

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS



On Wednesday, Dec. 5, the Kentucky Board of Education approved changes to the proposed minimum high school graduation requirements, 704 KAR 3:305. The changes add "graduation prerequisites" and "graduation qualifiers," to ensure students have basic competency in math and reading as well as experiences intended to equip them for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. The changes will now go to the Kentucky General Assembly for review.

GRADUATION PREREQUISITES

Under the revised statute, students entering high school in the 2020-21 school year must demonstrate basic competency in reading and math in one of three ways before graduation.

1. The student's 10th grade state-required assessments meeting the minimum criteria in reading and mathematics; OR
 - The minimum criteria shall include earning a KDE-approved scale score in the apprentice student performance level of the state-required assessments approved by the Kentucky Board of Education as passing.
 - Students who do not meet the minimum criteria on one or both assessments may retake the reading and/or mathematics assessments twice annually in the 11th and 12th grades of high school enrollment.
 - The student's first completion of the assessments in 10th grade shall contribute to the school's accountability rating;
2. The student's 8th grade state-required assessment rating of proficient or higher for reading or mathematics or both reading and mathematics, if applicable; OR
3. A student collection of evidence to include the following:
 - a. The student's ILP that includes student transcript;
 - b. If applicable, the student's IEP, that includes evidence that the student has received specially designed instruction and related services in reading and mathematics;
 - c. Performance on the required state assessments;
 - d. Appropriate interventions, targeted to the student's needs, provided to the student to ensure support was provided toward meeting the requirements outlined in this administrative regulation;
 - e. Student work demonstrating the students' competency in reading and/or mathematics, as applicable; and
 - f. The student's postsecondary plans.

The process shall require the principal to submit the collection of student evidence to the superintendent or designee for review and approval, or for public charter schools principals to submit the collection of student evidence to the Commissioner of Education or designee.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to pass a 100 question civics exam, receive instruction in financial literacy and demonstrate competency in essential skills and technology.

GRADUATION QUALIFIERS

Under the revised proposal, students entering high school in the 2019-20 school year must complete one of eight Graduation Qualifiers:

1. Precollege curriculum as established by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020; OR
2. Benchmark score in one section of a college admissions or placement examination as established by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020; OR
3. Three postsecondary credit hours or more of a Kentucky Department of Education approved dual credit course with a grade of C or higher; OR
4. One course and corresponding assessment meeting the following criteria:
 - Advanced placement (AP) with a score of three or higher; or
 - Cambridge Advanced International (CAI) with a score at or above benchmark; or
 - International baccalaureate (IB) with a score of five or higher; or
5. Industry certification as approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board; OR
6. Four credits from valid courses within a single KDE-approved career pathway; OR
7. Complete 2 years of a KDE approved or Kentucky Labor Cabinet approved pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship; OR
8. A Kentucky Department of Education approved process to verify 500 hours of exceptional work experience, or alternative requirements as prescribed in a student's IEP.

Districts shall report individual student data regarding the completion of each graduation qualifier to the Kentucky Department of Education which may be included in public reporting.

22 PERSONALIZED CREDITS

Students entering high school in the 2019-20 school year must complete the following 22 personalized credits before graduation.

- English I and II AND 2 additional English Language Arts credits aligned with the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- Algebra I and Geometry AND two additional Mathematics credits aligned with the student's ILP
- 3 credits Social Studies (at least 1 aligned with the student's ILP)
- 3 credits Science (at least 1 aligned with the student's ILP)
- 1/2 credit Health
- 1/2 credit Physical Education
- 1 credit Visual and Performing Arts
- 6 additional credits aligned with the student's ILP



PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

SPECIAL EDUCATION CONSIDERATIONS

SHIFTING EXPECTATIONS

- Part of the reasoning behind updating graduation requirements was to provide students with more avenues to learn and master academic standards.
- The proposed and updated graduation requirements shift expectations to work readiness for all students, including students with disabilities.
- The proposed changes allow more opportunities for students to obtain competencies in reading and math.

IDEA GUIDELINES STILL IN PLACE

- Students eligible to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are required to meet the graduation requirements as prescribed by the regulation.
- The requirement for specially-designed instruction does not change with the proposed graduation requirements.
- Students with disabilities are entitled to individualized programming under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- The Individual Education Program (IEP) is developed by the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) to ensure that the needs of the student are met to successfully reach educational expectations and to obtain a diploma.

IEP HONORED IN REQUIREMENTS

- Nothing in the proposed regulation subverts the rights of a student with an Individual Education Program (IEP) in place, and this includes transition services outlined in 707 KAR 1:320.
- While every student must have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), students with an IEP must have a statement of the transition service needs that includes postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to education, employment, training, and independent living skills.
- Ongoing progress data will be collected and analyzed at least annually by the ARC.

DEMONSTRATION OF READING & MATH SKILLS

- All students, including students with disabilities, are expected to demonstrate basic competencies in reading and mathematics, either through assessments or through a collection of evidences.
- Accommodations must be provided to students as prescribed in a student's IEP or 504 Plan and the student will have multiple opportunities to pass the assessments.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

- For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (i.e., less than 1% of the total student population statewide) for whom traditional assessments would be an inappropriate measure of progress, the ARC may determine the student may take the Alternate Assessment Aligned with Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS).
- Less than 1% of the total student population statewide qualifies for the AA-AAS. Federal law prohibits states from exceeding this 1% for statewide testing purposes – effectively capping the percentage of students that can participate in the AA-AAS.
- The AA-AAS was developed to provide schools and programs with a valid and reliable means of assessing the instruction provided. The AA-AAS continues to meet federal requirements outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).