Early Graduation End-of-Course Exams Guidance 2020-2021

Ordering, Shipping and Scoring Information for End-of-Course (EOC) Exams

The Early Graduation Pathway

Early Graduation is a deliberate pathway for students in grades 9 through 11 who wish to graduate in three years or less, receive a diploma from the district, and be eligible for acceptance into Kentucky public universities and nonprofit independent colleges and universities. The 2020-2021 pathway provides a financial scholarship, known as the Early Graduation Certificate, provided by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, to support this action. There difference between a student who is in the early graduate pathway and one who graduates early. Although the wording is similar, the early graduation pathway is tied to an early graduation certificate scholarship and benchmarks; whereas, graduating early is tied to the completion of all minimum high school graduation requirements in less than four years. Even if a student is not part of the early graduation pathway, the decision for the student to graduate should be made in conjunction with the school administration and central office.

The Early Graduation Program will stay in effect. SB158 establishes the Early Graduation Program is a deliberate pathway for students in grades 9-11 who wish to move on when ready, receive a diploma from the district, and be eligible for acceptance into Kentucky public universities, nonprofit colleges, independent colleges and universities. The pathway provides a financial scholarship, known as the Early Graduation Certificate, to support this action.

Students participating in the pathway must meet the requirements set forth by [704 KAR 3:305](), including those listed below.

- Students must notify the school principal within the first 30 school days of the school year in which they intend to graduate and must enter the Early Graduation Pathway prior to October 1 of the year in which they intend to graduate early.
- Students must graduate in three years or less. Students exceeding three years do not qualify for the incentives identified with the Early Graduation Pathway.
- Students must take and achieve college admissions assessment benchmarks as designated by the [Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education]() (CPE).
- Students must take and score proficient on four End-of-Course (EOC) assessments (Algebra II, Biology, English II and U.S. History).

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) will provide EOC assessments for students participating in the Early Graduation pathway during the 2020-2021 school year.

The following are the test window dates:

	Test Date
Test Window 1	**November 30 – December11, 2020**
Test Window 2	**February 22-March 5, 2021**
Test Window 3	**April 19-30, 2021**

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End-of-Course Assessments Ordering Information

Step 1:

Students must submit a *Letter of Intent* and be approved for the Early Graduation Pathway by **October 1** of the year in which they intend to graduate early.

The student is then designated in Infinite Campus (IC) as an early graduate using the Early Graduation flag, and a signed *Letter of Intent* is placed in the student's cumulative folder.

Once all students are flagged appropriately in IC, the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) or designee will be able to run an *Early Graduation* Order Report by school in IC.

In IC, DACs will go to:

      a. Adhoc reporting>Data Export>State Published filter
      b. Select the State Published *Early Graduate EOC Order Report* filter
      c. Select Delimited Values (CSV)
      d. Click Export

The order report will display with the following fields: Student SSID, District Name, and Address and School Name.

Student SSID	District	District Address	City	State	Zip Code	School
1234567890	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School
2345678901	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School
3456789012	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School
4567890123	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School
5678901234	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School
6789012345	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School

DACs will need to add five column headings: Algebra II EOC, Biology EOC, English II EOC, U.S. History EOC and Test Window. (Please do not abbreviate or change the column heading titles.)

Student SSID	District	District Address	City	State	Zip Code	School	Algebra II EOC	Biology EOC	English II EOC	US History EOC	Test Window
1234567890	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School					
2345678901	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School					
3456789012	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School					
4567890123	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School					
5678901234	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School					
6789012345	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School					

Step 2:

The DAC or designee will ensure the information listed on the order report is correct for each student.

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If a student's name does not appear on the *Early Graduation* Order Report but has been approved for the Early Graduation Pathway and will be testing during the 2020-2021 school year, please add the student's SSID and tests needed. **When a student's name does not appear, please ensure that the student is flagged correctly in IC. Students must be flagged as Early Graduate Students in IC to receive assessments.** If a student is not testing during the 2020-2021 school year, that student may be deleted from the order report. DACs should monitor EOC orders to ensure ordering aligns with student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

The DAC or designee will manually enter the test order for the 2020-2021 school year to include indicating the appropriate test name and test date for each student. As a reminder, the EOC assessments are in the following courses: Algebra II, Biology, English II and U.S. History.

