

Senate Bill 61 (2022) Early high school graduation program

[Senate Bill \(SB\) 61](#) amends [KRS 158.142](#) by modifying the statutory requirements for the early high school graduation program. The Early Graduation Program (EGP) establishes provisions allowing highly successful learners, who demonstrate critical skills and competencies needed for postsecondary success, the option to graduate prior to completion of the traditional four years of high school.

Upon successfully meeting all program requirements provided in [704 KAR 3:305, Section 5](#), students are awarded a high school diploma, Early Graduation Certificate and scholarship from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) that may be used at a Kentucky public two (2) year community and technical college or a Kentucky four (4) year public or non-profit independent institution accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

SB 61 (2022) amendments to KRS 158.142, Early high school graduation program

SB 61 is considered a “clean-up” bill and amends KRS 158.142 by removing two EGP requirements previously established in statute. These statutory amendments, described below, took effect as of July 14, 2022, and shall apply to all students who enter the program in the 2022-2023 academic year and beyond.

First, SB 61 removes end-of-course (EOC) assessments as it is no longer supported by the vendor. For this reason, the assessment is no longer a reliable measure of Kentucky students’ academic attainment and ability as it is not aligned to the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS)*.

Second, SB 61 removes ACT as the specifically named vendor for measuring college entrance examination benchmarks. This amendment provides long-term flexibility as educational practices and state-level contracts evolve.

SB 61 maintains the authority of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) to promulgate regulations; therefore, all EGP requirements, including the benchmark requirements for college entrance examinations, will be contained within 704 KAR 3:305, Section 5.

2022-2023 Early Graduation Program Requirements

For the 2022-2023 academic year, any student who submits an intent to participate in the EGP within the timeframe provided in 704 KAR 3:305, Section 5 shall be required to meet the provisions provided in SB 61.

Therefore, students who complete the EGP for the 2022-2023 academic year must:

- “Indicate that intent to the school principal at the beginning of grade 9 or as soon as the intent is known, but within the first thirty (30) school days of the academic year in which they wish to graduate,” Section 5(1)(b);



- “Meet the college readiness exam benchmarks established by the Council on Postsecondary Education in [13 KAR 2:020](#) for placement in credit-bearing courses without the need for remediation,” (Section 5(2)(b)); and
- Complete the locally established financial literacy program or course as provided in [KRS 158.1411](#).

For any student who completes the program in the 2023-2024 academic year and beyond, EGP requirements for earning a high school diploma, the Early Graduation Certificate and scholarship from KHEAA will change. These changes do not impact 2022-2023 EGP participants.

Additional guidance will be released to support schools and districts in implementing the new EGP requirements for 2023-2024 participants and beyond.

For questions regarding SB 61, please contact Office of Teaching and Learning Policy Advisor [Sarah Peace](#).