



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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EDUCATION COMMISSIONER TO ANNOUNCE CHANGES TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT PROPOSAL

(LEXINGTON, Ky.) – In a news conference at Frederick Douglass High School in Lexington today, Kentucky Education Commissioner Wayne Lewis announced proposed revisions to 704 KAR 3:305, minimum high school graduation requirements, in response to input received from educators and other education stakeholders. Commissioner Lewis will present the revised proposal to the Kentucky Board of Education at its meeting Dec. 5 at the Kentucky Department of Education in Frankfort.

“We received constructive feedback from stakeholders across the state and have consequently made revisions to the proposal that we hope will result in a high school diploma that meets the needs of all Kentucky students and the future workforce of the Commonwealth,” said Lewis.

The revised proposal hosts two main changes, both related to providing more flexibility to students on their path to college or a career.

The proposed changes include the introduction of Graduation Prerequisites. Under the revised statute, students may now demonstrate basic competency in reading and math in one of three ways:

1. The student’s tenth grade state-required assessments meeting the minimum criteria in reading and mathematics;
 - a. The minimum criteria shall include earning a KDE-approved scale score in the apprentice student performance level of the state-required assessments approved by the Kentucky Board of Education as passing.
 - b. Students who do not meet the minimum criteria on one or both assessments may retake the reading and/or mathematics assessments twice annually in the eleventh and twelfth grades of high school enrollment.
 - c. The student’s first completion of the assessments in grade ten shall contribute to the school’s accountability rating; or
2. The student’s eighth grade state-required assessment rating of proficient or higher for reading or mathematics or both reading and mathematics, if applicable; or
3. A student collection of evidence to include the following:

- The student's ILP that includes student transcript;
- If applicable, the student's IEP, that includes evidence that the student has received specially designed instruction and related services in reading and mathematics;
- Performance on the required state assessments;
- Appropriate interventions, targeted to the student's needs, provided to the student to ensure support was provided toward meeting the requirements outlined in this administrative regulation;
- Student work demonstrating the students' competency in reading and/or mathematics, as applicable; and
- The student's post-graduation plans.

The process shall require the principal to submit the collection of student evidence to the superintendent or designee for review and approval, or for public charter schools principals to submit the collection of student evidence to the Commissioner of Education or designee.

The "Transition Readiness" component has been removed in an effort to promote equity among districts and students. Resources can vary greatly between districts, and some stakeholders believed Transition Readiness would have put an undue burden on smaller or financially strapped districts by having to provide additional courses to students. Under the revised proposal, students may now choose one of seven Graduation Qualifiers:

1. Precollege curriculum as established by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020; or
2. Benchmark score in one section of a college admissions or placement examination as established by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020; or
3. Three postsecondary credit hours or more of a Kentucky Department of Education approved dual credit course with a grade of C or higher; or
4. One course and corresponding assessment meeting the following criteria:
 - (a) Advanced placement (AP) with a score of three or higher; or
 - (b) Cambridge Advanced International (CAI) with a score at or above benchmark; or
 - (c) International baccalaureate (IB) with a score of five or higher; or
5. Industry certification as approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board on an annual basis; or
6. Four credits from valid courses within a single KDE-approved career pathway; or
7. A Kentucky Department of Education approved process to verify 500 hours of exceptional work experience, or alternative requirements as prescribed in a student's IEP.

The Department believes these qualifiers are more representative of the varying availability of courses students currently have access to, thus creating more equitable requirements.

The news conference was live streamed via the [Kentucky Department of Education Facebook page](#) and can be viewed there.

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