

# POLICY

## Ramapo Indian Hills Board of Education

Section: Students

5460/HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

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### 5460. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

#### M

The Board of Education will recognize the successful completion of the secondary school instructional program by the award of a State-endorsed diploma certifying the student has met all State and local requirements for high school graduation **in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 et seq.** The Board will annually certify to the Executive County Superintendent each student who has been awarded a diploma and has met the requirements for graduation.

#### A. High School Graduation Requirements

For a State-endorsed diploma, the Board shall develop, adopt, and implement graduation requirements that prepare students for success in post-secondary degree programs, careers, and civic life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A graduating student must have **earned** ~~the appropriate number of credits as stipulated in the charts below~~ **a minimum of 125 credits** in courses designed to meet all of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), including, but not limited to, the following credits:

- (1) **At least** twenty credits in **English** language arts literacy aligned to grade nine through twelve standards ~~with a minimum of five credits for each year enrolled in high school beginning with the Class of 2023;~~
- (2) **At least** fifteen credits in mathematics, including Algebra I or the content equivalent (“content equivalent” is defined at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3); geometry or the content equivalent; and a third year of mathematics that builds on the concepts and skills of algebra and geometry and that prepares students for college and 21<sup>st</sup> century careers;

- (3) ~~At least~~ fifteen credits in social studies, including satisfaction of N.J.S.A. 18A:35-1 and 18A:35-2; five credits in world history; and the integration of civics, economics, geography, and global content in all course offerings;
- (4) ~~A minimum of twenty credits in science including biology, chemistry, and one additional physical science course;~~ **At least fifteen credits in science, including at least five credits in laboratory biology/life science or the content equivalent; one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course, which shall include chemistry, environmental science, or physics; and one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course;**
- (5) ~~A minimum of five credits~~ **At least three and three-quarters** credits in health, safety, and physical education during each year of enrollment, distributed as one hundred fifty minutes per week, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:35-5, 7, and 8; ~~3.75 credits in physical education and 1.25 credits in health;~~
- (6) **At least** five credits in visual and performing arts;
- (7) **At least five** ~~ten~~ credits in world languages or student demonstration of proficiency as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2ii(2) and A.1.b.(2)(b) below;
- (8) **At least** two and one-half credits in financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy;
- (9) Technological literacy, consistent with the ~~Core Curriculum Content Standards~~ **NJSLS**, integrated throughout the curriculum;
- (10) **At least** five credits in 21<sup>st</sup> century life and careers, or career-technical education; and
- (11) Electives as determined by the high school program sufficient to total ~~the appropriate number of credits required for graduation.~~ **a minimum of 125 credits.**

Class of 2016 (and thereafter)			
Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
35	35	35	35
Credits required to graduate: 135.			

As defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3, “credit” means the award for the equivalent of a class period of instruction, which meets for a minimum of forty minutes, one time per week during the school year or as approved through N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2.

1. ~~Option H~~

~~The minimum one hundred thirty-five (Class of 2016 and thereafter) credit requirement set forth above may be met in part through alternative program completion. This is Option H.~~

~~Graduation credit can be obtained through an Option H program – an alternative to traditional high school courses, which involves in-depth experiences. Option H will provide students with enriching, stimulating, and meaningful learning experiences that will enhance student achievement of the NJSLs.~~

The high school graduation credit requirement may be met in whole or in part through Option II program completion, which includes a range of interdisciplinary or theme-based experiences that enable students to pursue a variety of individualized learning opportunities, as follows:

- (1) The District shall establish a process to approve individualized student learning opportunities that meet or exceed the NJSLs.
  - (a) Individualized student learning opportunities in all NJSLs areas include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - (i) Independent study;
    - (ii) Online learning or distance learning;
    - (iii) Study abroad programs;
    - (iv) Student exchange programs;
    - (v) Structured learning experiences, including, but not limited to, work-based programs, internships, apprenticeships, and service learning experiences;
    - (vi) Magnet programs; and
    - (vii) Successful completion of programs from an

accredited organization, that assures achievement of knowledge and skills as delineated in the NJSLS or includes learning that builds on and goes beyond the standards.

