typical class. The workloads are significantly heavier, homework is intensive, and deadlines and requirements are not flexible.

Dual Enrollment with local Community College

In a student's junior and senior year, if they qualify (see below), they may take courses through the Career and College Promise program with their local community college. These courses are consistent throughout the state and may be found on the Community College's website. These courses, when passed to a "C" level or higher pass on both high school and college credit.

College Entry Exams

We encourage all students with an interest in attending university after graduation to consider taking the PSAT, PreACT, or for rising 10th graders, the SAT or ACT. Some universities and colleges are tending to not require testing for application or admission, but most still do. The PSAT is typically taken during 8th, 9th, or 10th grade, and score reports can be utilized (if students elect this offering) for consideration by universities and scholarship groups recruiting student applicants. There is no limit to the number of times a student may take the SAT, but statistics show that student scores tend to improve each time it is taken during the first three attempts. The majority of colleges and universities take the highest score for students. The SAT scores (if students elect this option while taking the test) may also be utilized by universities and scholarship groups to recruit students to apply.

Determining whether or not to sign up for the SAT is a decision left to students and their parents but FernLeaf strongly encourages families to consider taking either the SAT or ACT. Information regarding testing dates and times are posted through collegeboard.org. 10th graders in public schools in North

Carolina are given the PreACT, in order to prepare them for the ACT they will be given in 11th grade. Both the PreACT and the ACT are offered free of charge to students, but only given to them in the grades specified. We cannot give the free ACT to a ninth, tenth or twelfth grade student. Students can sign up to take the ACT at other times through ACT.org, if it is preferred, to take the SAT. Available sign up dates and times can be found at act.org and test sites are confirmed upon registration.

Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) Course Requirements

FernLeaf has a relationship with Blue Ridge Community College which affords our students an opportunity to access many courses through the Career and College Promise Program (CCP). All of our students with a 2.8 grade point average can access these courses in 11th and 12th grade. Those students who wish to access these courses earlier than their junior year will need to qualify either by having been qualified Academically Intellectually Gifted by their prior school or in the following manner, as prescribed by the Board of Governors for NC: *they will need an aptitude and achievement test as evidenced by a score in the range between the 92nd percentile and the 99th percentile on the aptitude and the achievement test included in the Mental Measurements Yearbook, published by the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements. Here are some examples of tests that are accepted:*

- *Aptitude: CogAT, or [OLSAT](#) The link for OLSAT given by our liaison at BRCC, as we do not have familiarity here at FernLeaf.*
- *Achievement (End of Year): SAT, ACT, or Iowa Basic Skills*
- *They will also need to demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics on an approved assessment. Examples of this test would be: SAT, ACT, Pre-ACT, PSAT, or the college placement test. or the college placement test (offered by BRCC as the NMSQT, but can have one retake, then wait 5 years to retake).*

Information about Career and College Promise (CCP), as well as courses for BRCC can be found at [Blue Ridge Education Programs](#). CCP courses at Blue Ridge Community College are free to all public high school students in Henderson County. Students living in Buncombe County can attend BRCC, but may also access the CCP Program at AB Tech.

North Carolina School of Science and Math (NCSSM)

We also have the ability for students to sign up for course work with North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM). These courses are taught at a high level, and will require students to be able to work independently, communicate well with their instructors, and will likely have homework beyond what students have seen before. Also, courses students take through NCSSM will need to fit into their overall FernLeaf schedule. The link to their course offerings can be found here: [NCSSM Connect](#).

Independent Studies

Independent study opportunities are available to students who meet the required criteria. These courses encompass a wide range of academic, vocational, or arts interests. These may include, but are not limited to, scientific or social science research, creative writing, instrumental performance, and interdisciplinary study. Students work with a qualified facilitator to develop a structure for the course, document learning, determine assessment procedures, and receive feedback.

Independent study scope and student course load will determine credits that students receive for their course. Any student who meets the required criteria for credit earning independent study must receive final approval from an administrator for enrollment in the course.

Grading Scale and Grade Point Averages

FernLeaf High School courses are graded based on the statewide standardized 10-point grading scale. FernLeaf also utilizes the statewide standardized transcript system maintained by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction which weights grade point averages (GPA) according to State Board of Education policies. The standardized transcripts include:

- GPA,
- class rank,
- end-of-course test scores, and
- uniform course information including course code, course name, credits earned toward graduation, and credits earned for admission to an institution of higher education.

Honors and AP courses as well as dual enrollment courses are weighted using the following conventions:

Course Type	Weighting Scale
Honors	½ (.5) Quality Point
Advanced Placement	1 Quality Point
Community College and Four Year University and College Courses	1 Quality Point

Required Testing

End of Course Tests (EOCs)

All FernLeaf students enrolled for credit in the below courses are required to take the standardized End of Course Tests (EOCs) at the completion of the course. Per SBE policy TEST-003, scores from these tests must count as at least twenty (20) percent of the student's final grade for each respective course.

- Biology
- English II
- NC Math 1
- NC Math 3

PreACT, ACT®, and ACT WorkKeys®

Per North Carolina General Statute, the PreACT is administered annually to all eligible 10th graders, the ACT is administered to all eligible 11th Graders, and the ACT WorkKeys assessments are required for all eligible students in the Career and Technical Education concentration.

