

## **5460 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 credits in courses designed to meet all of the standards adopted by the State of New Jersey including, but not limited to, the following credits:

1. At least twenty credits in language arts literacy aligned to grade nine through twelve standards;
2. At least fifteen credits in mathematics, including Algebra I or the content equivalent including geometry or the content equivalent 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;
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, including one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course which shall include chemistry, environmental science, or physics, and including one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course;
5. At least 4 credits in health, safety, and physical education during each year of enrollment distributed as one hundred fifty (150) minutes per week as required by N.J.S.A.18A:35-5, 7 & 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);

8. At least two and one-half credits in financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy;
9. Technological literacy, consistent with the standards adopted by the State of New Jersey 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 credits.

As defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3, “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 standards adopted by the State of New Jersey.
  - a. Individualized pupil learning opportunities in all standards adopted by the State of New Jersey include, but are not limited, to the following:
    - (1) Independent study;
    - (2) Online learning;
    - (3) Study abroad programs;
    - (4) Pupil exchange programs;
    - (5) Structured learning opportunities including, but not limited to work-based programs, internships, apprenticeships, and service learning experiences.
  - b. Individualized pupil learning opportunities based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the standards adopted by the State of New Jersey shall:
    - (1) Be based on pupil interest and career goals as reflected in the Personalized Pupil Learning Plans;

- (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 a designee.
    - c. Group programs based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the standards adopted by the State of New Jersey 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 standards adopted by the State of New Jersey 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 standards adopted by the State of New Jersey 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 standards adopted by the State of New Jersey:
    - (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 of Education-approved locally designed competency-based assessments.

3. The District shall establish a process to approve post-secondary learning opportunities that may consist of:
  - a. Advanced Placement (AP) courses;
  - b. 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 standards adopted by the State of New Jersey.

**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. Any Statewide assessment graduation requirements as determined by the New Jersey Department of Education, as outlined below.

**C. Statewide Assessment Graduation Requirements**

1. The requirement that all pupils demonstrate proficiency in the high school end-of-course Partnership for Assessments of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment in ELA 10 and Algebra I, or through the alternate means set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f) through (i);
2. The Board of Education will provide pupils who have not demonstrated proficiency on the high school end-of-course PARCC assessments in ELA 10 and Algebra I with the opportunity to demonstrate such competence through one of the alternate means set forth below:
  - a. For the graduating classes of 2018, and 2019, pupils who do not take both the ELA 10 and the Algebra I end-of-course PARCC assessments or who take, but do not achieve a passing score on both assessments, as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6, may satisfy the State requirement to demonstrate proficiency in English language arts and mathematics in one of the following ways:
    - (1) Achieve a passing score, as determined by the Commissioner, on a corresponding substitute competency test in English language arts and/or mathematics, as applicable, or substitute a passing score on another end-of-course PARCC assessment, including ELA 9, ELA 11, Geometry, or Algebra II; or

- (2) Meet the criteria of the portfolio appeals process; and
- b. For the graduating class of 2020, pupils who take all applicable high school end-of-course PARCC assessments for all courses in which they are enrolled, including those pupils who received a waiver for ELA 11 pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(c)3i, as of September 6, 2016, and thereafter, but do not achieve a passing score on both the ELA 10 and Algebra I end-of-course PARCC assessments pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 (a)6, may satisfy the State requirement to demonstrate proficiency in English language arts and mathematics in one of the following ways:
  - (1) Achieve a passing score, as determined by the Commissioner, on a corresponding substitute competency test in English language arts and/or mathematics, as applicable, or substitute a passing score on another end-of-course PARCC assessment, including ELA 9, ELA 11, Geometry, or Algebra II; or
  - (2) Meet the criteria of the portfolio appeals process.
3. Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, pupils who take all applicable high school end-of-course PARCC assessments for all courses in which they are enrolled, including those pupils who received a waiver for ELA 11 pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(c)3i, as of September 6, 2016, and thereafter, but do not achieve a passing score on both the ELA 10 and Algebra I end-of-course PARCC assessments pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6, by the conclusion of their senior year and after multiple opportunities to take the assessments, may satisfy the State requirement to demonstrate proficiency in English language arts and mathematics by meeting the criteria of the portfolio appeals process.
4. In accordance with a NJDOE Memorandum dated January 24, 2017, pupils in the graduating cohort of 2020 and 2021 who completed an Algebra I course prior to September 6, 2016 and:
  - a. Took the PARCC Algebra I assessment, but did not pass and are now in an advanced mathematics course (e.g. Geometry or Algebra II); or
  - b. Did not receive a valid test score, but are now in an advanced mathematics course (e.g. Geometry or Algebra II); or

c. Did not have an opportunity to take the PARCC Algebra I assessment because the NJDOE did not offer a summer test administration, but are now in advanced mathematics course (e.g. Geometry or Algebra II). Only pupils in the graduating cohorts of 2020 and 2021 described in the three specific groups above in a. b., and c. are eligible to utilize the following pathways to demonstrate proficiency in mathematics:

- (1) Take or retake the PARCC Algebra I assessment and pass; or
- (2) Utilize the NJDOE portfolio appeals process, provided they take the PARCC Geometry assessment and the PARCC Algebra II assessment (if enrolled in the Algebra II course) and receive valid scores; or
- (3) Take and pass the Geometry or Algebra II assessment.

5. All English Language Learners (ELLs) shall satisfy the requirements for high school graduation, except ELLs may demonstrate they have attained State minimum levels of proficiency through passage of the portfolio appeals process in their native language, when available, and passage of a Department of Education-approved English fluency assessment.
6. Pupils with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3 or eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who participate in the alternative assessment for pupils with disabilities are not required to participate in repeated administration of high school end-of-course PARCC assessments.

**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.

In accordance with policy 5200, a pupil absent from a class more than 18 days in a school year, or nine days for a semester course, or 5 days in a marking period course may not receive credit for that course.

**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.

- a. 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.
    - b. The District shall develop and implement procedures for assessing whether a pupil has met the specified alternate requirements for graduation individually determined in an IEP.
  2. 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 pupil has satisfied all State and local graduation requirements, as specified in the pupil's IEP.
  3. 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.
  4. 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.
  5. 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 high school end-of-course PARCC assessments to demonstrate proficiency as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f) pursuant to the standards applicable to the student's graduating class. Upon certification of passing the test applicable to the student's class in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A: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).
4. The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any currently enrolled pupil, regardless of grade level, who:
  - a. Has demonstrated proficiency in the high school end-of-course PARCC assessments in ELA 10 and Algebra I, or as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f);
  - b. Has presented official transcripts showing at least thirty general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education; and
  - c. Has formally requested such early award of a State-endorsed high school diploma.

**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 in accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:7C-5.

H. Reporting

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

1. The total number of pupils graduated;
2. The number of pupils graduated under the substitute competency test process;
3. The number of pupils graduated under the portfolio appeals process;
4. The number of pupils receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternative requirements for graduation as specified in their IEP's;
5. The total number of pupils denied graduation from the twelfth grade class; and
6. The number of pupils denied graduation from the twelfth grade class solely because of failure to pass the high school end-of-course PARCC assessments, substitute competency tests, or portfolio appeals process based on the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8.

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

N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-1; 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:14-4.11 et seq.

Related Policies:  
5200 Attendance  
5240 Tardiness  
5410 Promotion and Retention

Approved: November 20, 2001  
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