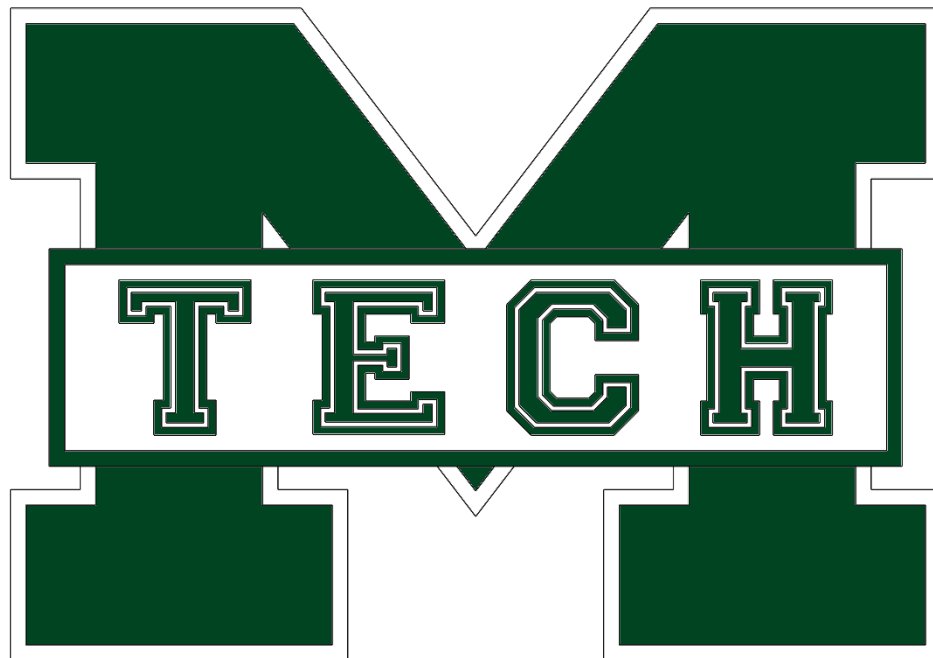


Northern Berkshire Vocational Regional School District

McCann Technical School



Competency Determination Policy

2025-2026

Competency Determination Requirements

Students earn full credit in accordance with the district's standards-based grading policy which awards course credit for ratings of Proficient, Approaching Proficient, and Developing. Students who receive a Limited rating in a course do not receive course credit. Students are required to attain 8 credits per year and accumulate 32 credits to graduate.

Students are determined to have met the necessary competency level in English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and U.S. History by attaining the necessary ratings on department wide standards established in accordance with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The rating of Proficient, Approaching Proficient, and Developing within a course are required to meet the competency determination and arrived at by the same rating system delivered in the requisite standards that are common across the courses within a department.

General

A student earns full credit when they receive a rating of Proficient, Approaching Proficient, or Developing in a course in accordance with the district's grading policy.

A student shows the required level of mastery through the evaluation of common end-of-course standards that are rated and reported on and are also built upon the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework. The culmination of these ratings that lead to a Proficient, Approaching Proficient, or Developing in a course overall will indicate the required level of mastery to attain competency determination.

English Language Arts

Writing and Literature 9 and Writing and Literature 10

A student will show mastery in English Language Arts through the evaluation, rating, and reporting on common, school-wide standards in each class at the end of the year. These common standards are built on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Ratings on these standards that culminate in Proficient, Approaching Proficient, or Developing rating overall will indicate the student has mastered the required content at a level to earn competency determination.

Mathematics

Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra II

A student will show mastery in Mathematics through the evaluation, rating, and reporting on common, school-wide standards in each class at the end of the year. These common standards are built on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Ratings on these standards that culminate in Proficient, Approaching Proficient, or Developing rating overall will indicate the student has mastered the required content at a level to earn competency determination.

Science

Biology

A student will show mastery in Science through the evaluation, rating, and reporting on common, school-wide standards in each class at the end of the year. These common standards are built on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Ratings on these standards that culminate in Proficient, Approaching Proficient, or Developing rating overall will indicate the student has mastered the required content at a level to earn competency determination.

U.S. History

U.S. History 1, U.S. History 2

A student will show mastery in US History through the evaluation, rating, and reporting on common, school-wide standards in each class at the end of the year. These common standards are built on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Ratings on these standards that culminate in Proficient, Approaching Proficient, or Developing rating overall will indicate the student has mastered the required content at a level to earn competency determination.

The Northern Berkshire Vocational Regional School District (NBVRSD) is dedicated to providing students with disabilities, English learners, and late-enrolling students with the necessary supports to meet the competency determination requirements while simultaneously meeting the unique needs of these specific student groups.