An "X" should be marked under the needed EOC assessment for each student and an assessment window date stated. If a student will be taking assessments in more than one test window, the DAC or DAC designee will need to add additional rows for the student to ensure the correct tests are ordered for the appropriate testing window.

Student SSID	District	District Address	City	State	Zip Code	School	Algebra II EOC	Biology EOC	English II EOC	US History EOC	Test Window	
1234567890	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School	X		X		1	Student taking 2 tests in one window
2345678901	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School			X		1	
3456789012	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School	X				2	
4567890123	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School		X			3	
5678901234	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School		X			2	
6789012345	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School				X	1	Student taking 2 tests in two
6789012345	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School	X				2	different testing windows

All early graduates must be listed on the order report in order to receive assessment materials for the 2020-2021 school year. The spreadsheet will serve as the order for EOC materials.

Student SSID	District	District Address	City	State	Zip Code	School	Algebra II EOC	Biology EOC	English II EOC	US History EOC	Test Window
1234567890	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School	x		x		1
2345678901	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School				x	1
3456789012	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School	x				2
4567890123	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School		x			3
5678901234	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School		x			2
6789012345	Edmonson County	100 Wildcat Way	Brownsville	KY	42210	Edmonson County High School				x	1

Step 3:

The DAC or designee will return the order report via email to the Office of Assessment and Accountability (OAA) by **November 13**. The DAC should include the name of the DAC and the BAC(s) in the body of the email.

All order reports should be emailed to the attention of: **Shara Savage**, Early Graduation EOC Assessment Contact.

End-of-Course Assessments Security Measures

From receipt to return of testing materials, all materials must be kept secure. When materials are not in use, the materials must be in locked storage.
- Anyone with the potential to be involved in the handling and administering of the assessments is required to be trained in the Administration Code. Those who will be

providing accommodations must also be trained in the Inclusion of Special Populations regulation prior to administering the tests.

- No school personnel may review, edit or share, either verbally or nonverbally, the content of tests.
- Students may not be given access to test booklets by any school personnel prior to testing.
- School personnel may not reproduce any portion of the test booklets or answer documents, except for transcription of responses by test administrators when materials are damaged (e.g., hazardous materials caused by nosebleed, torn pages, food contamination).
- Reproductions are limited to hand transcription. School personnel may NOT keep any hand-copied portions of the test used for transcription. School personnel may NOT audiotape, videotape, photograph or photocopy materials.
- School personnel may NOT retain, discard, recycle, remove or destroy test booklets without specific instruction from the DAC, BAC and/or KDE.

End-of-Course Assessments Receipt and Return of Materials

Materials for each test window will be shipped to the DAC within ten days prior to the opening of the testing windows selected. Please inventory materials within 48 hours they are received to be sure that you have the correct test booklets and answer documents requested for each student. The shipment includes a Teacher Manual. The DAC or designee is to return the testing materials on or before the established return deadline. All secure test materials, which include assessment booklets and answer sheets, must be returned to KDE.

Districts/schools are responsible for paying the return postage. Districts/schools can choose their method of return shipping, but **the shipping provider must enable tracking and provide a tracking number**. Districts are encouraged to return materials as soon as students are finished testing to ensure timely scoring.

Return Shipping Deadlines

	Test Date	Return Shipping Deadline
Test Window 1	November 30 – December11, 2020	December 17, 2020
Test Window 2	February 22-March 5, 2021	March 11, 2021
Test Window 3	April 19-30, 2021	May 5, 2021

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Return Shipping Address

Shara Savage
Office of Assessment and Accountability
Kentucky Department of Education
300 Sower Blvd – 5th Floor

Frankfort, KY 40601

Phone: (502) 564-4394, ext. 4715
Email: Shara Savage

End-of-Course Assessments Scoring Information

The KDE Office of Assessment and Accountability (OAA) will score assessments and return scores to DACs.
DACs will receive:
- A summary report of all tested students and their scores by content area at the completion of scoring for each testing window.
- Individual student score reports with the name of the student and the scale score listed
  - KDE will continue to use the established EOC cut scores.

The table below provides cut scores for each content area and performance level of the EOC assessments. The score reports will be provided via the Secure Web Application.