(b) Individualized student learning opportunities based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the NJSLS shall:

(i) **Be based on student interest and career goals as reflected in the Personalized Student Learning Plans as they are phased in according to the schedule of implementation set forth in New Jersey Administrative Code;**

In the development of Personalized Student Learning Plans according to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.2(a), the District shall actively encourage all students who have otherwise met the requirements for high school graduation according to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a) ~~through 3~~, ~~to include in their programs of study the following additional credits:~~ **to continue to pursue rigorous, yet balanced, courseloads in accordance with their post-secondary aspirations which may include the following:**

- a. Five credits in mathematics during each year of enrollment, aimed at preparation for entrance into post-secondary programs or 21st century careers;
- b. Five credits in a laboratory science during each year of enrollment, aimed at preparation for entrance into post-secondary programs or 21st century careers;
- c. Five credits in social studies during each year of enrollment, aimed at preparation for entrance into post-secondary programs or 21st century careers;
- d. Five credits in world languages during each year of enrollment, aimed at preparation for entrance into post-secondary programs or 21st century careers;
- e. **Five credits in the visual and performing arts during each year of enrollment, aimed at preparation for entrance into post-secondary programs or 21st century careers, and**

- f. Five credits in business and/or technology during each year of enrollment, aimed at preparation for entrance into post-secondary programs or 21st century careers.
- (ii) Include demonstration of student competency;
- (iii) Be certified for completion based on the District process adopted according to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2.ii. and A.1.b.(2) below; and
- (iv) Be on file in the school District and subject to review by the Commissioner of Education or his/her designee.
- (c) Group programs based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the NJSLs shall be permitted and shall be approved in the same manner as other approved courses.

2. The District shall establish a process for granting of credits through successful completion of assessments that verify student achievement in meeting or exceeding the NJSLs at the high school level, including standards achieved by means of the individualized student learning opportunities enumerated at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2. Such programs or assessments may occur all or in part prior to a student's high school enrollment; no such locally administered assessments shall preclude or exempt student participation in applicable Statewide assessments at grades three through twelve.

- (a) The District shall choose assessments that are aligned with or exceed the NJSLs and may include locally designed assessments.
- (b) The District shall choose from among the following assessment options to determine if students have achieved the level of language proficiency designated as Novice-High as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and recognized as fulfilling the world languages requirement of the NJSLs:
  - (i) The Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) online assessment;
  - (ii) The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or the

Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI); or

- (iii) New Jersey Department of Education-approved locally designed competency-based assessments.

3. The District 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.

- (a) The District shall award credit for successful completion of an approved, accredited college course that assures achievement of knowledge and skills that meets or exceeds the NJSLS.

#### B. Additional Graduation Requirements

- (1) Attendance requirements as indicated in Policy and Regulation 5200;
- (2) Any statutorily mandated requirements for earning a high school diploma; and;
- (3) Any Statewide assessment graduation requirements as determined by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and as outlined in C. below.

#### C. Statewide Assessment Graduation Requirements

- (1) The requirement that all students **must take and demonstrate proficiency in grade 11 on the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA), which includes content aligned to the grade 10 New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) in** ~~by achieving a passing score on the English Language Arts (ELA) and the NJSLS in Algebra I and Geometry. mathematics components of the State graduation proficiency test or through the alternative means at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(h), if applicable, or for students who take the State graduation proficiency test but do not achieve a passing score through the alternative means set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(g) and (i):~~

**If, after completing the NJGPA, a student does not demonstrate proficiency on the ELA or mathematics section, the student may retake the**

NJGPA in the following summer or fall.

A student with disabilities whose IEP states that they are not eligible for the alternate assessment (Dynamic Learning Maps) must take the NJGPA in grade 11.

**FIRST PATHWAY - NJGPA**

Note: Cut Scores Approved by the New Jersey State Board of Education on May, 2023

<b>ELA</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment - ELA $\geq$ 725 (Graduation Ready)	New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment - Mathematics $\geq$ 725 (Graduation Ready)

On May 3, 2023, the State Board of Education approved the graduation ready cut score for ELA and mathematics components of the NJGPA, as well as the menu of alternative assessments and aligned cut scores.

The requirements in this section were adopted by the New Jersey State Board of Education on September 8, 2021 for the classes of 2023-2025.

**English Language and Arts and Literacy (ELA)**

If, after completing the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment in grade 11, students did not demonstrate proficiency by passing the ELA component, such students may access the following pathways:

- Second Pathway: By meeting the designated cut score on a substitute competency test such as the PSAT, SAT, ACT, or ACCUPLACER; or
- Third Pathway: By submitting, through the District, a student portfolio appeal to the New Jersey Department of Education.

**Mathematics**

If, after completing the required New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment in grade 11, students did not demonstrate proficiency by passing the mathematics component, such students may access the following pathways:

- Second Pathway: By meeting the designated cut score on a substitute competency test such as the PSAT, SAT, ACT, or ACCUPLACER; or
- Third Pathway: By submitting, through the District, a student portfolio appeal to the New Jersey Department of Education.

