



Kentucky Department of  
**E D U C A T I O N**

Kentucky Minimum High School Graduation Requirements  
Frequently Asked Questions

**2023-2024**

# Kentucky Minimum High School Graduation Requirements

[704 KAR 3:305](#) establishes the minimum requirements necessary for entitlement to a Kentucky public high school diploma.

This document provides support in understanding the minimum high school graduation requirements as outlined in 704 KAR 3:305.

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## List of Acronyms

AA-AAAS	Alternate Assessment Aligned with Alternate Academic Achievement Standards
AP	Advanced Placement
ASL	American Sign Language
CAI	Cambridge Advanced International
CPE	Council on Postsecondary Education
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CTE	Career and Technical Education
EGP	Early Graduation Program
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
JROTC	Junior Reserves Officers' Training Corps
IB	International Baccalaureate
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Education Plan
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
KAS	<i>Kentucky Academic Standards</i>
KBE	Kentucky Board of Education
KDE	Kentucky Department of Education
MCF	<i>Model Curriculum Framework</i>
SBDM	School-Based Decision Making Council
PBC	Performance-Based Credit
PE	Physical Education
VPA	Visual and Performing Arts

## Associated Statutes and Regulations

### Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS)

<a href="#">KRS 156.160</a>	Promulgation of administrative regulations by the KBE
<a href="#">KRS 156.395</a>	Definition of instructional materials
<a href="#">KRS 158.100</a>	Programs required of school districts - additional programs permitted – Virtual high school
<a href="#">KRS 158.140</a>	Admission to high school, promotion, classification, diploma - alternative high school diploma
<a href="#">KRS 158.141</a>	Passing grade on civics test required for high school graduation
<a href="#">KRS 158.1411</a>	Financial Literacy Requirements
<a href="#">KRS 158.1413</a>	Essential workplace ethics instruction program – required characteristics
<a href="#">KRS 158.142</a>	Early High School Graduation Program requirements – certificate – scholarship
<a href="#">KRS 158.281</a>	Individual Education Program
<a href="#">KRS 158.302</a>	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation training required for high school students
<a href="#">KRS 158.622</a>	Advanced placement course - dual credit programs, credit for virtual high schools
<a href="#">KRS 158.645</a>	Capacities required of students in public education system
<a href="#">KRS 158.6451</a>	Goals for Commonwealth’s schools – Model Curriculum Framework
<a href="#">KRS 158.6459</a>	Intervention strategies for accelerated learning – Individualized learning plan
<a href="#">KRS 160.345</a>	School-based decision making – composition – responsibilities
<a href="#">KRS 164.002</a>	Definitions related to advanced course options

### Kentucky Administrative Regulations (KAR)

<a href="#">13 KAR 2:020</a>	Guidelines for admission to state-supported postsecondary education institutions
<a href="#">701 KAR 5:100</a>	School-based decision making guidelines
<a href="#">704 KAR Ch 8</a>	Kentucky Academic Standards
<a href="#">704 KAR 3:303</a>	Required academic standards
<a href="#">704 KAR 3:305</a>	Minimum requirements for high school graduation
<a href="#">704 KAR 3:455</a>	Instructional resource – definition
<a href="#">704 KAR 3:535</a>	Full-time enrolled online, virtual and remote learning programs
<a href="#">704 KAR 19:002</a>	Alternative education programs
<a href="#">707 KAR 1:002</a>	Definitions – special education
<a href="#">707 KAR 1:320</a>	Individual education program

## Helpful Links and Resources

[Accountability](#)

[Advanced Coursework](#)

[Career and Technical Education](#)

[Digital Learning Guidelines](#)

[Early Graduation Program](#)

[Individual Learning Plan](#)

[Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\)](#)

[Minimum High School Graduation Requirements](#)

[Model Curriculum Framework \(MCF\)](#)

[Performance-Based Credit](#)

[Postsecondary Readiness](#)

[Searchable State Course Code Database](#)

## Section 1: Definitions

"**Continuity of services plan**" means a plan that outlines the ways in which a student will receive access to essential services that will end if the student graduates early. See Section 11 for additional information.

"**Early Graduation Certificate**" means a certificate, awarded by the district and signed by the principal and superintendent, that shall qualify the recipient to be awarded a high school diploma and a scholarship award equal to one-half (1/2) of the state portion of the average statewide per pupil guaranteed base funding level, to 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. See Section 5 for additional information.

"**Early Graduation Program**" or "**EGP**" means an optional, criteria-based program in which a student may receive a diploma from the school district, an Early Graduation Certificate, and a scholarship award upon successful completion of all program requirements provided in Section 5 of this administrative regulation in three (3) academic years or less. See Section 5 for additional information.

"**Graduate early**" means a student is awarded a diploma from the district, in under four (4) academic years from the start of grade 9, based upon meeting the minimum credit requirements of this administrative regulation and additional requirements as may be imposed by a local board of education. See Section 5 for additional information.

"**Individual Learning Plan**" or "**ILP**" is defined in 704 KAR 19:002. See Section 2 for additional information.

## Section 2: Individual Learning Plans

### **Q: What is an ILP?**

A: The ILP is a student-directed, multi-year, dynamic tool that maps academic plans, personal/social growth and career development activities while considering the student's unique, self-defined interests, needs and goals for the attainment of postsecondary success.