High School Diploma Endorsements

FernLeaf students are eligible to earn a variety of endorsements which may be added to their high school diplomas. North Carolina has established a set of standardized State Endorsements which indicate that students have completed specific course concentrations that prepare them for college and/or careers. Additionally, FernLeaf students may also earn endorsements that demonstrate that they have completed specific courses and other activities that are in line with the FernLeaf Mission and Vision for students.

FernLeaf Endorsements

In addition to the standardized State Endorsements, FernLeaf offers students the opportunity to earn additional endorsements that are unique to FernLeaf and allow students the opportunity to differentiate themselves from other high school students across the state. These differentiators are important for students as they pursue competitive college admissions and other post high school opportunities. These endorsements, which are in line with the FernLeaf mission and vision for students, are available in the areas of character, interpersonal skills and relationships, service, unique passions and aptitudes, environmental stewardship, and more. Students should work with their advisor to determine which FernLeaf Endorsements are best for them.

State Endorsements

These endorsements and the associated requirements are set forth by the State Board of education and are available to all North Carolina Public High School Students.

- College Endorsement
- College/UNC Endorsement
- North Carolina Academic Scholars Endorsement
- Academic Language Endorsement
- Career Endorsement

State Endorsement Eligibility Requirements

Endorsement	Description & Eligibility Requirements
College/UNC Endorsement	Indicates readiness for entry into a four-year university in the University of North Carolina system. 1. The student shall complete the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Math I, II, III or Integrated Math I, II, III and a fourth mathematics course that meets University of North Carolina system Minimum Admission Requirements that include a mathematics course with either Algebra II, Math III or Integrated Mathematics III as a prerequisite; 2. The student shall complete three units of science including at least one physical science with a lab, one life science and one additional science course; 3. The student shall complete U.S. History or equivalent coursework; 4. The student shall complete two units of a world language (other than English); 5. Students shall earn a weighted grade point average of at least 2.5; and

	6. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.
College Endorsement	Indicates readiness for entry into NC Community Colleges. 1. The student shall complete the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Math I, II, III or Integrated Math I, II, III; and a fourth mathematics course aligned with the students post-secondary plans. The fourth math course must meet University of North Carolina system Minimum Admission Requirements or be acceptable for earning placement in a credit-bearing college math class under the North Carolina Community College System's Multiple Measures Placement policy; 2. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 2.6; and 3. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.
NC Academic Scholars Endorsement	Indicates that students have completed a balanced and academically rigorous high school program preparing them for post-secondary education. 1. The student shall complete the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence of Math I, II, III; Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II; or Integrated Math I, II, III and a fourth-level mathematics course that meets University of North Carolina system Minimum Course Requirements that include a mathematics course with either Math III, Algebra II, or Integrated Mathematics III as a prerequisite; 2. The student shall complete three course credits of science including an Earth/Environmental science course, Biology, and at least one physical science course that must include either physics or chemistry; 3. For students entering ninth grade in 2012-13 or later, the student shall complete four course credits of social studies; 4. The student shall complete two course credits of a world language (other than English); 5. The student shall complete four elective course credits in any one subject area, such as Career and Technical Education (CTE), JROTC, Arts Education, World Languages, or in another content area; 6. The student shall have completed at least three higher-level courses during junior and/or senior years which carry quality points such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or Dual Enrollment courses; Advanced CTE and CTE credentialing courses; honors level courses, or Project Lead the Way courses; and 7. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 3.50.
Global Languages Endorsement	Indicates proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English. 1. The student shall earn a combined unweighted 2.5 GPA or above for the four English Language Arts courses required for graduation; 2. The student shall establish proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English, using one of the options outlined below and in accordance with the guidelines developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; and - o Establish "Intermediate Low" proficiency or higher per the ACTFL proficiency scale using the Credit by Demonstrated Mastery SBE policy. - o Complete a four-course sequence of study in the same world language, earning an overall unweighted GPA of 2.5 or above in those courses.

	○ Pass an external exam approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction establishing “Intermediate Low” proficiency or higher per the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency scale. 3. English Learner students shall complete all the requirements of sections 1 and 2 above and reach “Developing” proficiency per the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) proficiency scale in all four domains on the most recent state identified English language proficiency test.
Career Endorsement	Indicates completion of a rigorous course of study that includes a Career Technical Education concentration. 1. Except as limited by N.C.G.S. §115C-81(b), the student shall complete the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Math I, II, III or Integrated Math I, II, III and a fourth mathematics course aligned with the student's post-secondary plans. Acceptable fourth math courses for the Career Endorsement include any math course that may be used to meet NC high school graduation requirements, including applied math courses found in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) domain; 2. The student shall complete a CTE concentration in one of the approved CTE Career Pathways; 3. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 2.6; 4. The student shall earn at least one industry-recognized credential. Earned credentials can include Career Readiness Certificates (CRC) at the Silver level or above from WorkKeys assessments or another appropriate industry credential/certification; and 5. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.

Drivers Education

FernLeaf students may take drivers education classes through one of these options:

1. At FernLeaf with Mountain Professionals Driving School (availability subject to minimum enrollment threshold set by Mountain Professionals, Inc). Course will be offered once per year in the Fall.
2. Online through [WRESA](#)
3. Through student's District Public High School or other locations as found through mountain professionals website.

Upon completion of the classroom drivers education course, students will receive a certificate along with information about how to complete the behind the wheel training component.