	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient	Distinguished	CPE-linked College Readiness Benchmark
	125-142	143-147	148-152	153-175	148
	125-145	146-153	154-160	161-175	154
	125-151	152-153	154-161	162-175	154
	125-143	144-146	147-153	154-175	147

End-of-Course Assessments COVID-19 Guidance

Safety expectations were written with input from the Education Continuation Task Force as well as the Governor's Office, Department for Public Health, Kentucky Department of Education, the Cabinet of Education and Workforce Development and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Throughout this process, stakeholders from all areas of education were engaged to provide input and expertise. KDE strongly recommend all schools and districts to adhere to all school related guidance, including during testing sessions.

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COVID-19 is transmitted mostly through direct contact with respiratory droplets from an infected individual. The infected individual may have no symptoms or have symptoms of a fever (greater than 100.4), a cough, gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting), a new rash or new loss of sense of taste/smell. These symptoms are not unlike other infectious viruses, yet it is difficult without testing to develop a plan that is able to meet all circumstances. The goal of the Kentucky Department for Public Health is to establish safety expectations based upon the core measures to mitigate transmission.

Staff should follow local and state safety expectations and best practice guidelines when administering the ACT to students.

These include:

- Social Distancing

- Screening, School Exclusion and Contact Tracing

- Personal Protective Equipment, including Cloth Face Masks

- Sanitation, Environmental and Industrial Factors

- Increase space between students by rearranging seating to maximize space between students to be 6 feet or greater.

- If the physical space in the school does not allow for spacing students' desks 6 feet apart, space desks as far away as possible and require masks at all times in that classroom for students and staff. All desks should be arranged so students' seats face the same direction.

- Model creating space between students/staff and avoid unnecessary contact or movement within the personal space of 6 feet.

- Place markings on floor as a reminder of areas that are 6 feet apart for instruction.

- Reduce class sizes to allow for smaller cohorts of students to decrease potential need for contact tracing.

"Because of concern that infectious viral particles can land on surfaces with coughing, sneezing, talking and laughing, safety expectations for schools during this public health emergency should include safety expectations implemented by schools as determined by the Kentucky Department for Public Health.

- Encourage proper hand and respiratory hygiene practices (covering coughs and sneezes).

- Daily cleaning and disinfection of all school facilities.

- Make hand cleaning supplies readily available. All restrooms should be monitored often for adequate hand soap and towels or functioning hand drying devices.

- Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be used when soap and water are not readily available.

- Follow normal preventative actions while at home and school, including cleaning hands and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

- Daily cleaning and disinfection of classrooms, gymnasiums, restrooms, locker rooms, cafeteria seating and other facilities is critical to preventing the spread of all illness, including COVID-19 pandemic and seasonal influenza. Special attention should be given to high touch areas, such as water fountains, doorknobs, light switches, desks, computers, phones, toilets, faucets, sinks, handrails, etc. It is recommended that high touch surfaces be cleaned and disinfected frequently."

From: *Team Kentucky Guidance on Safety Expectations and Best Practices for Kentucky Schools, p. 17-18*

Staff and students participating in the EOC assessments should abide by social distancing and mask protocols. Cleaning and disinfection procedures would also apply to testing materials (e.g., calculators) and desks, tables and chairs after each student use.

For more information on KDE COVID-19 guidance, please view the document COVID-19 Considerations for Reopening Schools.

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General Questions

1. **If students are participating fully or partially in Non-Traditional Instruction (NTI) during the EOC testing windows for regular and accommodated students, may students enter the school building in-person to take the ACT?**
   The decision to bring students into the building for administration of the EOC assessments should be made in conjunction with the high school administration, central office staff, and local health department. These decisions should be made in accordance with local health department and state government guidelines at the time of testing. Safety expectations provided in the document, COVID-19 Considerations for Reopening Schools should be followed during administration.

2. **How will schools/districts notify KDE of students needing EOC assessment materials?**
   DACs will run a district wide *Early Graduation* Order Report **after October 1** that lists all students pursing the Early Graduation pathway. Per 704 KAR 3:305, these students must be flagged in IC prior to October 1 of the year in which they intend to graduate early. DACs or their designees will manually enter the test name and test dates for each student. The order report should be emailed to Shara Savage, Office of Assessment and Accountability, prior to **November 13**.

3. **Can students outside the Early Graduation pathway take the EOC assessments provided by KDE?**
   No; only students designated as pursuing the Early Graduation pathway and flagged correctly in IC are permitted to take the EOC assessments provided by KDE during the 2020-2021 school year.