ILP implementation supports district and school goals, such as increasing completion of the program of study for the student's chosen CTE pathway, increasing student attendance and engagement, and increasing high school graduation rates.

The development of an ILP is required for ALL students beginning in 6th grade and can be thought of as both an instrument and a process to engage students in planning, while simultaneously deepening their understanding of the relevance of course selections and learning opportunities (in and out of school) aligned with their career interests, postsecondary education/training and attainment of career and life goals. As an instrument, an ILP provides a place to organize and record progress related to academic, personal/social and career development information. As a process, it encourages students to set realistic goals based on individual interests and strengths, while identifying actions necessary to achieve those goals. The ILP process promotes relevant communication between students, school staff, parents and other influential adults. The ILP process also supports school and district improvement efforts to be responsive to students' interests and needs.

### **Q. When must the student's ILP be established?**

The development of the ILP for each student shall be established **within the first ninety (90) days of the sixth grade year** and shall be focused on career exploration and related postsecondary education and training needs.

### **Q: What are the minimum requirements for the ILP?**

A: All students in grades 6-12 are required to participate in their district's ILP program in order to meet the district's requirements. All districts must minimally meet the requirements indicated in the ILP self-implementation rubric. As a reminder, the rubric contains the minimum requirements for helping students reach their post-secondary plans.

### **Q: Why is there so much flexibility?**

A: Local school districts have the flexibility to design an ILP program or process to best meet the needs of its students. With a well-designed program/process, districts and schools have an opportunity to offer a robust advising system to enable all students in grades 6-12 to learn about and plan for postsecondary goals.

### **Q: What does an effective ILP entail? How do we know if our process is effective?**

A: Section 2(2) of the minimum requirements for high school graduation regulation, *704 KAR 3:305*, states that each district should have an ILP team that includes students, parents/caregivers and school staff in order to properly evaluate an ILP. Districts should seek feedback from these stakeholders annually to ensure their processes hold value and engage their students. School districts also should use the self-implementation rubric to ensure they have a high quality ILP that meets the requirements in *704 KAR 3:305*.



## Section 3: Minimum Requirements for High School Graduation

(Applies *only* to students entering grade 9 on or before the first day of the 2018-2019 academic year)

**Q: What are the minimum high school graduation requirements for students who entered high school on or before the first day of the 2018-19 school year?**

A: See the [Minimum High School Graduation Requirements Freshmen Classes 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 and Thereafter](#) chart.

**Q. What are the age requirements for high school?**

A. Per KRS 158.100(1), “each school district shall provide an approved preschool school program through twelve (12) grade school service... An approved high school service for all children of high school grade under twenty-one (21) years of age residing in the district shall be provided...”

**Q: Are the 2018-19 requirements still relevant now that the new requirements have been implemented for 2019-21 and beyond?**

A: Yes. Per KRS 158.100, schools and districts are required to provide services of all children in high school under 21 years of age. Some students who began grade 9 on or before the 2018-19 academic year are still eligible for services.

## Section 4: Minimum Requirements for High School Graduation

(Applies to *all* students entering high school in 2019-2020 and thereafter)

### **Q: What are the current graduation requirements?**

A: The graduation requirements can be found in the [Kentucky Minimum Graduation Requirements for Students Entering High School in 2019-2020 and Thereafter](#) chart.

### **Q: Can schools offer online or virtual courses that meet minimum graduation requirements?**

A: Yes. A high school student's enrollment should be captured in Infinite Campus via the course setup. Students taking courses online should be enrolled in a course with a state course code that corresponds to the content of the online course they are taking (for example, Algebra 1 should be coded 270304 Algebra 1).

Per the "Digital Learning Guidelines," courses provided by digital learning providers should cover the standards aligned to the course. Any standards not covered by the digital learning provider should be supplemented by an on-site classroom teacher.

For more information, see [Virtual and Performance-Based Course Set-Up and Attendance Verification](#) and Virtual and Attendance-based Course Set-Up.

**Q: Can a CTE teacher teach a mathematics, science or social studies course?** A: CTE teachers may teach a mathematics, science or social studies course if they are team-teaching the course with a certified content teacher (certifications for courses can be checked in the Searchable State Course Code Database). This is considered an interdisciplinary course. Students may get credit for both the content area and CTE pathway in this scenario.

Interdisciplinary career and technical/core academic courses require that a teacher certified in the content area and a CTE teacher certified in the respective career and technical area work together in planning, teaching and evaluating student learning to ensure all aspects of the KAS for the specific academic course is addressed. The Utilizing Interdisciplinary Courses in Compliance with Highly Qualified Teacher Policies document can be accessed for additional information.

### **Q: What is the difference between foundational courses and personalized courses?**

A: Foundational courses consists of 10 courses that all Kentucky students must take to graduate from a Kentucky public high school. Personalized courses are a minimum of 12 courses every Kentucky student must take based on his/her/their ILP and individual needs.

More information on foundational and personalized courses can be found on the *Minimum Graduation Requirements For Students Entering High School in 2019-2020 and Thereafter* chart.

### **Q: 704 KAR 3:305 states that third and fourth years of English and mathematics can be personalized. Is this really the case?**

A: With the implementation of ILPs, as described in 704 KAS 3:305, schools have the flexibility to offer third and fourth-year English and mathematics courses that meet the needs of students and incorporate the remaining required KAS of that content. The content for the credit must be taught by a teacher certified in

the corresponding content area.