Students with Disabilities

NBVRSD ensures compliance with the legal requirement and philosophy that all students with disabilities shall receive a free and appropriate education (FAPE) and be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Accordingly, each student's placement determined by their IEP Team, to the maximum extent appropriate, ensures the student is educated in and has access to the general education curriculum and environment. FAPE is delivered through an educational program that is appropriately ambitious for the student's individual circumstances and provides the chance for the student to make progress and meet challenging objectives which prepare them for future living, learning, and employment.

To meet the competency determination requirements, students with disabilities enroll in courses and demonstrate mastery through the following pathways, as determined by their IEP Team:

- **General Education with Supports:** The primary pathway for students with disabilities is enrollment in general education courses. They may be supported by a special educator who provides inclusion services and accommodations, or they may be enrolled in a co-taught course section where a general and special educator teach the class as a team. IEP Teams may also determine that a modified curriculum within the general education setting is appropriate for the student to make effective progress, which would be supported by a team-teaching arrangement.
- **Specialized Courses:** When an IEP Team determines that a different enrollment is the best option for a student to make effective progress, they may enroll in a specialized course taught by a dually licensed special education and content-area educator. These educators collaborate with their content-area colleagues to ensure curriculum and priority standards are aligned with general education courses, while providing the required specialized instruction.
- **Alternative Demonstration of Mastery:** An IEP Team may determine that a student will demonstrate competency through alternative or modified assessments. These can include capstone projects, performance-based tasks, or portfolios of work that are aligned with state curriculum frameworks and documented in the student's IEP.
- **Out-of-District Placements:** When an out-of-district placement is being considered for a student with disabilities, the student's district of residence collaborates with NBVRSD to determine the appropriate placement and planning for the student to meet a competency determination in accordance with the most current DESE guidance regarding graduation for students with IEPs.

English Learners

NBVRSD ensures equal access to the curriculum and assessments through its English Language Education (ELE) Program. To meet the competency determination requirements, English Learners (ELs) enroll in courses and demonstrate mastery through the following pathways, while also developing English proficiency, as determined by their ELE Team:

- **General Education with Supports:** ELs are provided with Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) instruction in their content area classes by educators that have obtained the SEI-Endorsement. They also receive direct English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction from a licensed ESL teacher. ELs are also provided with appropriate accommodations to ensure equitable access to obtain mastery which may include the use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries, extended time, and clarification of instructions in their native language whenever possible.
- **ESL Course for ELA Credit:** For some ELs, typically those at lower levels of English proficiency, certain ESL courses may be certified as meeting the English Language Arts (ELA) coursework requirement. This

determination is made on a case-by-case basis by the principal, director of student services/ELE program director, and other applicable members of the student's ELE Team based on the student's English language proficiency level (as measured by ACCESS for ELLs or an initial WIDA English Language Development Screener Assessment), prior schooling, and literacy in their native language. The curriculum for these ESL courses would be aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for ELA, integrating grade-appropriate standards for reading, writing, speaking, and listening with targeted English language development. Identified ELs who are in an ESL course only will demonstrate competency on WIDA English Language Development Standard - Language of Language Arts as a part of satisfying graduation criteria for ELA competency. Identified ELs who complete ESL courses prior to graduation and who transition into an ELA course for the remainder of their time at school will demonstrate ELA competency in their general education ELA course with appropriate ELE Program supports.

Late-Enrolling Students

Students who enroll late to the district will have a transcript review conducted to ensure they have met competency determination in their prior placement. Guidance staff will pull school profiles from the previous school and submit the transcript and school profile to the principal to review. The principal will ensure the appropriate number of credits and level of mastery have been obtained to determine competency determination.

Appeals Process

If a student does not meet the competency determination requirements they may appeal that decision to the principal. The principal and director of student services, when applicable, in collaboration with the student's teachers of the course(s) being appealed, will review any pertinent information the student and their family may provide that they feel should be considered when determining competency. The principal may, at their discretion, provide alternative methods of demonstrating proficiency in the appealed course(s) that could include, but is not limited to, remediation of courses, standards, or assignments.

Families wishing to make an appeal may do so within 2 weeks of receiving notification that their child has not met the competency determination. The principal will respond to the appeal within five days proposing two dates and times for a meeting where the family may present their appeal and any relevant information. The principal will be responsible for making the decision on whether to grant the appeal, provide remediation avenues, or deny the appeal within 5 days of the meeting.

Diploma Request Process for Previously Enrolled Students

Students previously enrolled in the district who may be eligible for a diploma will have their transcript reviewed by the school principal in the same manner as done for all enrolled students and communicate the competency determination results to the student's current placement.

Students who did not meet competency determination under the state's previous measures will have the opportunity to have their transcript reviewed by the school principal under the same measures as students in this policy. The principal will be responsible for reviewing their performance in the courses listed in this policy to review the ratings they received in the evaluation of the common standards within those subjects. The decision on competency determination will be communicated to the family by the principal via email. Students found to have met competency determination through this review will be eligible for a diploma consistent with district policies.