

**Policy**

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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from the N/A District high school, and receive a state-endorsed diploma issued by the N/A Board of Education, a pupil must:

- A. Meet both state and district proficiency standards in the core curriculum content areas; achieve or exceed passing grade on New Jersey Department of Education approved high school proficiency assessment;
- B. Complete successfully any course requirements stated in the administrative code, unless those of the district are greater, in which case the district's standard must be met. The proficiencies required must include the New Jersey Student Learning Standards approved by the State Board of Education;
- C. Select and complete successfully enough elective credits to meet the district minimum of N/A credits;
- D. Complete and submit a financial aid application in a form required by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority or submit a waiver form to the district requesting exemption. This requirement applies to the graduating classes of the 2024-2025, 2025-2026, and 2026-2027 school years, unless and until legislation extends the requirements of P.L. 2023, c. 295.

Successful completion means that the pupil has demonstrated the degree of proficiency required by the district to indicate achievement of the district goals for the particular course, and has attended the required number of course sessions.

Transfer pupils must meet all state and local requirements in order to receive a N/A diploma.

The chief school administrator shall put into effect the procedures necessary to assess each pupil upon entry into the system, and, annually thereafter, to identify those pupils not meeting the state or district proficiency requirements. He/she shall develop the programs necessary to remedy these deficiencies at the lowest possible grade level.

Remediation and Basic Skills

Pupils who do not pass the New Jersey Department of Education approved statewide proficiency assessment, the elementary assessment component for grades three through five and the middle school components for grades six through eight shall be provided appropriate remediation.

Twelfth-grade pupils who have satisfied all other graduation requirements but have repeatedly failed the statewide examination shall receive a special review assessment as provided by law.

Pupils with Limited English Proficiency

Pupils with limited English proficiency must be provided with the program opportunities required by law, and must fulfill the regular state and district requirements for graduation.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

### Special Education Pupils

A disabled pupil must meet all state and local high school graduation requirements in order to receive a state-endorsed high school diploma unless exempted in his/her IEP with the written approval of the chief school administrator.

A pupil who qualifies may take the New Jersey Department of Education approved alternate proficiency assessment, if alternate requirements for graduation have been specified in his/her IEP.

By June 30 of a disabled pupil's last year in the elementary program, the pupil's case manager, parent/guardian and teacher(s) shall meet to review the instructional guide and basic plan of the pupil's IEP in view of the transition to the secondary program. Input from appropriate staff from the secondary school shall be part of the review.

The basic plan of the IEP for the pupil exiting the elementary program will address all the elements required in the administrative code. The description of the educational program will include exemptions, if any, from regular education program options or state and local graduation requirements including HSPA, along with the rationale for the exemptions. The exemptions must be approved in writing by the chief school administrator.

Required reviews of the IEP shall continue to address graduation requirements and shall explain why the proficiencies required for graduation are not part of the IEP.

Because graduation with a state-endorsed diploma is a change of placement that requires written notice, all procedures described in the administrative code shall be followed scrupulously. Procedures shall include written notice to parents/guardians that includes a copy of procedural safeguards published by the State Department of Education and opportunity for mediation or a due process hearing.

### Proficiency

In consultation with appropriate professional staff, the chief school administrator shall develop and present to the board for adoption indicators of achievement and standards of proficiency and attendance demonstrating successful completion of each course offered at every level of the high school.

The subject matter and standards of proficiency shall be articulated with the district's elementary schools and with sending elementary districts.

In accordance with law, the board of education shall have copies of this policy distributed to all ninth-grade or otherwise entering pupils and their parents/guardians.

They shall also be informed as to the examinations, demonstrated proficiencies, course and credit hour requirements, attendance policies, and any other state and local requirements.

Proficiency requirements for each individual course shall be given to pupils upon registering for the course.

The yearly program of studies for each pupil in the high school must be approved and signed by the parent/guardian, except in the case of 18-year-old pupils.

### Early Graduation

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

Pupils who have clearly demonstrated a scholastic aptitude, an unusual readiness for the world of work, a financial need, or a serious health or family concern may be considered for early graduation. Minimal graduation requirements must be completed early. Approval must be obtained from the parents/guardians and the administration.

Individualized Student Learning Opportunities

The board shall establish a process to approve individualized student learning opportunities that meet or exceed the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

- A. Individualized student learning opportunities areas include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Independent study;
  - 2. Online learning;
  - 3. Study abroad programs;
  - 4. Student exchange programs; and
  - 5. 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 New Jersey Student Learning 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 on file in the school district and subject to review by the Commissioner or his or her designee.