**Q: How do we know what standards should be covered in a required course?**

A: Course standards documents are available for all required courses on the [Course Standards Document](#) webpage provided on [kystandards.org](#). All courses must be aligned to the KAS.

**Q: Will there be documents available detailing the standards that must be covered during personalized course options for the different content areas?**

A: Yes. Documents are available on the [Course Standards Document](#) webpage provided on [kystandards.org](#) that detail the KAS required through a combination of foundational and personalized course options for the different content areas.

**Q: For students who do not meet the college entrance examination benchmarks for English, reading and/or mathematics, what qualifies as a transitional course or intervention?**

A: Per KRS 158.6459, a high school, in collaboration with its local district, must develop accelerated learning opportunities that provide supplementary support for students in meeting the CPE college entrance examination benchmarks. Districts and schools have the autonomy to develop and implement a transitional course or intervention to address remediation needs before their students exit high school.

**Q: Where can I find a list of certifications that allow a teacher to teach a certain course?**

A: The certifications that allow a teacher to teach a certain course can be found in the details box for each course listed in the Searchable State Course Database.

**Q: Why do some districts have different graduation requirements than the minimum graduation requirements listed on the KDE website?**

A: The state sets minimum graduation requirements, but districts may include additional local requirements over and above the minimum high school graduation requirements provided in 704 KAR 3:305.

**Q: Do private schools need to follow the state's minimum graduation requirements?**

A: No. However, students wishing to be admitted to a public postsecondary institution in Kentucky are still required to meet the same pre-college standards as public-school students. Therefore, students must be afforded the opportunity to complete the required pre-college curriculum as established in 13 KAR 2:020.

**Q: The minimum graduation requirements state that students must show demonstrated performance-based competency in technology. What are those requirements?**

A: A district may create its own competency requirements based on the *KAS for Technology*.

**Q: Are students required to have 120 hours of seat time in order to receive credit for a course?**

A: According to 704 KAR 3:305, a board of education may award credit toward high school graduation for satisfactory demonstration of learning based on content standards described in the KAS and a rigorous performance standards policy established by the board of education. A school shall establish performance descriptors and evaluation procedures to determine if the content and performance standards have been met. Additional information can be found in the KDE PBC Guidance Document.

**Q: Do foundational courses such as English 1, English 2, Algebra 1 and/or Geometry need to be taken in sequence or can they be taken out of order?**

A: While courses are recommended to be taken in a specific order to optimize student learning and outcomes, a student who does not pass one of these courses may move on to the next course while completing the course he or she did not pass. If the local school district has a policy pertaining to the sequencing of courses, then this policy must be followed.

## English

### **Q: Can students receive one of their required English or language arts credits by taking a transitional course?**

A: Students who do not meet benchmarks in reading (20) or English (18) on their ACT may take a transitional course or intervention before they graduate. The English or reading transitional course may be embedded into an English course or courses. However, a transitional course in English or reading does NOT satisfy the English credit for graduation. It is important to remember that this transitional intervention should be measured and monitored to address the student's needs around college readiness in reading and likewise in English.

## Mathematics

### **Q: Algebra 2 is no longer required, so do these standards still need to be taught?**

A: Although a course entitled Algebra 2 is no longer a requirement, there are additional standards not aligned to Algebra 1 or Geometry courses still required for all students. These remaining required standards must be taught during the third course, the fourth course or through a combination of third/fourth courses. For guidance regarding the required *KAS for Mathematics*, consult the *High School Mathematics Matrix Standards by Course for 2019-2020 and Beyond* document. This document illustrates the standards covered in Algebra 1 and Geometry and the additional standards which then would need to be covered in the third and/or fourth courses.

Schools now have flexibility as to how third/fourth courses will address those required standards. Schools can continue to offer Algebra 2 courses to cover those remaining required standards; however, Algebra 2 is no longer the only path for students to follow that will cover those standards. At the local level, educators may choose to develop a crosswalk that shows how all standards will be met through their specific courses. Also, note that districts can choose to go beyond the minimum high school graduation requirements, such as requiring Algebra 2 for all students, if they choose to do so.

### **Q: Can any mathematics course be used as a third and fourth year-personalized mathematics course? A:**

Any high school mathematics course outside of the two foundational courses (Algebra 1 and Geometry), can be used as a personalized third or fourth-year course provided that the remaining required *KAS for Mathematics* are completely addressed during the third-year course, the fourth-year course or through the combination of the third/fourth-year courses. For guidance regarding the specific *KAS for Mathematics* that need to be addressed, refer to the *High School Mathematics Matrix Standards by Course for 2019-2020 and Beyond*.

Keep in mind that how schools/districts cover those remaining required standards will be a local decision. Schools/districts may continue to teach those standards within an Algebra 2 course, but since that may look different around the state based upon the local decisions made, those standards may be listed as “additional required standards” as opposed to being labeled under a specific course heading such as Algebra 2.

### **Q: Can we use Financial Literacy as a third or fourth-year mathematics course?**

A: Any mathematics course outside of the two foundational courses (Algebra 1 and Geometry), can be used as a personalized third or fourth-year course provided that the remaining required *KAS for Mathematics* are completely addressed during the third-year course, the fourth-year course or through the combination of the third/fourth-year courses. For guidance regarding the specific *KAS for Mathematics* that need to be addressed, see the *High School Mathematics Matrix Standards by Course for 2019-2020 and Beyond* document.

