

## **Administrative Procedures for High School Graduation Requirements** (Attachment for Policy No. 217)

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these Administrative Procedures is to effectuate Policy 217 - High School Graduation Requirements and to provide consistency for graduation requirements for students in the School District of Philadelphia (“District”).

### **Procedures**

For graduation from high school, students must meet all subject and credit requirements established by Pennsylvania state law and must satisfy all Board Policies and other requirements established by the District.

### **District Graduation Requirements**

A student shall satisfy District requirements for graduation if the following requirements are met:

- Successfully completes a Multidisciplinary Project or a Service Learning Project
- Earns a total of 23.5 credits, which include:
  - 4 in English
  - 3 in Mathematics; one must be Algebra 1, or students must complete locally established grade-based requirements for academic content associated with the Algebra 1 Keystone Exam.<sup>1</sup>
  - 3 in Science; one must be biology, or students must complete locally established grade-based requirements for academic content associated with the Biology Keystone Exam.<sup>1</sup>
  - 3 in Social Studies
  - 1 in African American History
  - 2 in World Language
  - 2 in Arts and Humanities
  - 1 in Physical Education
  - 0.5 in Health
  - 4 in Electives

Electives are choice courses selected by students as an optional course of study. Students may take elective courses above and beyond the 4 required credits. One of the four required elective credits must satisfy one of the following:

- [College preparatory Mathematics or Science course](#)
- Math or Science elective course

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<sup>1</sup> Please see [HERE](#) for a comprehensive list of courses that satisfy these requirements

- International Baccalaureate (IB) course
- Advanced Placement (AP) course
- Terminal Career Technical Education (CTE) course

No course may count as satisfying more than one requirement. Scheduling errors and/or missing transfer transcripts do not exempt a student from completely fulfilling District graduation requirements. The Associate Superintendent of Secondary Schools or their designee must approve any substitutions for requirements in writing.

All children with disabilities in Pennsylvania have the right to earn a regular high school diploma. Students with disabilities may be enrolled in school and make progress toward fulfilling their graduation requirements until their 22nd birthday. Children with disabilities can earn a diploma by:

- Completing the course and credit requirements listed above; or
- Completing the special education program developed by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team.

All high school programs that facilitate the attainment of graduation requirements will provide high school diplomas.

[Pennsylvania State Graduation Requirements](#) regarding course subject matter are included in the District requirements above. In other words, if a student meets District graduation requirements, that student also meets State graduation requirements.

A certificate of achievement in specially designated official programs of study may be awarded upon the approval of the Superintendent.

A student who has completed the requirements for graduation may not be denied a diploma for disciplinary purposes.

#### [Act 158 - Statewide High School Graduation Requirements](#)

Keystone Exams are the statewide assessment that Pennsylvania uses to comply with accountability requirements in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Students will meet the statewide graduation requirement by satisfying one of the following:

- Scoring proficient or advanced on each Keystone Exam - Algebra I, Literature, and Biology (Pathway I).
- Earning a satisfactory composite score of 4452 on the Algebra I, Literature, and Biology Keystone Exams and performance must include at least a score of Proficient or Advanced on one Keystone (Pathway II).

- Earning a passing grade on the courses associated with each Keystone Exam, and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrator must meet one of the following (Pathway III):

- Attainment of an Industry-Based Competency Certification related to the CTE concentrator's program of study

OR

- Demonstration of high likelihood of success on approved industry-based competency assessment NOCTI or the National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) in an approved Career and Technical Education concentration consistent with the CTE concentrator's goals and career plan. The determination shall be made no later than the end of the eleventh grade, or, if a student enrolled in a one-year program, the end of the first semester of twelfth grade.

- i. High likelihood of success means that the student does the following:

1. Participating in all levels of programming, through terminal year;
2. Attaining a minimum of one certification;
3. Participating in pre-NOCTI and NOCTI; or

- a. Passing a final Exam if they do not participate in NOCTI.

OR

- Demonstration of readiness for continued meaningful engagement in a CTE Concentrator Program of Study as demonstrated by performance on benchmark assessments, course grades, and other factors consistent with the CTE concentrator's goals and career plan. The determination shall be made no later than the end of the eleventh grade, or, if a student enrolled in a one-year program, the end of the first semester of twelfth grade.

NOTE: Standards for completion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming can be found in [Policy 115 - Career and Technical Education](#).