- ~~(2) — Students in the graduating classes of 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 shall be required to demonstrate proficiency by achieving a passing score on the high school end-of-course PARCC assessments in ELA 10 and Algebra I or through alternative means set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f), (h), and (i) and A.5., A.7., and A.8. below:~~
- ~~(3) — The Board of Education will provide students who have not demonstrated proficiency on ELA and/or mathematics components of the State graduation proficiency, the opportunity for the following:~~
- ~~(1) — Remediation, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3.; and~~
- ~~(2) — One or more additional opportunities to demonstrate proficiency on the State graduation proficiency test, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-6; and~~
- ~~(4) — To ensure adequate transition to the new Statewide assessment systems, the District shall provide students in the graduating classes of 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2022 who have not demonstrated proficiency on the high school end-of-course PARCC assessments in ELA 10 and Algebra I with the opportunity to demonstrate competence through one of the alternative means set forth below:~~
- ~~a. — For the graduating classes of 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, students who did not take the ELA 10 and the Algebra I end-of-course PARCC assessments or who take but do not achieve a passing score on both assessments, as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6, may satisfy the State requirement to demonstrate proficiency in English language arts and/or mathematics in one of the following ways:~~
- ~~(1) — Achieve a passing score, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, on a corresponding substitute competency test in English language arts and/or mathematics, as applicable, or substitute a passing score on another end-of-course PARCC assessment, including ELA 9, ELA 11, Geometry, or Algebra II; or~~
- ~~(2) — Meet the criteria of the portfolio appeals process.~~

- (5) ~~For students in the graduating classes of 2023, 2024, and 2025, the alternative means referenced at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6 shall be as follows:~~
- a. ~~Achieve a passing score, and as determined by the Commissioner of Education and approved by the New Jersey State Board of Education, on a corresponding substitute competency test in English language arts and/or mathematics, as applicable; and/or~~
  - b. ~~Demonstrate proficiency through the portfolio appeals process, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3.~~

(2) All **Multilingual Learners (MLs)** ~~English Language Learners~~ shall satisfy the requirements for the high school graduation, expect **MLs** ~~ELLs~~ may demonstrate they have attained State minimum levels of proficiency through passage of the portfolio appeals process in their native language, when available, and passage of a Department of Education-approved English fluency assessment (**N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(d)**).

(3) Students, including students with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3 or eligible students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who participate in the alternative assessment for students with disabilities are not required to participate in repeated administration of high school assessment components required at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(c).

#### D. Attendance

Regular attendance is required for the successful completion of a course of study and graduation. Students are expected to be present in every scheduled class except as their attendance is excused in accordance with Board Policy 5200.

#### E. Students with Disabilities

(1) Through the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) process set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7 and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11, the District may specify alternate requirements for a State-endorsed diploma for individual students with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3.

- (a) The District shall specifically address any alternate requirements for graduation in a student's IEP, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11.

- (b) The District shall develop and implement procedures for assessing whether a student with a disability has met the specified alternate requirements for graduation individually determined in an IEP.
- (2) The IEP of a student with a disability who enters a high school program shall specifically address the graduation requirements. The student shall meet the high school graduation requirements pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 and A. above, except as specified in the student's IEP. The IEP shall specify which requirements would qualify the student with a disability for the State-endorsed diploma issued by the Board responsible for the student's education.
- (3) Graduation with a State-endorsed diploma is a change of placement that requires written notice pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(f) and (g).
  - (a) As part of the written notice, the parent shall be provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards statement published by the NJDOE.
  - (b) As with any proposal to change the educational program or placement of a student with a disability, the parent may resolve a disagreement with the proposal to graduate the student by requesting mediation or a due process hearing prior to graduation.
  - (c) In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.8(d), a reevaluation shall not be required.
  - (d) When a student graduates or exceeds the age of eligibility, the student shall be provided a written summary of their academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the student's graduation or the conclusion of the school year in which the student exceeds the age of eligibility. The summary shall include recommendations to assist the student in meeting the postsecondary goals.
- (4) If a student attends a school other than that of the school District of residence, which is empowered to grant a diploma, the student shall have the choice of receiving the diploma of the school attended or the diploma of the school District of residence.
  - (a) If the school the student is attending declines to issue a diploma to the student, the District of residence Board of Education shall issue the student a diploma if the student has satisfied all State and local graduation requirements, as specified in the student's IEP.
- (5) If the Board of Education grants an elementary school diploma, a student with a disability who fulfills the requirements of his or her IEP shall qualify for and receive a diploma.
- (6) Students with disabilities who meet the standards for graduation according to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11 shall have the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises and related senior activities on a nondiscriminatory basis.
- (7) A student with a disability whose IEP prescribes continued special education programs beyond the fourth year of high school shall be permitted to participate in commencement

ceremonies with his/her graduating class and shall receive a certificate of attendance, provided the student has attended four years of high school.