To earn credit toward high school graduation for individualized student learning opportunities, the student shall successfully complete assessments that verify student achievement in meeting or exceeding the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at the high school level. Achievement may be verified by assessments including standards achieved by means of the individualized student learning opportunities. Such programs or assessments may occur all or in part prior to a student's high school enrollment.

No assessments administered shall preclude or exempt student participation in applicable Statewide assessments at grades three through 12.

Pupil Enrollment in College Courses – Option 2

The board shall make reasonable efforts to develop articulation agreements with New Jersey colleges and universities to facilitate the delivery of college credit courses to qualified pupils.

The board shall establish a process to approve post-secondary learning opportunities that may consist of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), or concurrent/dual enrollment at accredited higher education institutions. Students shall receive credit for successful completion of an approved, accredited college course that assures achievement of knowledge and skills that meets or exceeds the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

The board shall determine eligibility requirements for these pupils and monitor the quality of the courses offered and college faculty who teach the courses.

Reporting and Monitoring

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

The chief school administrator shall report annually at a public meeting, not later than September 30, to the board and to the commissioner:

- A. The total number of students graduated in the aggregate and disaggregated according to subgroups described in federal law;
- B. The number of students graduated who took the New Jersey Department of Education approved alternate high school proficiency assessment;
- C. The number of students receiving state-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternate requirements for graduation as specified in their IEP's;
- D. The total number of students denied graduation from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class;
- E. The number of students denied graduation from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class solely because of failure to pass the New Jersey Department of Education approved high school proficiency assessment or the approved alternate high school proficiency assessment, based on the provisions of administrative code.

This information shall be reported to the board at a public meeting prior to the date prescribed by law.

The board shall review this policy annually and shall adopt all regulations required by law.

Adopted:	November 10, 2004
NJSBA Review/Update:	June 2015
Revised:	March 8, 2017, July 17, 2024
Readopted:	August 12, 2015, April 12, 2017, August 14, 2024

<b><u>Legal References:</u></b>	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:4-25	Prescribing minimum courses of study for public schools; approval of courses of study
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-1	Commissioner of education to develop a program of standards and guidelines
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-2	Boards of education; establishment of standards
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-4.1	Operation recognition; purpose; eligibility; application procedure
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-5.1	Boards of education prohibited from excluding students from graduation ceremony or from obtaining yearbook for inability to pay fees
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7F-46	Review, update of New Jersey Student Learning Standards; Educational Adequacy Report
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:33-1	District to furnish suitable facilities; adoption of courses of study
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35-1 <u>et seq.</u>	Curriculum and courses
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35-14.9	Pupil promotion and remediation; policies and procedures
	<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36-17	Credit of seniors in active military and naval service, etc.
	<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:8-1.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Standards and assessment
	<u>See particularly:</u>	
	<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:8-1.2,-2.1,-3.1, -3.3,-4.1, -4.2, -4.3, -5.1, -5.2	

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:13-1.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Programs and practices to support student achievement
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:14-3.7	Individualized education program
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:14-4.11	Graduation
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:15-1.11	Graduation requirements for English language learners Students
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:20-2.4	Graduation (adult education programs)
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:23A-9.5	Commissioner to ensure achievement of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:30-1.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Evaluation of the performance of school districts
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:33-1.1 <u>et seq.</u>	School turnaround and improvement

The Department of Education Website, <http://www.nj.gov/njded/assessment/>  
(Lists the state assessment components)

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub.L. 114-95, 20 U.S.C.A. 6301 et seq.

**Possible**

<b><u>Cross References:</u></b>	*1120	Board of education meetings
	*5113	Absences and excuses
	*5120	Assessment of individual needs
	*5127	Commencement activities
	6000	Concepts and roles in instruction
	*6010	Goals and objectives
	*6122	Articulation
	*6140	Curriculum adoption
	6141.4	Independent study
	*6142	Subject fields
	*6142.2	English as a second language; bilingual/bicultural
	*6142.6	Basic skills
	*6145	Extracurricular activities
	*6147	Standards of proficiency
	*6154	Homework/makeup work
	*6171.4	Special education
	*6200	Adult/community education

\*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual

**Key Words**

High School Graduation, Early Warning Test, HSPT, Graduation, Graduation Requirements