

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

The Board of Education will recognize the successful completion of the secondary school instructional program by the award of a State-endorsed diploma certifying the pupil has met all State and local requirements for high school graduation. The Board will annually certify to the Executive County Superintendent each pupil who has been awarded a diploma has met the requirements for graduation.

### A) High School Graduation Requirements

A graduating pupil must have earned a minimum of 120 (four-year high school: no fewer than one hundred twenty credits) credits in courses designed to meet all of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards including, but not limited to, the following credits:

- 1) At least twenty credits in language arts literacy aligned to grade nine through twelve standards, effective with the 2009-2010 grade nine class;
- 2) At least fifteen credits in mathematics, including Algebra I or the content equivalent ("content equivalent" is defined at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3) effective with the 2008-2009 grade nine class, including geometry or the content equivalent effective with the 2010-2011 grade nine class, and including a third year of mathematics that builds on the concepts and skills of algebra and geometry and that prepares pupils for college and 21<sup>st</sup> century careers effective with the 2012-2013 grade nine class;
- 3) At least fifteen credits in social studies, including satisfaction of N.J.S.A. 18A:35-1 and 18A:35-2: five credits in world history, and the integration of civics, economics, geography, and global content in all course offerings;
- 4) At least fifteen credits in science, including at least five credits in laboratory biology/life science or the content equivalent effective with the 2008-2009 grade nine class, including one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course which shall include chemistry, environmental science, or physics effective with the 2010-2011 grade nine class, and including one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course effective with 2012-2013 grade nine class;
- 5) At least three and three-quarters credits in health, safety, and physical education during each year of enrollment, distributed as one hundred fifty minutes per week, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:35-5, 7 and 8;
- 6) At least five credits in visual and performing arts;
- 7) At least five credits in world languages or pupil demonstration of proficiency as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2ii(2);

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- 8) At least two and one-half credits in financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy, effective with 2010-2011 grade nine class;
- 9) Technological literacy, consistent with the Core Curriculum Content Standards, integrated throughout the curriculum;
- 10) At least five credits in 21<sup>st</sup> century life and careers, or career-technical education; and
- 11) Electives as determined by the high school program sufficient to total a minimum of 120 (must be at least one hundred twenty) credits.

Credit means the award for the equivalent of a class period of instruction which meets for a minimum of forty minutes, one time per week during the school year or as approved through N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2.

The high school graduation credit requirement may be met in whole or in part through program completion of a range of experiences that enable pupils to pursue a variety of personalized learning opportunities, as follows:

- 1) The district shall establish a process to approve individualized pupil learning opportunities that meet or exceed the Core Curriculum Content Standards.
  - (a) Individualized pupil learning opportunities in all Core Curriculum Content Standards areas include, but are not limited, to the following:
    1. Independent study;
    2. Online learning;
    3. Work-based programs, internships, apprenticeships;
    4. Study abroad programs;
    5. Pupil exchange programs;
    6. Service learning experiences; and
    7. Structured learning experiences.
  - (b) Individualized pupil learning opportunities based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards shall:

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1. Be based on pupil interest and career goals as reflected in the Personalized Pupil Learning Plans as they are phased in according to the schedule of implementation set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.2(a)1;
  2. Include demonstration of pupil competency;
  3. Be certified for completion based on the district process adopted according to 2. below; and
  4. Be on file in the school district and subject to review by the Commissioner or his/her designee.
- (c) Group programs based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards shall be permitted and shall be approved in the same manner as other approved courses.
- 2) The district shall establish a process for granting of credits through successful completion of assessments that verify pupil achievement in meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards at the high school level, including those occurring by means of the individualized pupil learning opportunities enumerated as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2. Such programs or assessments may occur all or in part prior to a pupil's high school enrollment; no such locally administered assessments shall preclude or exempt pupil participation in applicable Statewide assessments at grades three through twelve.
  - (a) The district shall choose assessments that are aligned with or exceed the Core Curriculum Content Standards and may include locally designed assessments.
  - (b) The district shall choose from among the following assessment options to determine if pupils have achieved the level of language proficiency designated as Novice-High as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and recognized as fulfilling the world languages requirement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards:
    1. The Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) online assessment;
    2. The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI); or
    3. Department-approved locally designed competency-based assessments.

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- 3) The district shall establish a process to approve post-secondary learning opportunities that consist of: (select one or more options)

- Advanced Placement (AP) courses;
  - The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP);
  - or concurrent/dual enrollment at accredited higher education institutions.

- (a) The district shall award credit for successful completion of an approved, accredited college course that assures achievement of knowledge and skills that meets or exceeds the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

### B) Additional Graduation Requirements

- 1) Attendance requirements as indicated in Policy No. 5200.
- 2) Any statutorily mandated requirements for earning a high school diploma;
- 3) Demonstrated proficiency in all sections of the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), Competency Assessments, or Alternative High School Assessment process applicable to the class graduating in the year they meet all other graduation requirements, based on a schedule prescribed by the Commissioner in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(b) through (d); and
- 4) Those pupils graduating from an adult high school shall demonstrate proficiency in all sections of the HSPA, applicable Competency Assessments, or designated Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA) process for any subjects not yet passed on a previously approved Statewide assessment required for graduation.

