



Graduation Pathway Procedures

**** For the Class of 2023 and Beyond, students must complete the following THREE requirements ****

Course Completion

Big Walnut students are expected to complete 20 course credits with at least the following:

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| ☐ 4 English | ☐ 3.5 Electives |
| ☐ 4 Math | ☐ .5 Health |
| ☐ 3 Science | ☐ .5 PE |
| ☐ 3 Social Studies | ☐ 1 Fine Art |
| | ☐ .5 Financial Literacy |

Demonstrating Competency

Big Walnut students are expected to earn a "competency" score on the ELA II and ALG I EOC or demonstrate competency on one of the 4 alternate pathways:

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|---|---|
| ☐ ELA II (Score of 684 or higher) | ☐ College Credit Plus |
| ☐ Algebra I (Score of 684 or higher) | ☐ ACT/SAT |
| | ☐ Military Enlistment |
| | ☐ Career Experience |
| | ☐ WebXams (3 proficient) |
| | ☐ Industry Credential |
| | ☐ Apprenticeship |
| | ☐ 250-hour work-based learning |
| | ☐ WorkKeys |
| | ☐ Ohio Means Jobs Seal |

**** If a student is unable to pass the EOC after multiple attempts with remediation in between and is unable to meet one of the 4 alternate pathways, the IEP team must meet, to include either the Director of Student Services or the Student Services Coordinator, to discuss Excusal from the state test.**

Demonstrating Readiness (Seals)

Big Walnut students are expected to earn at least 2 seals, 1 of which must be state defined:

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|---|---|--|
| ☐ Biliteracy | ☐ Fine and Performing Arts | ☐ Military |
| ☐ Citizenship | ☐ Ohio Means Jobs Readiness | ☐ Science |
| ☐ College Ready | ☐ Honors Diploma | ☐ Student Engagement |
| ☐ Community Services | ☐ Industry Recognized Credential | ☐ Technology |
| | | ☐ District Credential |

**** All high school students must have the above outlined in Section 3 (Profile) of the IEP and discussed at EVERY IEP meeting. If a student is being considered for excusal, the Director of Student Services or Student Services Coordinator must be invited to the meeting.**



Indicator 1: Graduation

Policies, Practices, and Procedures

Policy:

In accordance with Board Policies 5640 (Graduation Requirements) and 5460.02 (Students At-Risk of Not Qualifying for a High School Diploma), a graduation plan is developed for all students who are enrolled in high school. The plan is developed jointly by the student and School Counselor and remains in effect until the student qualifies for a high school diploma. The plan will be updated annually and will describe the targeted academic pathway(s) for the student to meet graduation requirements.

Parents/guardians are invited to assist in developing and updating the graduation plan.

Practices and Procedures:

The Big Walnut Local School District will use these practices and procedures to monitor how special education students obtain credits necessary to graduate by meeting the same requirements as students without disabilities. In addition, the following practices and procedures will allow for systems to track progress toward graduation and for determining the appropriateness of student graduation exemptions.

Person Responsible	Procedure	When
School Counselor	In collaboration with each individual student, develop a graduation plan. This plan must be reviewed and updated annually.	Annually
Intervention Specialist	Within Section 3 (Profile) of each student's IEP, the information from the "Graduation Pathways Procedures" document (attached) must be included.	Annually
Multidisciplinary Team (School Counselor, Intervention Specialist, Social Worker, Building Administrator,	The multidisciplinary team will meet quarterly to review and analyze student data. The team will specifically examine indicators and thresholds for early warning signs in order to accurately identify at-risk students.	Quarterly
	Congruent with Board Policy 5460.02, the determination of whether a student is at-risk of not	



Student Services Coordinator)	<p>qualifying for a high school diploma will be made using one (1) or more of the following criteria (each defined further below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Student's lack of adequate progress in meeting the terms of a graduation plan B. Excessive tardiness or absences from school; C. History of in-school or out-of-school discipline such as suspension and expulsion; D. Concerns for social or emotional health 	
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The following indicators and thresholds are considered early warning signs that would indicate that a student is at-risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma.

