



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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November 2, 2016

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Leads
Renaissance School Project Leads
High School Principals and Supervisors
School Counselors

FROM: Donald Mitchell
Chief Performance Officer
Division of Talent & Performance

SUBJECT: 2017 Graduation Assessment Requirements

This memorandum is to reiterate to school districts that the graduating requirements for class of 2017 do not change from last year. Students graduating as members of the class of 2017 can meet graduation assessment requirements through a variety of ways, including:

- 1) Achieving passing scores on certain PARCC assessments;
- 2) Achieving certain scores on alternative assessments such as the SAT, ACT, or Accuplacer; or
- 3) The submission by the district of a student portfolio through the Department's portfolio appeals process. (Special education students whose Individual Education Plans (IEPs) specify an alternative way to demonstrate proficiencies will continue to follow the graduation requirements set forth in their IEPs.)

Below is the comprehensive list of options to meet the graduation assessment requirement, which is also available on the Department's [graduation requirements webpage](#). Please note that to fulfill the graduation assessment requirements, a student will need to achieve a passing score for an assessment in both the Math column and the English Language Arts (ELA) column:

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| English Language Arts (ELA) |
|---|
| PARCC ELA Grade 9 \geq 750 (Level 4) <i>or</i> |
| PARCC ELA Grade 10 \geq 750 (Level 4) <i>or</i> |
| PARCC ELA Grade 11 \geq 725 (Level 3) <i>or</i> |
| SAT Critical Reading (taken before 3/1/16) \geq 400 <i>or</i> |
| SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section (taken 3/1/16 or later) \geq 450 <i>or</i> |
| SAT Reading Test (taken 3/1/16 or later) \geq 22 <i>or</i> |
| ACT Reading or ACT PLAN Reading* \geq 16 <i>or</i> |
| Accuplacer Write Placer \geq 6 <i>or</i> |
| Accuplacer Write Placer ESL \geq 4 <i>or</i> |
| PSAT10 Reading or PSAT/NMSQT Reading (taken before 10/1/15) \geq 40 <i>or</i> |
| PSAT10 Reading or PSAT/NMSQT Reading (taken 10/1/15 or later) \geq 22 <i>or</i> |
| ACT Aspire Reading* \geq 422 <i>or</i> |
| ASVAB-AFQT Composite \geq 31 <i>or</i> |
| Meet the criteria of the NJDOE Portfolio Appeal |

| Mathematics |
|---|
| PARCC Algebra I \geq 750 (Level 4) <i>or</i> |
| PARCC Geometry \geq 725 (Level 3) <i>or</i> |
| PARCC Algebra II \geq 725 (Level 3) <i>or</i> |
| SAT Math (taken before 3/1/16) \geq 400 <i>or</i> |
| SAT Math Section (taken 3/1/16 or later) \geq 440 <i>or</i> |
| SAT Math Test (taken 3/1/16 or later) \geq 22 <i>or</i> |
| ACT Math or ACT PLAN Math* \geq 16 <i>or</i> |
| Accuplacer Elementary Algebra \geq 76 <i>or</i> |
| PSAT10 Math or PSAT/NMSQT Math (taken before 10/1/15) \geq 40 <i>or</i> |
| PSAT10 Math or PSAT/NMSQT Math (taken 10/1/15 or later) \geq 22 <i>or</i> |
| ACT Aspire Math* \geq 422 <i>or</i> |
| ASVAB-AFQT Composite \geq 31 <i>or</i> |
| Meet the criteria of the NJDOE Portfolio Appeal |

* Indicates test is no longer administered but can be used for the graduating year.
 Note: The symbol \geq means a score greater than or equal to

DLM/st

- c: Members, State Board of Education
 - Kimberley Harrington, Acting Commissioner
 - Senior Staff
 - Diane Shoener
 - Colleen Schulz-Eskow
 - Jeffrey Hauger
 - Executive County Superintendents
 - Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
 - Executive County Business Officials
 - NJ LEE Group
 - Garden State Coalition of Schools
 - Education Law Center
 - American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey

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5460 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

5460 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

[See POLICY ALERT Nos. 90, 95, 121 153, 157, 169, 186 and 205]

M

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 student has met all State and local requirements for high school graduation. The Board will annually certify to the Executive County Superintendent each student who has been awarded a diploma has met the requirements for graduation.

A. High School Graduation Requirements

A graduating student must have earned a minimum of 130 (**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;
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) including geometry or the content equivalent; and a third year of mathematics that builds on the concepts and skills of algebra and geometry and that prepares students for college and 21st 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 one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course, which shall include chemistry, environmental science, or physics and one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course effective with 2012-2013 grade nine class;

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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 student 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, 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 21st century life and careers, or career-technical education; and
11. Electives as determined by the high school program sufficient to total a minimum of 130 **(must be at least one hundred twenty)** 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 students to pursue a variety of personalized learning opportunities, as follows:

1. The district shall establish a process to approve individualized student learning opportunities that meet or exceed the Core Curriculum Content Standards.
 - a. Individualized student 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;

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- (4) Study abroad programs;
 - (5) Student exchange programs; and
 - (6) Structured learning experiences, including, but not limited to, work-based programs, internships, apprenticeships, and service learning experiences.
 - b. Individualized student learning opportunities based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards shall:
 - (1) Be based on student interest and career goals as reflected in the Personalized Student Learning Plans;
 - (2) Include demonstration of student 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 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 student achievement in meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards at the high school level, including standards achieved by means of the individualized student 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 student's high school enrollment; no such locally administered assessments shall preclude or exempt student 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.