### **Q: Can transition courses count as mathematics requirements?**

A: Students who do not meet the benchmark in mathematics (19) on their ACT may take a transitional course or intervention before they graduate. The mathematics transitional course does **NOT** satisfy the mathematics credit for graduation. Furthermore, it is important to remember this transitional intervention should be measured and monitored to address students’ needs around college readiness in

relation to mathematics.

**Q: If high school level courses, such as Algebra I, Geometry or Algebra II are taken in middle school, will a high school credit be awarded and will the course be accepted toward graduation?**

A: According to KRS 158.622(3)(b), each school district shall accept for credit toward graduation and completion of high school course requirements an advanced placement, a high school equivalent, or a Kentucky Virtual High School course taken by a student in grades 5, 6, 7 or 8 if that student attains performance levels expected of high school students in that district as determined by achieving a score of "3" or higher on a College Board AP examination or a grade of "B" or better in a high school equivalent or a Kentucky Virtual High School course.

## Science

**Q: The state assessment for accountability in science occurs in grade 11, which would be the third year of high school. How can we personalize a third credit in science while still ensuring students have had meaningful learning experiences aligned to the *KAS for Science*?**

A: Third year courses can be personalized to meet the needs of students based on their ILP. These personalized third year science courses must ensure that students have access to all remaining *KAS for Science* for this subject that are not associated with the identified foundational courses. These remaining *KAS for Science* should be embedded within the curriculum so all students are prepared for the state-required assessments.

**Q: Which science courses meet minimum graduation requirements?**

A: 704 KAR 3:305 states that students have three science credits, two of which incorporate lab-based scientific investigation experiences and include the content contained in the *KAS for Science*. Several possible sequences are available. When determining what courses, a school/district requires for graduation, it is important to ensure that all students have access to and are taught all *KAS for Science*.

**Q: Is there a sequence that schools could offer that would provide access to all the *KAS for Science*?**

A: Yes, there are several offerings that provide access to all the *KAS for Science*:

- Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Earth/Space (note: this is a four-course offering)
- Biology, Introduction to Chemistry and Physics, and Earth/Space
- Biology with Earth/Space, Chemistry with Earth/Space and Physics with Earth/Space
- Integrated Science I, Integrated Science II and Integrated Science III
- Conceptual Science I, Conceptual Science II and Conceptual Science III.

While the first three offerings may be in any sequence, Integrated Science and Conceptual Science should be provided in the order given to ensure students have the proper background knowledge to be successful at the next level of the sequence. In addition, it is not recommended that schools offer an Integrated Science or Conceptual Science course with traditional science courses.



## Social Studies

**Q: The state assessment for accountability in social studies occurs in grade 11, which would be the third year of high school. How can we personalize a third credit in social studies while still ensuring students have had meaningful learning experiences aligned to the *KAS for Social Studies*?**

A: Third year courses can be personalized to meet the needs of students based on their ILPs. These personalized third year social studies courses must ensure that students have access to the *KAS* for this subject. The *KAS for Social Studies* should be embedded within the curriculum so all students are prepared for the state-required assessments.

**Q: How should districts configure the credit bearing social studies course offerings?**

A: Districts and schools can arrange the essential high school social studies content within the three-credit requirement to best meet the needs of their students. A local board of education may substitute an integrated, applied, interdisciplinary or higher-level course for a required course if the alternative course provides rigorous content and addresses the same academic expectations.

**Q: What must be included in the three credits required for social studies?**

A: The reference to the three-credit requirement refers to this statement: Three credits for social studies are required for high school graduation. These credits must incorporate the inquiry practices of questioning, investigating, using evidence and communicating conclusions and the four social studies disciplines of civics, economics, geography and history and the standards therein. Districts and schools can arrange the essential content within the three-credit requirement to best meet their need. Course codes aligned to standards have been provided to meet a traditional approach as well as an integrated approach. Both the traditional approach and the integrated approach allow for students to cover all adopted *KAS* during the course sequence.

## Physical Education (PE)/Health Education

### **Q: Can JROTC count as the .5 credit requirement for PE?**

A: Per KRS 156.160, JROTC courses can count as a PE course.

### **Q: Must cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) be taught in P.E. or health education?**

A: Yes. KRS 158.302, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Training Required for High School Students, establishes that every public high school shall provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation training to students as part of the health course or the PE course that is required for high school graduation or the JROTC course that meets the PE requirement. The training shall:

**(a)** Be based on the American Heart Association's Guidelines for CPR and Emergency Cardiovascular Care or other nationally recognized, evidenced-based guidelines; **(b)** Incorporate psychomotor skills training to support cognitive learning; and **(c)** Make students aware of the purpose of an automated external defibrillator and its ease and safety of use. **The training does not have to be provided by a certified instructor or result in students being certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.**

### **Q: Can JROTC count as the .5 health credit requirement?**

A: JROTC may only count as a health credit if all *KAS for Health Education* are addressed and the teacher holds the appropriate certification to teach a health education course.

### **Q: Can marching band count as the .5 PE credit requirement?**

A: Marching band only may be substituted for a required PE course if all standards found in the *KAS for Physical Education* are addressed and the teacher holds the appropriate certification to teach a physical education course.