### C) High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA)

- 1) The district will provide pupils who have not demonstrated proficiency on one or more sections of the HSPA following the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, or applicable Competency Assessments, with the opportunity to demonstrate such competence through both repeated administrations of the HSPA and the AHSA SRA process conducted in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education.
  - (a) The Superintendent or his/her designee shall submit the results of the AHSA process to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools by March 4 31 of each year, or as otherwise determined by the Commissioner of Education, for approval for graduation in June of the same year. Such results shall include information, as prescribed by the Commissioner, pertaining to pupils successfully completing the AHSA process, and to those who fail to complete the AHSA process successfully.

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- (b) The Executive County Superintendent, as the Commissioner's designee, shall review the results of each pupil's AHSA and recommend to the Commissioner either approval or disapproval for graduation.
- (c) All English Language Learners (ELLs) shall satisfy the school district's requirements for high school graduation, except that any ELLs may demonstrate that they have attained State minimum levels of proficiency through:
  - 1. Passage of the AHSA process in their native language, when available, and passage of an English fluency assessment approved by the Department of Education; or
  - 2. Passage of the AHSA process in English with appropriate accommodations.
- (d) Pupils with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3 or eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and who participate in the AHSA process are not required to participate in repeated administrations of the HSPA.

### D) Attendance

Regular attendance is required for the successful completion of a course of study and graduation. Pupils are expected to be present in every scheduled class except as their attendance is excused in accordance with Board Policy 5200.

### E) Pupils with Disabilities

- 1) The district, through the IEP process and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11 - Graduation, may, for individual pupils with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3, specify alternate requirements for a State-endorsed diploma.
- 2) The district shall specifically address any alternate requirements for graduation in a pupil's IEP, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11.
- 3) The district shall develop and implement procedures for assessing whether a pupil has met any alternate requirements for graduation individually determined in an IEP.
- 4) If a pupil with a disability attends a school other than that of the school district of residence, which is empowered to grant a diploma, the pupil shall have the choice of receiving a diploma of the school attended or a diploma of the school district of residence.
  - (a) If the school the pupil is attending declines to issue a diploma to the pupil, the district of residence Board of Education shall issue the pupil a diploma if the

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pupil has satisfied all State and local graduation requirements, as specified in the pupil's IEP.

- 5) Pupils with disabilities who meet the standards for graduation according to the school district's graduation requirements shall have the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises and related activities on a nondiscriminatory basis.
- 6) A pupil with a disability whose individualized education program prescribes continued special education programs beyond the fourth year of high school shall be permitted to participate in commencement ceremonies with his/her graduating class and shall receive a certificate of attendance, provided the pupil has attended four years of high school.
- 7) When a pupil with a disability graduates or exceeds the age of eligibility, the pupil shall be provided a written summary of his or her academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the pupil's graduation or the conclusion of the school year in which he or she exceeds the age of eligibility. The summary shall include recommendations to assist the child in meeting his or her postsecondary goals.

### F) High School Diploma

- 1) The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to prospective graduates who have met all of the requirements adopted in accordance with State and local requirements.
- 2) The Board of Education shall not issue a high school diploma to any pupil not meeting the criteria specified in State and local requirements.
  - (a) The district shall provide pupils exiting grade twelve without a diploma the opportunity for continued high school enrollment to age twenty, or until the requirements for a State-endorsed diploma have been met, whichever comes first.
  - (b) The district shall allow any out-of-school individual to age twenty who has otherwise met all State and local graduation requirements, but has failed to pass the HSPA or applicable Competency Assessments to return to school at scheduled times for the purpose of taking the necessary test. Upon certification of passing the test applicable to the pupil's class in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)8, a State-endorsed diploma shall be granted by the high school of record.
- 3) The Commissioner of Education shall award a State-issued high school diploma in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(c) and (d).

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- 4) The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any currently enrolled pupil formally requesting an early award of the diploma in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(e) and Board Policy 5465.

### G) Notification

Each pupil who enters or transfers into the high school and the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be provided a copy of the school district's requirements for a State-endorsed diploma, and those programs available to assist pupils in attaining the State-endorsed diploma.

### H) Reporting

The Superintendent, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-7 and 18A:7E-3, shall report annually, at a public meeting not later than September 30, to the Board of Education and the Commissioner:

- 1) The total number of pupils graduated;
- 2) The number of pupils graduated under the AHSA process;
- 3) The number of pupils receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternative requirements for graduation as specified in their IEPs;
- 4) The total number of pupils denied graduation from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class; and
- 5) The total number of pupils denied graduation from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class solely because of failure to pass the HSPA or AHSA, based on the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)3.

- I) The Superintendent shall provide the district's graduation requirements each year they are evaluated through the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) to the Executive County Superintendent and update this filed copy each time the graduation policy and requirements are revised.

N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-1 et seq.; 18A:35-1;  
18A:35-4.9; 18A:35-7; 18A:36-17

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1 et seq.; 6A:8-5.1; 6A:8-5.2; 6A:14-4.1211 et seq.

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