- Earning a passing grade on the courses associated with each Keystone Exam, and satisfactorily complete one of the following (Pathway IV):
  - Attain the necessary score (or higher) on any of these alternative assessments: SAT (1010), PSAT 10 (970), PSAT/NMSQT (970), ACT (21), ASVAB (31), ACT WorkKeys (Gold Level), advanced coursework (AP (3), IB(4))

OR

- A concurrent course (dual-enrollment) for each Keystone that a student did not score proficient

OR

- An approved pre-apprenticeship

OR

- Acceptance in a 4-year nonprofit institution of higher education for college-level coursework.
- Earning a passing grade on the courses associated with each Keystone Exam, and demonstrating readiness for postsecondary engagement through three pieces of evidence from the student’s career portfolio aligned to student goals and career plan. Evidence shall include at least one of the following:
  - ACT WorkKeys (Silver), AP (3), IB (3)
  - Successful completion of concurrent coursework (dual-enrollment)
  - Successful completion of a postsecondary course
  - Acceptance in an accredited nonprofit institution of higher education or other than 4-year institution with ability to enroll in college-level coursework
  - Attainment of an industry-recognized credential
- Evidence shall include up to two of the following:
  - Service learning project
  - Completion of an internship, externship or co-op or full-time employment
  - Letter guaranteeing military enlistment
  - Compliance with NCAA’s course for college bound student athletes regardless of postsecondary intent. (Pathway V)
- Students must earn a passing grade (60 percent or higher) in content areas where students did not score proficient on a Keystone exam.

### [Act 1 - Experiencing Education Instability](#)

Act 1 of 2022 (Act 1) promotes timely high school graduation and facilitates equal access to academics and extracurricular activities and the removal of systemic barriers for students who experience education instability as defined by the legislation.

#### *School Responsibilities*

- Identify eligible students who experience “education instability,” if a student has not already been identified as such. The criteria for education instability is set forth in [Act 1](#).
- Keep information about educational instability confidential.
- For students in grades 9-12, develop and execute a graduation plan in collaboration with the student to support the student’s on-time graduation. Said graduation plan needs to be included in the Student Information System and/or EasyIEP.

- Establish a Point of Contact for all eligible students. The Point of Contact's information is recorded in District systems.
  - The Point of Contact is responsible for completion of all tasks required by Act 1.
  - A Point of Contact must work with school staff to arrange consultations and facilitate academic placement of students.

If a student is experiencing instability defined under Act 1, they or a parent/guardian should reach out to a counselor or the Act 1 point of contact at their school for support in graduation planning.

### *Central Office Responsibilities*

The Office of Graduation Pathways in collaboration with the Office of School Organization and Management is responsible for the following actions:

- Develop policies and procedures that enable equal access to educational activities.
- Provide information and documentation related to best practices for tracking and communicating student progress toward graduation.
- Award full or partial credits for work satisfactorily completed at prior school entities, including those issued from a school associated with a residential placement.
- Align graduation requirements for Act 1 eligible students to District graduation requirements.
- Determine if a student has met graduation requirements.

*Note: Policy 217 is about Graduation Requirements. For graduation ceremonies, schools must give students and parents/guardians advance notice regarding the conditions under which a student's participation in a graduation ceremony may be withheld. Such advance notice may be provided to students and parents/guardians through a student handbook or a letter to seniors and their parents/guardians.*

### *Act 1 and Special Education*

- If the mandates of Act 1 conflict in any way with the rights a student has under an IEP or 504 Plan, a school entity implements the requirements specific to the student with a disability under applicable disability laws.
- Students may still graduate either through credit acquisition or through the completion of IEP goals.
- Importantly, students who have IEPs may still elect to remain in school, until the age allowed by law, and graduate with the current graduating class.

### Graduation Supports and Resources

Graduation requirements and the District's [marking guidelines](#) are publicly accessible and posted on the District's [website](#).

The [Office of Postsecondary Readiness/Pathways to Graduation](#) offers support to schools around transcript reviews and course approvals, Dual Enrollment opportunities, Advanced Placement courses, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming and certifications, College and Career Readiness guidance, career planning, non-CTE credentials and certifications, Career Connected Learning opportunities, and credit recovery opportunities.

The [Office of Student Support Services \(OSSS\)](#) offers services to assist students who are encountering barriers to their academic success or personal growth, and helps students negotiate situations by connecting them with appropriate internal staff and outside resources. Specifically, OSSS provides services for unhoused students, students transitioning into the District, and ELECT (Education Leading to Employment and Career Training).

### *School Responsibilities*

Schools are responsible for counseling students to know what is expected of them for meeting their subject and credit requirements and completion of their schooling in alignment with [Policy 213 - Assessment of Student Progress](#), [Policy 215 - Promotion and Retention](#), and their related Administrative Procedures. Schools should refer to the information included in [Policy 212 - Reporting Student Progress](#) and its Administrative Procedures around providing periodic notifications to students in danger of failing.

Information and guidance related to planning and execution of graduation ceremonies is provided in [Policy 222 - Field Trips, Social Events, and Class Trips](#) and its Administrative Procedures.

### **Maintenance Schedule**

These Administrative Procedures will be reviewed upon review of the Policy, or upon the occurrence of a triggering event.

Satisfaction of graduation requirements will be assessed annually for eligible students attending District high schools and approved by the high school principal.