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- b. The district shall choose from among the following assessment options to determine if students 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.
3. The district shall establish a process to approve post-secondary learning opportunities that may consist of:
 - 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.
 - (1) Advanced Placement (AP) courses;
 - (2) Concurrent/dual enrollment at accredited higher education institutions.

B. Additional Graduation Requirements

1. Attendance requirements as indicated in Policy and Regulation 5200;
2. Other requirements established by the Board of Education as indicated below:

At least 20 hours of volunteer service per year of enrollment.
3. Any statutorily mandated requirements for earning a high school diploma; and
4. Any Statewide assessment graduation requirements as determined by the New Jersey Department of Education, and as outlined in C. below.

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C. Statewide Assessment Graduation Requirements

1. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is transitioning from the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) to the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) End-of-Course assessments for students, including students with disabilities, in the classes of 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.
2. Students in the classes of 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 will be able to demonstrate proficiencies in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics required by State statute by either meeting the “cut score” on the PARCC assessments or meeting the “cut score” on a substitute assessment or by meeting the criteria of the NJDOE portfolio appeal process.
3. A student with a disability, whose Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team determines the student is exempt from these requirements, would be required to achieve the alternative proficiency in his/her IEP.
4. The NJDOE has developed “concordant” cut scores for additional substitute assessments. For the classes of 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019, students will be able to demonstrate proficiency in both ELA and Mathematics by meeting one of the criteria under English Language Arts and Mathematics as indicated below:

a. English Language Arts

- PARCC ELA Grade 9 \geq 750 (Level 4); or
- PARCC ELA Grade 10 \geq 750 (Level 4); or
- PARCC ELA Grade 11 \geq 725 (Level 3); or
- Prior to 3/1/16 SAT Critical Reading \geq 400; or
- 3/1/16 or later SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section \geq 450 OR SAT Reading Test \geq 22; or
- ACT Reading or ACT PLAN Reading \geq 16; or
- Accuplacer Write Placer \geq 6; or
- Accuplacer Write Placer ESL \geq 4; or
- PSAT10 Reading or PSAT/NMSQT Reading* \geq 40; or
- PSAT10 Reading or PSAT/NMSQT Reading** \geq 22; or

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- ACT Aspire Reading ≥ 422 ; or
- ASVAB – AFQT Composite ≥ 31 ; or
- Meet the Criteria of the NJDOE Portfolio Appeal

b. Mathematics

- PARCC Algebra I ≥ 750 (Level 4); or
- PARCC Geometry ≥ 725 (Level 3); or
- PARCC Algebra II ≥ 725 (Level 3); or
- Prior to 3/1/16 SAT Math ≥ 400 ; or
- 3/1/16 or later SAT Math Section ≥ 440
OR SAT Math Test ≥ 22
- ACT or ACT PLAN Math ≥ 16 ; or
- Accuplacer Elementary Algebra ≥ 76 ; or
- PSAT10 Math or PSAT/NMSQT
Math* ≥ 40 ; or
- PSAT10 Math or PSAT/NMSQT
Math** ≥ 22 ; or
- ACT Aspire Math ≥ 422 ; or
- ASVAB – AFQT Composite ≥ 31 ; or
- Meet the Criteria of the NJDOE
Portfolio Appeal

Note: * PSAT taken prior to October 2015; ** PSAT taken after October 2015.

D. Attendance

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

E. Students with Disabilities

1. Through the IEP process and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11 - Graduation, the district may specify alternate requirements for a State-endorsed diploma for individual students with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3.

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- a. The district shall specifically address any alternate requirements for graduation in a student'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 student with a disability has met any alternate requirements for graduation individually determined in an IEP.
 2. If a student with a disability attends a school other than that of the school district of residence, which is empowered to grant a diploma, the student shall have the choice of receiving the diploma of the school attended or the diploma of the school district of residence.
 - a. If the school the student is attending declines to issue a diploma to the student, the district of residence Board of Education shall issue the student a diploma if the student has satisfied all State and local graduation requirements, as specified in the student's IEP.
 3. Students 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 student with a disability whose IEP 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 student has attended four years of high school.
 5. When a student with a disability graduates or exceeds the age of eligibility, the student shall be provided a written summary of his or her academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the student'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 Board of Education requirements.

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2. The Board of Education shall not issue a high school diploma to any student not meeting the criteria specified in State and local requirements.
 - a. The district shall provide students 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 meet the Statewide assessment graduation requirements, to return to school at scheduled times for the purpose of meeting the Statewide assessment graduation requirements. Upon certification of meeting these requirements, 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 student 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 student who enters or transfers into the high school and the student's parent(s) will be provided a copy of the school district's requirements for a State-endorsed diploma, and the programs available to assist students 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 and to the Commissioner of Education the number of students who completed the twelfth grade course requirements and were denied a diploma and the number of students who received State endorsed diplomas.

- 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 and requirements are revised.

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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:14-4.11 et seq.

Adopted July 20, 2016