

## SUBCHAPTER 5. IMPLEMENTATION OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### 6A:8-5.1 Graduation requirements

(a) District boards of education shall develop, adopt, and implement requirements for a State-endorsed diploma which include the following:

1. Local high school graduation requirements including one of the following two options:

i. Participation in a local program of study of not fewer than 110 credits in courses designed to meet all of the Core Curriculum Content Standards, including, but not limited to, the following credits:

(1) At least 20 credits in language arts literacy;

(2) At least 15 credits in mathematics;

(3) At least 10 credits in science through August 2000; at least 15 credits in science effective with the 2000-2001 grade nine class;

(4) At least 15 credits in social studies, including satisfaction of N.J.S.A. 18A:35-1 and 2;

(5) At least  $3\frac{3}{4}$  credits in health, safety, and physical education during each year of enrollment, distributed as 150 minutes per week, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:35-5, 7 and 8;

(6) At least five credits in visual and performing arts through August 2001; at least 10 credits in visual and performing arts effective with the 2001-2002 grade nine class;

(7) At least 10 credits in world languages effective with the 2001-2002 grade nine class; and

(8) Cross-content workplace readiness which may be satisfied through infusion into existing courses, course equivalents, or career education courses; or

ii. The 110-credit requirement set forth in (a)i above may be met in whole or in part through program completion as follows:

(1) District boards of education may determine and establish a set number of curricular activities or programs aimed at achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards for promotion and graduation purposes.

(2) Curricular activities and programs may be organized around an interdisciplinary model based on themes involving the Core Curriculum Content Standards, such as the following:

(A) Arts and Humanities;

(B) Business and Information Systems;

(C) Mathematics, Science, and Technology; or

(D) Health and Human Services.

(3) Programs shall be planned for individuals and/or a group based on specific instructional objectives.

(4) The principal shall certify completion of curricular activities or programs based upon specified instructional objectives.

(5) Group programs based upon specific instructional objectives shall be approved in the same manner as other approved courses. Individual programs shall be on file in the local district and subject to review by the Commissioner or his or her designee;

2. Local student attendance requirements;

3. Any other requirements established by the district board of education;

4. Any statutorily mandated requirements for earning a high school diploma; and

5. Starting with those students entering grade nine in the 1999-2000 academic year or planning to graduate from an adult high school in the 2002-2003 academic year, the requirement that all students demonstrate proficiency in all sections of the HSPA or SRA process applicable to the class graduating in the year they meet all other graduation requirements.

i. The applicable sections of the HSPA or SRA process shall follow the schedule provided by the Department pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(a) for the implementation of New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards.

ii. Students who enter an adult high school and make continuous progress toward completion are held accountable for the Statewide assessment in effect at the time they meet all other graduation requirements.

6. Until superseded by the requirement under (a)5 above, the requirement that students (unless explicitly exempted by an IEP) perform at or above the proficient level in all sections of the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) or SRA process applicable to their class as per the schedule provided by the Department for the implementation of New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards.

(b) District boards of education may count Advanced Placement (AP) courses or college credit courses as fulfilling credit requirements in (a)i above or program completion requirements in (a)ii above.

(c) District boards of education, through the IEP process and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.12, Graduation, may, for individual students with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3, specify alternate requirements for a State-endorsed diploma which may include the APA.

1. District boards of education shall specifically address any alternate requirements for graduation in a student's IEP, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.12.

2. District boards of education shall develop and implement procedures for assessing whether a student has met any alternate requirements for graduation individually determined in an IEP.

(d) District boards of education shall provide their graduation requirements to the Commissioner and update this filed copy as their graduation policies are revised.

(e) District boards of education shall provide, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-5, each student entering high school and his or her parents or legal guardians with a copy of the district board of education's requirements for a State-endorsed diploma, and those programs available to assist students in attaining a State-endorsed diploma.

(f) District boards of education shall provide students who have not demonstrated proficiency on one or more sections of the HSPA following the 11th grade with the opportunity to demonstrate such competence through both repeated administrations of the HSPA and the SRA process.

1. District boards of education shall submit the results of the SRA process to the appropriate county superintendent of schools by March 1 of each year for approval for graduation in June of the same year.

2. County superintendents, as the Commissioner's designees, shall review the results of each student's SRA and recommend to the Commissioner either approval or disapproval for graduation.

3. All students of limited English proficiency shall satisfy the requirements for high school graduation according to (a)1 through 3 above, except that any students of limited English proficiency may demonstrate that they have attained State minimum levels of proficiency through:

i. Passage of the SRA process in their native language and passage of an English fluency assessment approved by the Department of Education; or

ii. Passage of the SRA process in English with appropriate accommodations.

4. Students with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3 or eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may demonstrate that they have attained State minimum levels of proficiency through the SRA process if specified in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan.

(g) Until superseded by (f) above, district boards of education shall provide students entering grade 12 who have not demonstrated proficiency in one or more sections of the HSPT with the opportunity to become eligible to graduate by demonstrating such competence through repeated administrations of the HSPT and, if necessary, through the SRA process as described in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(d)5.

1. District boards of education shall submit the results of the SRA process to the appropriate county superintendent of schools by March 1 of each year for approval for graduation in June of the same year.

2. County superintendents, as the Commissioner's designees, shall review the results of each student's SRA and recommend to the Commissioner either approval or disapproval for graduation.

3. All students of limited English proficiency shall satisfy requirements for high school graduation in accordance with the provisions of (a)1 above, except that students of limited English proficiency who enter New Jersey schools in grade nine or later may demonstrate that they have attained or exceeded the proficient level through passage of the SRA process in their native language, and/or English and passage of an English fluency assessment approved by the Department of Education.

#### 6A:8-5.2 High school diplomas

(a) District boards of education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to prospective graduates who have met all of the requirements adopted in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a), 5.1(c), or (d) below.

(b) District boards of education shall not issue a high school diploma to any student not meeting the criteria specified in the rule provisions referenced in (a) above.

1. District boards of education shall provide students exiting grade 12 without a diploma the opportunity for continued high school enrollment to age 20, or until the requirements for a State-endorsed diploma have been met, whichever comes first.

2. District boards of education shall allow any out-of-school individual to age 20 who has otherwise met all State and local graduation requirements but has failed to pass the HSPA to return to school at scheduled times for the purpose of taking the necessary test. Upon certification of passing the test applicable to the student's class in concordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)3, a State-endorsed diploma will be granted by the high school of record.

(c) The Commissioner, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:30-1.3(a)1, shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma based on achieving the Statewide standard scores for passage of the General Educational Development (GED) test, to individuals age 16 or older who are no longer enrolled in school and have not achieved a high school credential.

(d) Starting in the 2002-2003 academic year, district boards of education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any individual who:

1. Has performed at a proficient or advanced proficient level of achievement in all sections of the HSPA;

2. Has presented official transcripts showing at least 30 general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education; and

3. Has, if a student currently enrolled in a public school, formally requested such early award of a State-endorsed high school diploma.

(e) The chief school administrator or lead person of a charter school, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-7 and 18A:7E-3, shall report annually at a public meeting, not later than September 30, to the district board of education or the charter school board of trustees, and to the Commissioner:

1. The total number of students graduated;
2. The number of students graduated under the SRA process;
3. The number of students receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternate requirements for graduation as specified in their IEPs;
4. The total number of students denied graduation from the 12th grade class; and
5. The number of students denied graduation from the 12th grade class solely because of failure to pass the HSPA or SRA, based on the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)3.