

Statute	THECB Administrative Rules (19 TAC Chapter 21, Subchapter D)
<p>Sec. 28.0253. TEXAS FIRST EARLY HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAM.</p> <p>(a) In this section:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2) "Eligible institution" means an institution of higher education that is designated as a research university or emerging research university under the coordinating board's accountability system. (3) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003. (4) "Program" means the Texas First Early High School Completion Program established under this section. <p>(b) The agency, in coordination with the coordinating board, shall establish the Texas First Early High School Completion Program to allow public high school students who demonstrate early readiness for college to graduate early from high school. The purpose of the program, in conjunction with the Texas First Scholarship Program established under Subchapter K-1, Chapter 56, is to promote efficiency in the state public education system and incentivize the enrollment of high performing students at eligible institutions.</p> <p>(c) The coordinating board, in consultation with the agency and eligible institutions, shall by rule establish standards for use in the program regarding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the specific competencies that demonstrate a student's mastery of each subject area for which the coordinating board and the commissioner have adopted college readiness standards; (2) the specific competencies that demonstrate a student's mastery of a language other than English; and (3) acceptable assessments or other means by which a student may demonstrate the student's early readiness for college with respect to each subject area and the language described by Subdivision (2), subject to Subsection (d). <p>(d) The assessments or other means the coordinating board establishes under Subsection (c)(3) must be equivalent to the assessments or other means eligible institutions commonly use to place students at the institutions in courses that may be credited toward a degree requirement.</p> <p>(e) A school district or open-enrollment charter school may issue a high school diploma to a student under the program if, using the standards established under Subsection (c), the student demonstrates mastery of and early readiness for college in each of the subject areas described by that subsection and in a language other than English, notwithstanding any other local or state requirements.</p> <p>(f) A student who earns a high school diploma through the program is considered to have earned a distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program adopted under Section 28.025. The student is not guaranteed admission to any institution of higher education or to any academic program at an institution of higher education solely on the basis of having received the diploma through the program. The student may apply for admission to an institution of higher education for the first semester or other academic term after the semester or other academic term in which the student earns a diploma through the program.</p> <p>(g) On a student's initial enrollment in high school in a grade level below grade 12 in a school district or open-enrollment charter school, the district or school shall provide to the student and the student's parent or guardian information regarding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the requirements to earn a high school diploma under the program; and (2) the Texas First Scholarship Program established under Subchapter K-1, Chapter 56. <p>(h) The agency and the coordinating board shall jointly prepare and post on their respective Internet websites a publication that includes the information required to be provided under Subsection (g) in a form that enables a school district or open-enrollment charter school to reproduce the publication for distribution under that subsection.</p>	<p>Sec. 21.50 Authority and Purpose</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Authority. The authority for this subchapter is Texas Education Code §28.0253, establishing the Texas First Early High School Completion Program to allow public high school students who demonstrate early readiness for college to graduate early from high school (b) Purpose. The purpose of the Texas First Early High School Completion Program, in conjunction with the Texas First Scholarship Program established under Texas Education Code, Chapter 56, Subchapter K-1, is to promote efficiency in the state public education system and incentivize the enrollment of high performing students at eligible institutions within the state of Texas. <p>Sec. 21.51 Definitions</p> <p>The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) "Coordinating board" means the agency, including staff, known as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2) "Eligible institution" means an institution of higher education that is designated as a research university or emerging research university under the coordinating board's accountability system. (3) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Texas Education Code §61.003. (4) "Program" means the Texas First Early High School Completion Program established under this section. (a) Authority. The authority for this subchapter is Texas Education Code §28.0253, establishing the Texas First Early High School Completion Program to allow public high school students who demonstrate early readiness for college to graduate early from high school <p>Sec. 21.52 Eligibility for Texas First Diploma</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Notwithstanding any other state or local law, a student is entitled to early high school graduation under the Texas First Early High School Completion Program if the student meets the criteria established in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection. A student who achieves a required score on an assessment to meet the requirement of any one of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection, shall be allowed to use that same assessment to meet the requirement of another section if the student's score meets the required minimum for each section. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The student has met the following minimum criteria at the time of graduation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (A) Earned at least twenty-two (22) high school credits by any permissible method, including credit by examination; (B) Earned a final Grade Point Average equivalent to 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; (C) Earned an overall scaled score in at least the 80th percentile on one or more of the following assessments: ACT, SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, TSIA/TSIA2, or GED, or alternatively, has a grade point average in the top ten percent of the student's current class during the current or semester prior to the counselor's or administrator's verification under subsection (b) of a student's eligibility for early graduation under the Program; and (D) Completed the requirement for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness End-of-Course (STAAR EOC) examinations for English I or II, Algebra I, and Biology by one of the following methods: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) If the student has taken the STAAR EOC for English I or II, Algebra I, and Biology, the student has achieved the satisfactory level of performance as defined by the Commissioner of Education; or (ii) If the student has not taken the required STAAR EOC assessment for English I or II, Algebra I, or Biology, the student has satisfied the STAAR EOC requirement by achieving a passing score on a substitute assessment for that subject area authorized under Title 19 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 101, Subchapter DD, §101.4002(b). (2) The student has demonstrated the student's mastery of each subject area of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and a language other than English through assessments or other means eligible institutions commonly use to place students in courses that may be credited toward degree program requirements. A student may demonstrate mastery of each subject area, as applicable, by meeting one or more of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (A) Earning a score on the STAAR EOC assessment that meets the college readiness standards set out in Title 19 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 4, Subchapter C, §4.54; (B) Credit earned in a course in the core curriculum of an institution of higher education in which the student received at least a C; or (C) Meeting the standards on the assessments set out in Figure 1. Attached Graphic (b) A counselor or administrator at the public school of a student who is eligible for early graduation under the Program must verify that the student meets the requirements in subsections (a)(1) and (2) of this section, prior to issuing a diploma to the student under this Program. A student is responsible for providing the official copy of the assessment results to their counselor or administrator to verify these requirements. (c) A school that issues a diploma under the Program shall require the minimum number of assessments to demonstrate that the student meets the criteria established in subsections (a)(1) and (2) of this section and may not require a student to take any other STAAR End-of-Course assessment to graduate under the Program, except as required by this section. <p>Sec. 21.53 Diploma Equivalency</p> <p>A student who graduates early through the Program is considered to have earned a diploma with a distinguished level of achievement under Texas Education Code §28.025. The school district must provide each student who earns a Program diploma with a designation of distinguished level of achievement on the student's diploma.</p> <p>Sec. 21.54 Notice to Students</p> <p>For the 2022-2023 school year, each high school must provide a written notification to each high school student and the student's parent or guardian listing the eligibility criteria for the Texas First Early High School Completion Program and Texas First Scholarship Program. After the 2022-2023 school year, the school must provide the notice to each student and the student's parent or guardian upon the student's initial enrollment in high school. The notice must include information about the requirement that a student must provide an official copy of their assessment results and transcripts, as applicable, to receive credit for the assessments and credits required to receive early graduation from the Program.</p> <p>Sec. 21.55 Satisfaction of Other Requirements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A student who meets all Program requirements according to Title 19 Texas Administrative Code §21.52 has met the requirements of the Texas Success Initiative according to Texas Education Code Chapter 51. (b) A student who meets all Program requirements according to Title 19 Texas Administrative Code §21.52 has met the initial eligibility requirements of the TEXAS Grant program, as authorized by the Toward Excellence, Access, and Success Grant Program under the Texas Education Code §56.3041.