

KENTUCKY'S NEW HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS



On April 5, 2019, Kentucky's new minimum high school graduation requirements became law. The changes add "graduation prerequisites" and "graduation qualifiers," explained below, to ensure students have basic math and reading skills, as well as experiences that can help them be prepared to enter college or the workforce. Here's what the changes mean for Kentucky students:

2019-2020 HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN

The new graduation requirements give students the chance to take more classes geared toward their plans after graduation. Freshmen must complete the following 22 personalized credits before graduation.

- English I and II AND 2 additional English Language Arts credits aligned with the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- Algebra I and Geometry AND two additional Mathematics credits aligned with the student's ILP
- 3 credits Social Studies (at least 1 aligned with the student's ILP)
- 3 credits Science (at least 1 aligned with the student's ILP)
- 1/2 credit Health
- 1/2 credit Physical Education
- 1 credit Visual and Performing Arts
- 6 additional credits aligned with the student's ILP

IN ADDITION, students must complete one of eight graduation qualifiers. These qualifiers help ensure graduates are prepared for what comes after high school. Students will be required to do ONE of the following:

- Complete the precollege curriculum as established by the Council on Postsecondary Education; OR
- Meet the benchmark score in one section (such as English, Reading, Math or Science) of a college admissions test (such as ACT or SAT) or placement exam as established by the Council on Postsecondary Education; OR
- Earn three postsecondary credit hours or more of a Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)-approved dual credit class with a grade of C or higher; OR
- Complete one class and corresponding test meeting the following criteria:
 - Advanced Placement (AP) with a score of three or higher; or
 - Cambridge Advanced International (CAI) with a score at or above benchmark; or
 - International Baccalaureate (IB) with a score of five or higher; OR
- Earn an industry certification as approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board; OR
- Earn four credits from classes within a single KDE-approved career pathway; OR
- Complete two years of a KDE-approved or Kentucky Labor Cabinet-approved pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship; OR
- Complete a KDE-approved process to verify 500 hours of exceptional work experience or alternative requirements as outlined in a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

2020-2021 HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN

Students entering high school in the fall of 2020 and beyond also will have to meet a graduation prerequisite. The graduation prerequisite require students to demonstrate basic competency in reading and math in one of three ways before graduation:

- Score at least at the Apprentice level in reading and mathematics on the 10th-grade state-required assessments;
 - Students who do not meet the minimum score on one or both assessments may retake the reading and/or mathematics assessments twice each year in the 11th and 12th grades of high school.; OR
- Score at least Proficient on the 8th-grade state-required assessment for reading and/or mathematics; OR
- Complete a collection of evidence to include the following:
 - The student's ILP, including a student transcript;
 - If applicable, the student's IEP, including evidence that the student has received specially designed instruction and related services in reading and mathematics;
 - Student performance on the required state assessments;
 - Appropriate interventions, targeted to the student's needs, to ensure support was provided to the student;
 - Student work demonstrating the students' competency in reading and/or mathematics, as applicable; and
 - The student's post-high school plans.

The process shall require the principal to submit the collection of student evidence to the superintendent or his or her designee for review and approval.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Students also are required to pass a 100-question civics exam, receive instruction in financial literacy and demonstrate competency in essential skills and technology.

NEXT STEPS

Local school boards may consider adding to these minimum requirements to best meet the needs of their students.