- (8) When a student with a disability graduates or exceeds the age of eligibility, the student shall be provided a written summary of his or her academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the student's graduation or the conclusion of the school year in which he or she exceeds the age of eligibility. The summary shall include recommendations to assist the child in meeting his or her postsecondary goals.

#### F. High School Diploma

- (1) The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to prospective graduates who have met all of the requirements adopted in accordance with State and local Board of Education requirements and in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(d).
- (2) The Board of Education shall not issue a high school diploma to any student not meeting the criteria specified in State and local requirements.
  - (a) The District shall provide students exiting grade twelve without a diploma the opportunity for continued high school enrollment to age twenty or until the requirements for a State-endorsed diploma have been met, whichever comes first.
  - (b) The District shall allow any out-of-school individual to age twenty who has otherwise met all State and local graduation requirements, but has failed to pass the State proficiency test through alternative means as set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6 through N.J.A.C.6A8-5.1(i), as applicable pursuant to the standards applicable to the student's graduating class. Students in graduating classes prior to 2018 shall demonstrate proficiency as set forth for the classes of 2018 through 2022 at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f)1. Upon certification of passing the test applicable to the student's class in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8 and this Policy, a State-endorsed diploma shall be granted by the high school of record.
- (3) Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:20-1.4, The the Commissioner of Education shall award a State-issued high school diploma based on achieving the Statewide standard score on the General Education Development test (GED) or other adult education assessments to individuals age sixteen or older who are no longer enrolled in school and have not achieved a high school credential.
- (4) The Commissioner of Education shall award a State-issued high school diploma to individuals age sixteen or older and no longer enrolled in high school based on official transcripts showing at least thirty general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education. Included in the thirty general education credits must be a minimum of fifteen credits with at least three credits in each of the five general education categories as follows: English; mathematics; science; social science; and the humanities.
- (5) The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any currently enrolled student, regardless of grade level, who:

- (a) Has demonstrated proficiency in the State graduation proficiency test, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6 or as set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(g):
  - ~~(i) The Board shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any currently enrolled student in the graduating classes of 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 who has demonstrated proficiency in the high school end-of-course PARCC assessments in ELA 10 and Algebra I, or as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f);~~
- (b) Has presented official transcripts showing at least thirty general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education; and
- (c) Has formally requested such early award of a State-endorsed high school diploma.

#### G. Notification

Each student who enters or transfers into the high school and the student's parent(s) will be provided a copy of the school District's requirements for a State-endorsed diploma, and the programs available to assist students in attaining the State-endorsed diploma, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-5.

#### H. Reporting

The Superintendent, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-7 and 18A:7E-3, shall report annually to the Board of Education at a public meeting not later than September 30, and to the Commissioner of Education:

- (1) The total number of students graduated;
- (2) The number of students graduated under the substitute competency test process;
- (3) The number of students graduated under the portfolio appeals process;
- (4) The number of students receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternative requirements for graduation as specified in their IEP's;
- (5) The total number of students denied graduation from the twelfth grade class; and
- (6) The number of students denied graduation from the twelfth grade solely because of failure to pass the ~~end-of-course PARCC assessments~~ NJGPA, substitute competency tests, or portfolio appeals process based on the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8.

I. The Superintendent shall provide to the Executive County Superintendent the District's graduation requirements each year they are evaluated through the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) and update the filed copy each time the graduation policy is revised.

### Diplomas in Memoriam

The Board, upon written request by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, and recommendation by the Principal and Superintendent, will consider awarding a diploma in memoriam to a student who dies while enrolled in the District at grade level 12, provided the student was successfully on track at the time of death to receive a diploma at the end of the school year. For purposes of this policy, "school year" includes any summer session following the spring semester. Diplomas in memoriam will be provided to the family in a private meeting in the Principal's office, but not at the formal high school graduation ceremony.

N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3;18A:7C-5; 18A:7C-6, 18A:7C-7; 18A:7C-15; 18A:7E-3

18A:35-1; 18A:35-2; 18A:35-5; 18A:35-7; 18A:35-8

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3; 6A:8-4.1.(d); 6A:8-5.1 et seq.; 6A:14-1.3; 6A:14-2.3; 6A:14-3.7

6A:14-3.8;6A:14-4.11;6A:20-1.4

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