### **Q: Can students who participate in sports have the option of counting that as their .5 PE credit requirement?**

A: Sports participation only may be substituted for a required PE course if all standards found in the *KAS for Physical Education* are addressed and the teacher holds the appropriate certification to teach a PE course.

## Technology

### **Q: How do students demonstrate performance-based competency in technology?**

A: There are multiple ways this requirement can be satisfied through performance-based demonstrations by students. In order to award successful performance-based competencies, districts (and schools) must establish a policy for student demonstration in performance-based competency in technology. Performance-based competency in technology may be awarded for courses, credits or programs with the following characteristics:

- Technology standards-based student technology leadership program(s) (STLP), work-based learning experiences including internship, cooperative-learning experience, technology-related CTE pathway completion (including relevant certifications), technology-related apprenticeship, or other supervised learning experiences in the school and the community where learning with technology is demonstrated.
- Technology standards-based portfolios, a collection of shared student-created digital products that demonstrate performance-based competency in technology (transformative learning with technology), including 8th grade, senior year or capstone projects
- Course work and/or structured content that leads to demonstration and performance of learning competencies in technology
  - Technology standards-based online or other technology-mediated courses
  - Technology standards-based dual credit or other equivalency courses
  - Technology standards-based recognized certifications

### **Q: Does a computer science course have to be offered to satisfy the technology component of the graduation requirements?**

A: No. Earning a computer science credit is not a minimum requirement for high school graduation.

### **Q: What guidance is available for districts to establish a local policy for student demonstration in performance-based competency in technology?**

A. As highlighted in the *KAS for Technology*, in order to award successful, performance-based competencies, districts (and schools) must establish a policy for student demonstration in performance-based competency in technology that:

- Provides procedures for developing successful demonstrations of performance-based technology competency awards;
- Identifies successful performance descriptors and/or demonstrations of transformative learning with technology;
- Establishes evaluation and reporting procedures;
- Addresses content standards as addressed in *KAS for Technology*;
- Identifies the extent (if at all) to which integration of performance-based competency in technology is embedded in other content area competency demonstrations;
- Allows students to demonstrate competency and earn credit for learning acquired outside of school or in prior learning experiences;
- Allows students to pursue work-based learning experiences through internships, externships, apprenticeships, cooperative learning experiences and other learning experiences in the school and community; and

- Allows for students meeting computer science standards to be considered successful in meeting the demonstration of performance-based competency in technology.

**Q: Are there technology standards that must be addressed to meet the technology component of the minimum graduation requirements (demonstrated performance-based competency in technology)?**

A: Yes. The *KAS for Technology* for grades K-12 became effective in 2021. The technology standards are broad and should lead students toward competencies that highlight learning with technology.

The *KAS for Technology* provides a framework for integrating technology into all content areas and reflects the basic digital skills required for each student to be competitive in the global economy. The main concepts delivered through the *KAS for Technology* equip students to demonstrate digital competencies in becoming computational thinkers, creative communicators, digital citizens, empowered learners, global collaborators, innovative designers and knowledge constructors.

For students to attain the required technology competencies, it is essential they have access to technology during the school day at all grade levels. Instruction should provide opportunities for students to gain and demonstrate technology skills that build throughout their K-12 educational experiences.

**Q: If a computer science class is offered, does it have to count as an elective?**

A: Based on course standards, the teacher of record and district board decisions, a computer science course *can* qualify as an elective science course or as a third or fourth mathematics personalized course if the *KAS* for those content areas are met. Many computer science courses fit in career pathways as well. If these classes are part of the pathway and not used as a personalized science or mathematics class, they would be considered electives.

## Virtual Courses

### **Q: Are all virtual courses considered performance-based?**

A: No. Performance-based courses are often connected to a lack of Carnegie units (defined as at least 120 hours of instructional time in one subject) and defined as credits earned by a student outside of the traditional structure of a 120-hour instructional course. Virtual courses may or may not be offered in a traditional, 120-hour instructional course.

### **Q: What guidance/support can KDE provide to districts on alternate ways technology can serve as curriculum/assist in content areas without certified teachers?**

A: KRS 156.395 defines instructional materials as tools that are used to facilitate student learning as defined in administrative regulation. 704 KAR 3:455 defines instructional resources as any print, non-print or electronic medium designed to assist student learning.

KRS 160.345(2)(g), as expressed in KDE guidance, establishes that each district's superintendent has the authority to select a school's curriculum, textbooks, instructional materials, and student support services after consultation with the SBDM council and the local board of education. Likewise, there must be a reasonable review and response period for stakeholders in accordance with the local board of education policy before the superintendent makes the final decision regarding curriculum, textbooks, instructional materials, and student support services. Additionally, KRS 160.345(2)(g) establishes that "the school council shall consult with the school media librarian on the maintenance of the school library media center, including the purchase of instructional materials, information technology, and equipment."

The local SBDM council and local board of education establish appropriate school and district policies governing online course enrollment, parameters, course credits, etc.

Each digital learning resource, online and blended learning course must meet or exceed and be aligned in scope and sequence to the approved KAS in 704 KAR 3:303 and 704 KAR 3:305 Chapter 8. The local school district assures that all students have access and opportunity to learn the standards contained in the KAS (General Assurance 40). When appropriate, these resources and courses align with Kentucky course descriptions and bear course code assignments established by 704 KAR 3:540.