Criteria	Quantitative Indicators	Qualitative Indicators	District Actions
Student's lack of adequate progress in meeting graduation plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Failing two or more core academic classes (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies) in a semester. 2. Accumulating <5 credits by the end of 9th grade, <10 by the end of 10th grade, <15 by the end of 11th grade. 3. Not meeting the required state test scores for Algebra I and/or ELA II or alternate pathway requirements. 4. Missing two or more benchmarks in the student's IEP/Graduation Plan review within a year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of participation in transition planning or post-secondary goal-setting. 2. Students disengagement during IEP meetings or refusal to participate in coursework aligned to graduation. 3. Documented lack of family engagement in graduation planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene the IEP team to review barriers to progress. 2. Develop targeted supports (e.g., tutoring, credit recovery, supplemental instruction). 3. Strengthen transition planning and family engagement.
Excessive tardiness or	In alignment with Ohio's chronic absenteeism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patterns of absenteeism tied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate a Student Absence



absences from school	<p>definition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. $\geq 10\%$ of instructional days missed (excused or unexcused) 2. ≥ 5 unexcused absences in a month 3. ≥ 10 tardies in a quarter or ≥ 20 tardies in a semester 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to transportation barriers, caregiver responsibilities, or school avoidance. 2. Reports from staff that student frequently leaves class early or skips portions of the school day. 3. Attendance inconsistencies tied to disciplinary actions, social/emotional issues, or health needs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intervention Plan. 2. Refer to IEP team to determine the need for supports (e.g., transportation assistance, health services). 3. Collaborate with attendance officers and community partners to address barriers.
History of discipline (In-School or Out-of-School Suspension or Expulsion)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ≥ 3 office discipline referrals per quarter 2. ≥ 5 days of ISS/OSS in a semester 3. Any expulsion or multiple suspensions across two or more years 4. Placement in alternative school settings due to behavioral concerns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documented patterns of escalating behaviors despite intervention. 2. Evidence of conflict with peers/staff leading to repeated removals. 3. Student expresses negative perception of school environment (feeling targeted, unsafe, or unwelcome). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene IEP team to conduct or update a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). 2. Develop or revise a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). 3. Implement restorative practices and positive behavioral supports. 4. Provide staff professional development in de-escalation and culturally responsive practices.
Concerns for Social or Emotional Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ≥ 2 formal referrals to counseling or social worker in a semester 2. Documented mental health 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher and/or counselor observations or withdrawal, isolation, or frequent 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene the IEP team to integrate mental health supports. 2. Provide direct counseling or



	<p>crisis requiring outside agency support</p> <p>3. Repeated discipline or attendance issues tied to social/emotional needs</p>	<p>emotional outbursts.</p> <p>2. Student or family reports of anxiety, depression, trauma, or unsafe home environment.</p> <p>3. Observable signs of peer relationship difficulties, bullying involvement, or self-esteem concerns.</p> <p>4. Lack of coping strategies or refusal to access offered supports.</p>	<p>refer to outside agencies as needed.</p> <p>3. Implement Check-in/Check-out program</p> <p>4. Increase communication with families to strengthen collaboration.</p>
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Practices and Procedures for Graduation Exemptions:

Purpose

The District recognizes that some students with disabilities may qualify for graduation exemptions under Ohio law. Exemptions are intended to ensure equitable access to a diploma while maintaining the integrity of graduation requirements. All decisions regarding exemptions must be individualized, data-driven, and documented within the student's IEP.

Procedures

1. Appropriateness of Graduation Exemptions

Graduation exemptions shall only be considered when:



- The student's disability significantly impacts performance on state-required assessments despite appropriate accommodations and interventions.
 - The student has demonstrated mastery of course content through IEP-aligned goals, classroom performance, and credit completion.
 - The exemption is consistent with state requirements (e.g., participation in alternate assessments, testing exemption for students with significant cognitive disabilities, extended graduation timeline).
 - The IEP team determines, based on evidence, that the exemption is necessary to provide the student with equitable access to graduation.
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2. Types of Exemptions Permitted

- **Assessment Exemptions:**
 - Students participating in the Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD) are exempt from traditional state assessments.
 - Exemptions may apply to specific subject-area assessments when permitted by Ohio law.
- **Pathway Adjustments:**
 - Use of alternate pathways to graduation (e.g., demonstration of competency through IEP goals, career-technical pathways, or portfolio evidence).
 - Substitution of alternate demonstration options for specific state requirements when allowable.



