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High School Proficiency Based Graduation

The Rhode Island Department of Education has developed a proficiency-based diploma system that affects all public high school students beginning with the Class of 2008. Consistent with Council for Elementary and Secondary Education, the requirements for a Lincoln High School (LHS) Diploma will be set by the School Committee and published annually in the LHS Program of Studies. This state system sets the minimum graduation requirements. The Lincoln School Committee, by policy, maintains the prerogative to set more rigorous standards for graduation.

A Lincoln High School diploma is the official recognition that a student has met the state and Lincoln graduation requirements and has demonstrated the necessary proficiency to graduate. Only students who demonstrate fulfillment of these graduation requirements and proficiencies shall participate in the graduation ceremony and receive a diploma to be presented only by the Principal of Lincoln High School.

I. Requirements

The requirements for a Lincoln High School Diploma shall include:

- A. For the Class of 2024 – 2027, all students must complete the minimum required coursework credits (23), both in total and for specific subjects. Course requirements for graduation shall be as set by the School Committee and published in the LHS Program of Studies.

For the Class of 2028 and beyond, all students must meet the [minimum requirements for graduation](#) established by The Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition to state requirements, students must successfully complete additional requirements as set forth in the Lincoln High School Program of Studies.

- B. Successful completion of a Graduation Exhibition, as specified in the LHS Program of Studies.
- C. To meet the needs of a diverse and unique student population, the Lincoln Public Schools has a diploma system that builds upon the Rhode Island model. This diploma will be based on a Transition and/or career experience. Requirements includes the successful completion of a minimum of 23 academic credits with proficiency and measures as outlined in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Program of Studies along with the requirements for the specific plan outlined by the IEP team. This Pathway will not be awarded for circumstances other than approval through the IEP process. Students in the Transition Experiential Pathway will complete a transition plan, including a career and/or life experience and aligned application project. Further, students will be expected to complete individualized proficiency in six "core academic areas" (English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Technology, and the Arts) as well as complete an exhibition or equivalent.

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- D. Per the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education regulations, it is expected that all students participate in state assessments.
- E. For the Class of 2021 and beyond, students may earn a *Commissioner's Seal* and or a *Seal of Bi-Literacy*, to appear on the diploma by attaining the benchmarks adopted by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education and published annually in the Lincoln High School Program of Studies. Students and families will be notified of the criteria for this designation prior to October 1 of their ninth grade year or at the time of enrollment.

For the Class of 2021 and beyond, students may earn *Pathway Endorsements* to appear on the diploma by attaining the appropriate benchmarks as promulgated by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education and those published annually in the Lincoln High School Program of Studies. Students and families will be notified of the criteria for this designation prior to October 1 of their ninth grade year or at the time of enrollment.

II. Access and Opportunity

Access to instruction designed to allow students to attain proficiency is central to the achievement of proficiency. To that end, all students in Lincoln shall have access and opportunity to learn in the curriculum designed to make them proficient as shall be required of them to graduate.

Proficiency graduation is based on mutual, shared accountability. The school district is accountable for an educational program designed to enable students to reach proficiency. Students are accountable for participation in and completion of their program.

III. Transfer Students and Appeals Process

The LHS Principal shall establish a Proficiency Based Graduation Review Team (Review Team) consisting of faculty and administrators to review the Graduation by Proficiency (GBP) requirements of all students entering grades 11 and 12 as transfer students to LHS and to address appeals of graduation requirements. A student's compliance with an approved home study course of study or another school's GBP or like standards may not be automatically accepted by the Lincoln Public Schools. Parents are encouraged to submit student's educational records to the Review Team as soon as possible to receive timely advice as to the status of a student's progress towards District GBP standards.

A. Transfer Students

Students entering LHS requiring more than two years of work necessary prior to graduation (typically before the start of grade 11) will meet all requirements in order to receive a LHS diploma. For transfer students who enroll at LHS with two years or less of

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work necessary prior to graduation (typically at the start of grade 11 or later), the following review procedure and decisions will be made:

- For students transferring to LHS from another Rhode Island public high school, the Review Team will consider the completed GBP standards established by the previous school. The review panel will make specific recommendations to the LHS Principal (or principal's designee). The recommendations will be reviewed by the Principal for his/her decision. The Principal will inform the student's guidance counselor, and the guidance counselor will meet with the student and parent/guardian.
- For students transferring to LHS from a Rhode Island non-public school or Home School Instruction, or from an out-of-state public or private school or Home School Instruction, the Review Team will review the student's transcripts and any other academic information from the prior school. The review team will make specific recommendations to the LHS Principal (or principal's designee) for his/her decision. The Principal will inform the student's guidance counselor, and the guidance counselor will meet with the student and parent/guardian.

B. Appeals Process

Any student who believes that he or she has been improperly denied a diploma may utilize the school system's appeal procedure through the administrative steps hereby outlined:

The Review Team is the first step if a student wishes to challenge a decision regarding graduation. A student (or his/her parent or legal guardian) may submit a request in writing to the Review Team as to why the student should be permitted to graduate. The Review Team shall inform the student/parent/guardian in writing of its decision regarding this appeal, along with an explanation for such decision, within ten days of receipt of this written request.

Students/parents/guardians who do not accept the Review Team's decision may then appeal to the LHS Principal. Such request must be in writing and must include **cause** as to why the Review Team's decision should be changed. The Principal shall inform the student, parent, or guardian in writing of his or her decision, along with an explanation for such decision, within ten days of the date of the written appeal.

Students/parents/guardians who do not accept the Principal's decision may then appeal to the Superintendent. A written request to the Superintendent must include **cause** as to why the LHS Principal's decision should be changed. The Superintendent shall inform the parent or guardian in writing of his/her decision, along with an explanation for such decision, within ten days of receiving this written appeal.

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Students/parents/guardians who do not accept the Superintendent's decision may then submit a written request to the Chairperson of the Lincoln School Committee. Such request must include *cause* as to why the Superintendent's decision should be changed. The School Committee, on receipt of such letter, will schedule a hearing to review the request. It shall be the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian to show cause for amending the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee Chairperson shall respond in writing to the student/parent/guardian within 10 days of this hearing.

IV. Promotion

Promotion of high school students to the next grade level will be determined solely by cohort status, and will not maintain a minimum number of credits to progress to the next identified grade level. Annually, progress toward credit and course completion requirements for graduation will be documented and communicated to students and parents/guardians. In a student's senior year, a formal meeting will occur. This meeting will include the student, parent/guardian, school counselor, and principal/designee and the purpose will be to communicate the lack of the minimum credits and requirements toward graduation, and develop a plan to determine a pathway to graduation.

Amended Policy Adopted June 18, 2007

Amended Policy Adopted September 14, 2009

Amended Policy First Reading May 15, 2017

Amended Policy Second Reading: June 12, 2017

Amended Policy Adopted: June 12, 2017

Amended Policy First Reading: October 21, 2019

Amended Policy Second Reading: November 18, 2019

Amended Policy Adopted: November 18, 2019

Amended Policy First Reading: May 20, 2024

Amended Policy Second Reading: June 10, 2024

Amended Policy Adopted: June 10, 2024

TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island