Digital learning content may be obtained from a vendor, built by a highly qualified content teacher, or a combination of both. A content-appropriate certified teacher should review and endorse all digital learning resources, online and blended course content. Online or blended courses should be reviewed by a local review committee (content-specific certified teacher, administrative designee, district technology coordinator designee, and a curriculum/instructional coach if available) before enrolling students in the courses. Currently, basal textbooks (print or digital) or individualized learning programs shall follow state guidelines of review and notification as established in KRS 156.395-476 and 704 KAR 3:455.

The local school district certifies that the textbook/instructional materials purchasing plans for all schools serving grades P-8 have been approved by the superintendent and the local board of education and are on file in the district office. The plans address the requirements as stated in KRS 156.439 and 704 KAR 3:455 (Textbook and Instructional Materials Assurance 1).

Online courses have components that provide access to the course content any time, any place and at the student's own pace. Online courses and digital learning content offer students personalized learning, as well as college- and career-prep courses in a variety of subjects to meet student needs regardless of physical location. From a structural and growth perspective, student learning experiences are personalized based on the following: student's diagnostic data, learning style and learning needs, which allow for student choice, voice and pace. Structures should be in place in each school where online courses and digital content are implemented to achieve such diagnostics and ensure learning progression. Additionally, credit may be given based on performance or seat time. Performance-based courses award academic credit when learning is successfully demonstrated regardless of the number of instructional hours. Additionally, the KBE has approved 704 KAR 3:535 to allow for students (K-12) who are enrolled full-time in a virtual school, program or academy to be counted "in-attendance" for purposes of recording daily attendance.

If an online course has been assigned to a highly qualified teacher, then a building level course steward may oversee the implementation of the course if provided within the school building. Teacher course stewards are trained in the delivery of online/blended learning, embedding the principles of the "Model Curriculum Framework." As detailed in the Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines, students taking an online course or blended learning course have access to a highly qualified teacher or content mentor for two-way communication, collaboration, questions and/or tutoring.

## Career Studies and Financial Literacy

### Q: Does Kentucky have standards for Career Studies?

A: Yes, the [KAS for Career Studies](#) outline the minimum content standards Kentucky students should learn within each grade-band. The standards address what is to be learned but do not direct how learning experiences are to be designed or what resources should be used.

### Q: How can students meet the requirement for financial literacy?

A: Schools may choose to offer different options, depending on a student's ILP.

- Students choosing a Business or Family and Consumer Science pathway may take a course such as:
  - Money Skills – 201010
  - Personal Finance – 060170
- Students may take one of the following courses as a math credit:
  - Money Skills for Mathematics – 201011
  - Personal Finance (Mathematics Credit) – 080719
- Districts may partner with postsecondary institutions to offer a dual credit or articulated credit course.
- Schools may develop a program, or combination of course offerings in a variety of instructional formats (e.g., modules, online learning).
- Schools also may choose to implement the standards systematically by section through academic advising or enrichment sessions.
- Resources to support financial literacy can be found within the *KAS for Career Studies* in addition to the Financial Literacy Resources provided on the KDE website.

## World Languages

**Q: Are world languages included in the minimum graduation requirements?**

A: No. World languages have never been part of the minimum graduation requirements as described in *704 KAR 3:305*. Pre-college curriculum, as specified by the CPE, requires two units of a world language or competency equivalent. World languages also may be included as part of a student’s required personalized credits. Local boards of education may include a world language requirement as part of local graduation requirements. Please refer to the *KAS for World Language* when designing programs.

**Q: Can ASL count as a world language credit?**

A: Yes. The state of Kentucky officially recognizes ASL as a world language per KRS 164.4785, and the KDE officially recognizes ASL credits as an elective in high school. For more information, go to the ASL standards and the ASL Survival Kit.



## Visual and Performing Arts (VPA)

**Q: Does an art/music/theater/dance class count as the high school graduation requirement?**

A: A VPA course that shows continuity with the student's ILP and includes the standards contained in the *KAS for VPA* may count for the visual and performing arts credit. A visual and/or performing arts course that shows continuity with the student's ILP and includes the standards contained in the *KAS* for a specialized art form also may count for the visual and performing arts credit. Recall that the ILP is iterative and can be updated at any point in the student's high school career.

**Q: Do students have to take a survey course of the visual and performing arts in order to graduate?**

A: Course code 500111 High School Survey Course of the visual and performing arts is one option for the visual and performing arts requirement. Students also may receive credit through the completion of a visual and performing arts course that covers the *KAS for Visual and Performing Arts* and is based on the student's ILP. A visual and/or performing arts course that shows continuity with the student's ILP and includes the standards contained in the *KAS* for a specialized art form also may count for the visual and performing arts credit or a specialized art form also may count for the visual and performing arts credit.

**Q: Can students receive visual and performing arts credit through another content area course such as social studies or world language?**

A: No. The minimum high school graduation requirements *704 KAR 3:305* allows for a credit to be earned in the visual and performing arts through the completion of the survey course or a standards-based arts course that is based on a student's ILP.

**Q: Can Introduction to Media Arts Course (code 480901) count for the Visual and Performing Arts requirement?**

A: A visual and/or performing arts course that shows continuity with the student's ILP and includes the standards contained in the *KAS for Visual and Performing Arts* may count for the visual and performing arts credit.

## Section 5: Early Graduation Program

Visit the [KDE's Early Graduation Program \(EGP\) webpage](#) and [FAQ](#), for more information, including the new requirements for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic years.