- **Extended Graduation Timeline:**

- Students with disabilities may remain enrolled beyond four years of high school to complete graduation requirements, not to exceed age 22, in accordance with state and federal law.

3. Team Decision-Making Process

Graduation exemptions must be discussed and documented at an **IEP team meeting**.

At the IEP meeting, the team will review the following information:

- Student performance data (course grades, credit accrual, assessments).
- Evidence of interventions and supports provided.
- Input from the student, family, and service providers.
- Decisions will be recorded in the IEP, including:
 - The specific exemption granted.
 - The rationale for the exemption.
 - Documentation of alternative demonstrations of competency, where applicable.

**** Exemptions will be reviewed annually by the IEP team** to ensure continued appropriateness.



4. Safeguards to Ensure Integrity

- Exemptions may not be granted for reasons of convenience, scheduling conflicts, or lack of instructional opportunity.
 - Exemptions shall not be applied in a manner that denies students access to rigorous coursework or lowers expectations based on disability.
 - All exemptions are subject to District and state monitoring for compliance with Indicator 1 requirements.
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Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- **IEP Teams:** Review and determine exemption appropriateness, with the District Representative being either the Director of Student Services or the Student Services Coordinator.
- **Building Administrators:** Ensure consistency in application and compliance with district and state policies.
- **District Special Education Office:** Provide oversight, training, and monitoring of exemption practices.



Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
Code	po5460
Status	Active
Adopted	November 9, 2009
Last Revised	May 19, 2025

5460 - **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to acknowledge each student's successful completion of the instructional program appropriate to the achievement of District goals and objectives as well as personal proficiency, the Board of Education awards a diploma to eligible students at a graduation ceremony.

The Board shall award a regular high school diploma to every student enrolled in this District who meets the requirements of graduation established by this Board or who properly completes the goals and objectives specified in his/her individualized education program (IEP) including either the exemption from or the requirement to complete the tests required by the State Board of Education in order to graduate. Each student must demonstrate, unless exempted, at least a proficient level of skill on the tests required by the State Board of Education to graduate.

The requirements for graduation from high school include earning twenty (20) units of credit in grades nine through twelve as established in State law. However, no student shall be required to remain in school for any specific number of semesters or other terms if the student completes the required curriculum early.

Students who have participated in interscholastic athletics, marching band, or cheerleading for at least two (2) full seasons while enrolled in grades 9 through 12, and as documented by the principal, may be excused from the high school physical education requirement. Students electing such an excuse shall complete one-half (1/2) unit of at least sixty (60) hours of instruction in another course of study which is designated by the Board as meeting the high school curriculum requirements.

Credit may be earned by:

- A. completing coursework;

- B. testing out of or demonstrating mastery of course content; or
- C. pursuing one or more educational options in accordance with the District's Credit Flexibility Program.

Credit may be earned at an accredited postsecondary institution.

Every high school may permit students below the ninth grade to take advanced work for credit. This work shall count toward the graduation requirements if it was both:

- A. taught by a person who possesses a license/certificate issued under State law that is valid for teaching high school;
- B. designated by the Board as meeting the high school curriculum requirements.

Readiness Requirements

Students must demonstrate readiness for graduation by earning at least two (2) diploma seals, one (1) of which must include a State-approved seal from the following list:

- C. Seal of Biliteracy;
- D. OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal;
- E. Industry-Recognized Credential Seal;
- F. College-Ready Seal;
- G. Military Seal;
- H. Citizenship Seal;
- I. Science Seal;
- J. Honors Diploma Seal;
- K. Community Service Seal;
- L. Fine and Performing Arts Seal;
- M. Student Engagement Seal;
- N. Technology Seal.