4. **What are the dates of the testing windows and return shipping deadlines?**
   - Test Window 1: November 30 – December11, 2020; Return shipping deadline December 17, 2020
   - Test Window 2: February 22-March 5, 2021; Return shipping deadline March 11, 2021
   - Test Window 3: April 19-30, 2021; Return shipping deadline May 5, 2021

5. **Can students test outside of the designated testing windows?**
   No; students may only test within the designated testing windows. This is to ensure KDE's secure test policy is observed to maintain the integrity and validity of scores. Please contact Shara Savage should any questions arise for testing students during a specific test window.

6. **Who will receive the secure testing materials for my district?**
   All test materials will be shipped directly to the DAC.

7. **How far in advance of the testing window will my district receive the assessment materials?**
   All test materials will be shipped within ten (10) days prior to the opening day of the testing window.

8. **Can the test materials be copied for students?**
   No; school personnel may not reproduce any portion of the test booklets or answer documents, except for transcription of responses by test administrators when materials are damaged (e.g., hazardous materials caused by nosebleed, torn pages, food contamination). Please refer to Administration Code Training 703 KAR 5:080.
   If extra materials are needed, please contact Shara Savage.

9. **Can schools provide accommodations?**
   Yes; students approved for accommodations under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan have access to reader (person), scribe (person), calculator, extended time, paraphrasing, reinforcement for behavior modifications and interpreter for students with deafness or hearing impairment.

10. **Do the assessment materials need to be secured?**
    Yes; materials must be stored in a secure area when not in use for testing. Storage locations within classrooms must be secured with double locks.
    Caution: Test questions are copyrighted, secure materials and may not be duplicated in any way.

11. **Will KDE provide a calculator policy?**
    Yes; in order to create a test administration that provides every student with a fair and equitable assessment opportunity, please follow KDE calculator policy within the test administration manual. Following this policy will ensure that all students have a measure of their academic achievement that is comparable to all students across the state.

12. **Will KDE provide postage-paid return envelopes for returning materials?**
    No; districts/schools are responsible for paying the return postage. Districts can choose their method of return shipping, *but the shipping provider must enable tracking and provide a tracking number*. Districts are encouraged to return materials as soon as students are finished testing.

13. **Can my district/school keep a copy of the assessment?**
    No; test booklets and answer documents are secure items and cannot be copied. They must be returned to KDE.

14. **How will scores be communicated to districts/schools?**

KDE will provide a summary report to the DAC listing student names and scale scores at the conclusion of the testing window via the Secure Web Application. KDE will also provide individual student score reports in a limited format, with only basic demographic information and scale score(s) listed. The limited format will allow for Early Graduation determinations to be made.

15. **What type of scores will be reported to districts/schools? Raw scores or scale scores?**
    The DAC will receive scale scores for students and disseminate the information to school staff.

16. **Will the scores arrive in time to prepare for May graduation ceremonies?**
    KDE will do everything possible to ensure scores are received in an adequate amount of time to prepare for graduation ceremonies. However, it is to the district's/student's advantage to test early within the testing window and to return materials as soon as possible.

17. **How do I receive previous EOC scores for an Early Graduate student who has transferred to my district if I don't see them in IC?**
    All questions pertaining to the Early Graduation EOC assessment score should be directed to:
    Email: Shara Savage

18. **Who will communicate the results of EOC assessments to students?**
    It will be the responsibility of the school personnel responsible for Early Graduation opportunities to share the results of EOC assessments and to either further graduation plans or to create an alternate path for a student who does not meet benchmark.

19. **Can students retest in areas where they failed to demonstrate proficiency?**
    Yes; in some circumstances. (See Appendix A/Retake Policy)
    Districts may determine that an extenuating circumstance prohibited an otherwise exceptional student from obtaining benchmarks. That student may appeal to the district superintendent to retake an EOC assessment. The DAC should keep the rationale for the retake on file. If the appeal is approved, the student may retake the test. Orders for retakes from the 2019-2020 school year should be included in your order report that will be submitted to KDE by **November 13**. For students that are approved for retakes during the 2020-2021 school year, a special order should be arranged with **Shara Savage.**

20. **Who should be contacted for questions pertaining to the Early Graduation Pathway?**
    All questions pertaining to the Early Graduation Pathway should be directed to:
    Email: Damien Sweeney, Ed.D

21. **Who should be contacted for questions pertaining to the EOC assessments being offered to students pursuing the Early Graduation pathway?**
    All questions pertaining to the Early Graduation EOC assessments should be directed to:
    Email: [Shara Savage](#)

22. **What if students don't meet proficiency on the EOCs and/or don't reach the benchmarks on the college admissions assessment designated by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE)?**
    Students may still graduate prior to the end of their fourth year in high school if the district has a policy on file allowing this and if the student meets all minimum high school graduation requirements according to state and district policy.