## Section 6: Substituting Courses

### **Q: Can a district substitute a course for a high school graduation requirement?**

A: Yes. Substitution of a course is possible, but rigor should not be sacrificed. Section 6 of 704 KAR 3:305 states:

*(1) A local board of education may substitute an integrated, applied, interdisciplinary, occupational, technical or higher-level course for a required course if the alternative course provides rigorous content.*

*(2) For students with disabilities, a local board of education may substitute a functional, integrated, applied, interdisciplinary, occupational, technical or higher-level course for a required course if the alternative course provides rigorous content. These shall be based on grade-level content standards and may be modified to allow for a narrower breadth, depth or complexity of the general grade-level content standards.*

All classes used for substitution also must be based on grade-level content standards. How students achieve or master those standards may be differentiated to personalize education for students with IEPs.

### **Q: Can English 1 or 2 be substituted with a different course?**

A: Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, English 1 and 2 may be substituted; however, the substituted course(s) must cover the *KAS for Reading and Writing*, grade 9-10 standards, for reading literature, reading informational text, composition and language. The *KAS for Reading and Writing* outlines the minimum content standards Kentucky students should learn in each grade-level English course; specifically, the standards establish what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of a course. Thus, the standards address what is to be learned but do not address how learning experiences are to be designed or what resources should be used.

### **Q: Can Algebra 1 or Geometry be substituted with a different course?**

A: Algebra 1 and Geometry may be substituted; however, the substituted course(s) must cover the *KAS for Mathematics* that have been tagged as Algebra 1 and Geometry in the “High School Mathematics Standards by Course” document. The *KAS for Mathematics* outlines the minimum content Kentucky students should learn. These standards are not a set of instructional or assessment tasks, but rather statements of what students should be able to do after instruction. Decisions on how best to help students meet these program goals are left to local school districts and teachers. The *KAS for Mathematics* does not dictate curriculum or teaching methods; learning opportunities and pathways will continue to vary across schools and school systems and educators should make every effort to meet the needs of individual students, based on their pedagogical and professional impressions and information.

## Section 7: Performance-Based Credit (PBC)

### **Q: How is a PBC course credit set up in Infinite Campus?**

A: For specific guidance on setting up PBC courses in Infinite Campus, consult the “Virtual and Performance Training” document.

### **Q: Can districts offer PBC?**

A: A district must have a policy showing how PBC will be implemented and how credits will be awarded. Schools should consider seeking approval from the local district prior to offering or awarding PBC. Additional information specific to districts and schools should be considered as follows:

#### Districts:

The local board of education must establish a policy for a PBC system that includes the following:

- The procedures for developing PBC systems and amending the system;
- The conditions under which each high school may grant PBC and the related performance descriptors and assessments;
- Objective grading and reporting procedures;
- The KAS for the corresponding content area;
- The extent to which state-provided assessments will be used in the local PBC system;
- The ability for students to demonstrate proficiency and earn credit for learning acquired outside of school or in prior learning;
- Criteria to ensure internships, cooperative learning experiences and other learning experiences in the school and community are designed to further student progress toward his or her ILP, supervised by an instructor certified in that content area, aligned with state and local content and performance standards, performance descriptors and evaluation procedures to determine if the content and performance standards have been met;
- Standards-based coursework that constitutes satisfactory demonstration of learning in any high school course;
- Standards-based course work that constitutes satisfactory demonstration of learning in a course for which the student failed to earn credit when the course was taken previously;
- Standards-based portfolios, senior year or capstone projects;
- Standards-based online or other technology mediated courses;
- Standards-based dual credit or other equivalency courses; or
- Standards-based internship, cooperative learning experience or other supervised experience in the school or the community.
- Maintain a copy of its policy on high school graduation requirements that includes a description of how the requirements address KRS 158.6451(1)(b) and 703 KAR 4:060.

At the school-level, there must be a plan to show how district policy will be implemented. Schools must document the evidence needed in their PBC plan. The content for the credit must be taught by a teacher certified in the corresponding content area.

All schools must be able to offer evidence that students met all content standards.

## Section 8: District-Awarded Diploma

**Q: Must the district award a student’s diploma once all state and local requirements for graduation have been met?**

A. 704 KAR 3:305(8)(1) states that “ [a] student who satisfactorily completes the requirements of this administrative regulation and additional requirements as may be imposed by a local board of education... shall be awarded a graduation diploma.”

Therefore, the district must award a student’s diploma once all state and local high school graduation requirements have been met.

**Q. Can the local school district require students to achieve a minimum score on a statewide assessment prior to awarding the diploma?**

A. While the local district does have the authority to impose additional graduation requirements above and beyond those provided in 704 KAR 3:305, Section 8(2) does not allow the achievement of a minimum score on a statewide assessment be one of those requirements.

**Q: Do local school districts have the authority to honor a student’s request to delay receipt of their diploma despite meeting all state and local requirements for graduation?**

A. While these situations are rare, local districts have the authority to grant this request. This may be an appropriate and worthwhile consideration in instances where a student has met all graduation requirements in December, for example, but would like to complete the remainder of the academic year with their cohort.

**Q: When is the last day a student can be reported as earning a diploma with their graduating class?**

A: For students who are not enrolled in summer school, June 30 is the target date for reporting the graduation date. July 31 is the absolute last day to report summer graduates in order for the students to receive credit and graduate with their class.