An honors diploma shall be awarded to any student who meets the established requirements for graduation or the requirements of his/her IEP; attains the applicable scores on the tests required by the State Board of Education to graduate; and meets any additional criteria the State Board may establish.

Commencement exercises will include only those students who have successfully completed requirements for graduation as certified by the high school principal or those students who have been deemed eligible to participate in such exercises in accordance with the terms of their IEP. No

student who has completed the requirements for graduation shall be denied a diploma as a disciplinary measure. A student may be denied participation in the ceremony of graduation when personal conduct so warrants.

The Board also shall grant a diploma of adult education to all District residents over the age of twenty (20) who meet the requirements established by the State Board of Education.

The Superintendent shall establish whatever administrative guidelines are necessary to comply with State rules and regulations.

Revised 5/31/12

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Legal	R.C. 3313.60, 3313.603, 3313.61, 3313.611, 3313.614, 3313.647, 3323.08
	R.C. 3301.07, 0710, 0711
	A.C. 3301-41-01, 3301-13-01 to 07



Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	STUDENTS AT-RISK OF NOT QUALIFYING FOR A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
Code	po5460.02
Status	Active
Adopted	July 23, 2020
Last Revised	January 21, 2021

5460.02 - STUDENTS AT-RISK OF NOT QUALIFYING FOR A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring that all students have an opportunity to graduate with a high school diploma. To assist with this commitment, a graduation plan is developed for all students who are enrolled in high school. The Board also utilizes specific procedures and criteria to identify students who are at-risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma and provides appropriate interventions and supports to assist at-risk students in meeting graduation requirements.

Development of a Graduation Plan

The District will develop a graduation plan for each student enrolled in grades nine through twelve. The plan will be developed jointly by the student and a District representative and will remain in effect until the student qualifies for a high school diploma. The plan will be updated annually and will describe the targeted academic pathway(s) for the student to meet graduation requirements. Parents/guardians will be invited to assist in developing and updating the graduation plan.

The District may use a student's Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") in lieu of developing a graduation plan if the IEP contains academic goals that are substantively similar to a graduation plan.

Criteria for Identifying Students At-Risk

The determination of whether a student is at-risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma will be made using one (1) or more of the following criteria:

- A. student's lack of adequate progress in meeting the terms of a graduation plan;

- B. excessive tardiness or absences from school;
- C. history of in-school or out-of-school discipline such as suspension and expulsion;
- D. concerns for coal or emotional health.

Administrative guidelines will be implemented that further define the criteria and how it will be used to identify at-risk students.

Procedures for Identifying Students At-Risk

The Superintendent will develop and implement procedures for identifying at-risk students enrolled in grades nine through twelve. Procedures may also include a process to identify at-risk students before they enter ninth grade.

The procedures will include a method for determining when a student is not making adequate progress in meeting the terms of their graduation plan, as well as a process for determining whether students meet any of the other criteria included in this policy and administrative guidelines. Students who are identified as at-risk will be provided appropriate interventions and supports in accordance with Board policy and administrative guidelines.

Parent Notice

Upon determination that a student has been identified as at-risk, and at least annually thereafter while the student remains identified as at-risk, the District will provide parents/guardians with written notice. The notice will include the following information:

- A. a statement that the student is at-risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma;
- B. a description of the curriculum requirements and/or the student's individualized education program requirements that must be completed, as well as any other requirements a student, must satisfy to qualify for a high school diploma; and
- C. a description of any additional instructional interventions and supports that are available to assist the student with meeting the qualifications for a diploma.

Interventions and Supports

The Board will provide instructional interventions and supports for students identified as at-risk. The interventions and supports will be selected to assist the student in qualifying for a diploma. Interventions and supports may include the following:

- A. tutoring programs;
- B. earning high school credit through demonstration of subject area competency;
- C. adjusted curriculum options;
- D. career-technical program options;
- E. mental health services;

F. family engagement and support services.

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Legal

R.C. 3313.617, 3313.618