

COMPETENCY DETERMINATION

In addition to meeting the local graduation requirements and community service hours articulated in School Committee Policy IKF, a student must meet the competency determination (CD) articulated in MGL c. 69 sect. 1D and in 603 CMR 30.00-30.05 in order to receive their high school diploma from Ayer Shirley Regional High School (ASRHS).

According to the statute and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the competency determination shall be based on the academic standards and curriculum frameworks for tenth graders in the areas of mathematics, science and technology (STE), history and social science, foreign languages, and English language arts (ELA), and shall represent a determination that a particular student has demonstrated mastery of a common core of skills, competencies and knowledge in these areas by satisfactorily completing coursework that has been certified by the student's district as showing mastery of the skills, competencies, and knowledge contained in the state academic standards and curriculum frameworks in the areas measured by the MCAS high school tests administered in 2023. Mastery of skills in US History will apply starting with the graduating class of 2027.

An Ayer Shirley Regional School District (ASRSD) student will earn their CD when they participate in the high school administration of the MCAS in ELA, Math, and STE, and demonstrate proficiency in related coursework in ELA, Math, STE, and US History (starting with the Class of 2027) as articulated below.

For a student enrolled in the ASRSD, showing mastery shall mean that a student successfully demonstrates proficiency in accordance with the district's grading policy through at least one of the following:

1. Passing the course with a grade of 60% or higher, or
2. Passing the final assessment for the course with a grade of 60% or higher, or
3. Passing a capstone or portfolio project associated with the specified course with a grade of 60% or higher; or
4. An equivalent measure identified in the district's CD policy.

A student enrolled in the ASRSD will be determined to have satisfactorily completed coursework and earned full credit in accordance with the district's grading policy and the requirements outlined below:

- Satisfactorily completing coursework shall mean that a student earns full credit in accordance with the district's grading policy. At ASRHS, a student earns full credit for a course by achieving a passing grade of 60% or higher.
- In some cases, a student may be graded on a Pass/Fail basis; in such instances, earning a Pass (P) constitutes satisfactory completion and full credit for the course.
- Courses required to demonstrate competency shall be full-year courses or their approved equivalents. An approved summer school course taken following an unsuccessful attempt during the school year, or an approved accelerated course taken during the summer, shall also be considered satisfactory completion of the required coursework.

Aligned Courses

ASRSD offers the following courses in alignment with the state curriculum frameworks that meet the above requirements. [Course numbers and titles may be amended each year in the annual program of studies].

Content Area	Requirements
English Language Arts (ELA)	<p>Students will meet the CD for ELA by successfully completing at least two years of coursework aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that cover the content of the following courses or higher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grade 9 ELA or Humanities I ● Grade 10 ELA or Humanities II ● Grade 11 ELA or American Literature or AP Language & Composition ● Grade 12 ELA or World Literature, AP Language & Composition, or AP Literature & Composition ● English Language Development I ● English Language Development II ● Other courses equivalent to Grade 9 and 10 ELA
Mathematics (Math)	<p>Students will meet the CD for Math by successfully completing at least two years of coursework aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that cover the content of the following courses or higher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Algebra I ● Geometry ● Algebra II ● Integrated Math I ● Integrated Math II ● Integrated Math III ● Other courses equivalent to Algebra I and Geometry
Science/Technology Engineering (STE)	<p>Students will meet the CD for STE by successfully completing at least one year of coursework aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that cover the content of the following courses or higher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biology or AP Biology ● Chemistry or AP Chemistry ● Physics or AP Physics ● Technology Engineering/Computer Science Courses, including PLTW courses ● Other courses equivalent to a full year of lab-based science
U.S. History (starting with Class of 2027)	<p>Students will meet the CD for U.S. History (Social Sciences) by successfully completing at least one year of coursework aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that cover the content of the following courses or higher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● U.S. History I ● U.S. History II ● AP U.S. History ● Other courses equivalent to a full year of U.S. History

Additional Considerations

Students with Disabilities (SWD)

ASRSD must both provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education to SWD and must also determine that the student has met the CD and local graduation requirements prior to the student earning a diploma. Discussion of the CD must be a part of the IEP Team's transition planning.

- For SWD who have been placed in out-of-district placements, ASRSD will accept equivalent coursework completed at the out-of-district schools following ASRSD practices for credit transfer and course alignment.
- All SWD who are attending ASRHS will be provided support to meet their specific special education goals and/or needs as outlined in their IEP while taking the aforementioned courses to meet CD requirements in ELA, Math, STE, and U.S. History. All SWD who are seeking a high school diploma and demonstrating competency in the courses or their equivalent as outlined above will be eligible to earn the CD and their high school diploma.

English Learners (EL) or Multilingual Learners (ML)

MLs who successfully complete English Language Development (ELD) I, ELD II, or both courses will be considered having met the CD in ELA. These courses are aligned to the ELA Curriculum Frameworks and considered equivalent to English 9 and 10. MLs who successfully complete a combination of ELD and ELA courses totaling two, shall be considered to have met the CD in ELA.

Late-Enrolling Students:

A late-enrolling student is a student who enrolls in ASRSD after Grade 9. A late-enrolling student may earn a CD in the following ways:

- Following the district's practices for credit transfer, transcript review, and course alignment by the high school principal or designee, or
- Completing additional course requirements as outlined above by the high school principal or designee, or
- Earning a qualifying MCAS score (i.e., meeting or exceeding) on the relevant high school MCAS

Notification and Appeals Process

ASRHS will provide student and caregiver notification regarding student progress toward the competency determination following the end of the student's completion of tenth grade, and no later than November 1 immediately following completion of tenth grade. If a current student or their caregiver wishes to appeal a CD, the student or caregiver must submit an appeal in writing to the building principal before February 15. The building principal will convene a team that will include the Assistant Principal, the student's counselor, and the curriculum leader(s) in the subject in question. Additionally, a special education teacher or ESL teacher will be included as necessary. A transcript review will be performed and a decision rendered within 30 school days. If the appeal is denied, the student or caregiver may appeal the decision to the Assistant Superintendent for review. If the appeal is denied, the student or caregiver may appeal the decision to the Superintendent for review, whose decision will be final.

Those enrolled in ASRSD or ASRHS, or Ayer High School in the classes of 2003 through 2024 who did not earn a diploma may appeal the decision through the following process:

- A written request may be submitted to the building principal requesting a review of the student's record to determine if the student is eligible for a diploma.
- To be eligible for a diploma, the individual must have been previously enrolled in the district, met all local graduation requirements, not been previously reported as a graduate in any other district's Student Information Management System submission, and must meet the district's current CD requirements.
- Upon receipt of request, a team of school personnel including the ASRHS Principal, the ASRSD Assistant Superintendent, and the student's high school counselor or counseling director will be convened to review the request, the student's transcript, and relevant school records. In the event that current requirements are met in addition to other local graduation requirements, the student will be eligible to receive an ASRHS diploma. If the appeal is denied, the student or caregiver may appeal the decision to the Superintendent for review, whose decision will be final.

LEGAL REFS: DESE Graduation Requirements and Related Guidance
 DESE Graduation and Transition Planning for Students with IEPs
 DESE Competency Determination Guidance and Policy Submission Process
 603 CMR 30.00
 M.G.L. c. 69, § 1D

CROSS REFS: Student Handbook
 IKF Graduation Requirements

SOURCE: MASC - 2025

First Read: December 2, 2025
Second Read: December 17, 2025
School Committee Approved: December 17, 2025