## Section 9: Special Recognition

**Q: What are the limitations for recognizing students?**

A: There are no limitations. Students benefit from special recognition as a result of their diverse accomplishments. However, the decision to award special recognition is at the discretion of the local district.

## Section 10: Students with Disabilities

### **Q: What is an IEP?**

A: An Individual Education Program or “IEP” is a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with 707 KAR 1:002 and 707 KAR 1:320.

### **Q: Are students with disabilities required to meet the minimum high school graduation requirements?**

A: Yes. Any student earning a regular diploma must meet the minimum high school graduation requirements.

Students eligible to receive special education services under the IDEA are required to meet the graduation requirements prescribed by 704 KAR 3:305. However, students with disabilities are entitled to the services and supports set in their Individual Education Programs as required under the IDEA.

### **Q: How does the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) ensure that graduation requirements are being met?**

A: The IEP is developed by the ARC. The ARC must review a student’s IEP and progress at least once a year but may meet as often as necessary. The ARC determines how to best meet the established goals of the IEP and graduation requirements.

### **Q: How does the requirement for transition services in the ILP correspond to the requirement for transition services in the IEP?**

A: Nothing in the graduation requirements displaces the rights of a student with an IEP, and this includes transition services outlined in 707 KAR 1:320.

While every student must have an ILP that addresses transition requirements, students with IEPs must also have a statement of the transition service needs that includes postsecondary goals based on age- appropriate transition assessments related to education, employment, training and independent living skills. The statement of transition services requirement of the IEP has not changed. The IEP transition services provisions take precedence over the ILP transition requirements for the student.

### **Q: Do students with disabilities have to pass the civics exam in order to graduate?**

A: Yes. KRS 158.141 requires all students seeking to earn a diploma to pass the civics exam. Local boards must prepare and approve a test. Students may take the test as many times as necessary and must answer at least 60% of the questions correctly. If a student passed a similar test within the previous five years, the student does not have to take the civics test. Appropriate accommodations for testing as established by a student's IEP are required by the IDEA and defined in KRS 158.281 or by a Section 504 Plan as defined in KRS 156.027.

### **Q: Do students with disabilities have to complete a course or program in financial literacy in order to graduate?**

A: Yes. KRS 158.1411 requires that, beginning with the entering grade 9 class of the 2020-2021 school year, successful completion of one or more courses or programs that meet the *KAS in Career Studies and Financial Literacy* is a graduation requirement for all students.

**Q: Are students with disabilities required to be assessed through the state assessment?**

A: Yes. Federal regulation 34 CFR § 200.6, “Inclusion of all Students,” requires that a student with a disability working toward a diploma must be assessed with an assessment aligned with the KASs for the grade in which the student is enrolled. As part of Kentucky’s assessment system, districts and schools must provide appropriate accommodations for each student with a disability; for example, the ability to use assistive technology consistent with nationally recognized accessibility standards necessary to measure the academic achievement of the student.

**Q: Do the minimum graduation requirements apply to those students participating in the Alternate Assessment?**

A: No. KRS 156.160(1)(e) governs the eligibility for an alternative high school diploma for students with disabilities whose IEP indicates that, in accordance with 20 U.S.C. sec. 1414(d)(1)(A):

- The student cannot participate in the regular statewide assessment; and
- An appropriate alternate assessment has been selected for the student based upon a modified curriculum and an individualized course of study.

KRS 158.140 governs the classifications and awarding of diplomas. Upon successful completion of all state and local board requirements, the student shall receive:

- (b) A diploma indicating graduation from high school; or
- (c) An alternative high school diploma if the student has a disability and has completed modified curriculum and an individualized course of study pursuant to requirements established by the KBE in accordance with KRS 156.160.

Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (i.e., less than 1 percent of the total student population statewide), for whom traditional assessments would be an inappropriate measure of progress, may take Kentucky’s AA- AAAS. The AA-AAAS was developed to provide schools and programs with a valid and reliable means of assessing the instruction provided. Kentucky’s AA-AAAS continues to meet federal requirements outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The act requires that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may take an AA-AAAS and limits the number of students that a state may assess with an AA-AAAS to no more than 1 percent of all students in the grades assessed in a state. (U.S. Department of Education Policy Memo to States, Aug. 27, 2018). Whether a student should participate in the AA-AAAS is a decision made by the student’s ARC.

Only students completing the corresponding modified curriculum and individualized course of study, aligned to the KAS and participating in the AA-AAAS, are eligible to earn an alternative high school diploma.



## Section 11: Continuity of Services Plan

### **Q: What is a continuity of services plan?**

A: Continuity of services plan outlines the ways in which a student will receive access to essential services that will **end if the student graduates early**.

### **Q: Do all students need a continuity of services plan?**

A: No. If a student wishes to graduate early, the school district must ensure the creation of a continuity of services plan for **any student identified as a homeless child pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 11434, a migratory child pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 6399, or youth engaged in foster care pursuant to KRS 620.020(5)**.

The completion of a transition plan for children aging out of foster care, as described by 42 U.S.C. 675(5)(H), shall meet the requirements outlined in this section.

### **Q. What is required of schools and districts in implementing a continuity of services plan?**

A. The local school district is required to engage in meaningful consultation with a school-based mental health services provider, as defined by KRS 158.4416, on the creation of a continuity of services plan prior to graduation.