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Office Support Contacts:

Damien Sweeney, Ed.D
Early Graduation Pathway Contact
Program Coordinator for Comprehensive School Counseling

Office of Career and Technical Education and Student Transition

Kentucky Department of Education

Phone: 502-892-6639, ext. 4545

Email: Damien Sweeney, Ed.D

Rebecca Gilpatrick
Director of Student Aid
Kentucky Higher Education Association Authority
Phone: (502) 696-7394

Email: Rebecca Gilpatrick

Shara Savage
Early Graduation End-of-Course Assessment Contact
Office of Assessment and Accountability
Kentucky Department of Education
Phone: (502) 564-4394, ext. 4715
Email: Shara Savage

QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

	Test Date	Return Shipping Deadline
Test Window 1	**November 30 – December11, 2020**	**December 17, 2020**
Test Window 2	**February 22-March 5, 2021**	**March 11, 2021**
Test Window 3	**April 19-30, 2021**	**May 5, 2021**

Appendix A - Retake Policy

As part of the protocol for this program, Early Graduate students who do not meet a benchmark due to an extenuating circumstance have been able to appeal to their superintendent to retake an assessment. The Office of Assessment and Accountability (OAA) will continue to provide this option under restricted circumstances.

As a reminder, the option to appeal to retake an EOC assessment is <u>not simply to keep attempting to receive a higher score to meet a benchmark in order to fulfill Early Graduation requirements</u>. This is a strong indicator that the student is not ready for college-level work if the student is unable to reach proficiency in either courses or assessments.

The intent of the appeal opportunity is to provide a recourse for those <u>otherwise exceptional students who experienced an extenuating circumstance</u> during testing that could have contributed to their less than typical performance. Examples could include death in the family, parent in a car accident, medical trauma, etc.

Students who have an approved Early Graduation Intent Form and are flagged in Infinite Campus (IC) may appeal to retake the EOC assessment once in some circumstances. Districts may determine that an extraordinary circumstance prohibited an otherwise exceptional student from obtaining benchmarks. Such a student may appeal to retake the EOC assessment on the grounds of the extenuating circumstances following the procedure below. The DAC should keep the documentation for the retake on file. **OAA may ask to review it.**

Procedure to request a retake of an End-of-Course assessment:

1. Complete the *Application to Request a Retake of an End-of-Course Assessment*.
2. Write a letter to the school principal or designee explaining the reasons for appealing to retake the EOC assessment.
3. Deliver the application and appeal letter to the school principal or designee within five days of receiving an EOC score that is below the benchmark.
4. If your appeal is approved by the school administrator, the letter and application will be delivered to the superintendent or designee. If the superintendent approves the EOC retake, the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) may request the assessment for the next test window.
5. If your appeal is denied by the school administrator or superintendent, the application process is terminated.

Deadline

Due to the fact that there will be no remaining test window after Test Window 3 and because of the amount of turnaround time needed to ship materials, have them returned, score assessments, and prepare score reports, OAA must set a deadline for students requesting a retake. OAA will not be able to consider retake requests submitted after **May 15, 2021**.

Application to Request a Retake of an End-of-Course Assessment

District Name _____ Date _____

District Address _____

Student Name _____

Parent Name _____

Address _____

City_____State_____Zip_____

EOC Scores   **College Admissions Assessment Scores**

Algebra II (148 or above)   _____   English (18)   _____

English II (154 or above)   _____   Mathematics (19)   _____

Biology (154 or above)   _____   Reading (20)   _____

U.S. History (147 or above)_____

_____Student Signature

_____Parent/Guardian Signature

_____Principal/Designee Signature

_____Superintendent/Designee Signature

Retake Application   **APPROVED** ☐   **DENIED** ☐

Attach rationale for decision