



## Graduation FAQs for 2015-2016

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In June 2014, the Ohio General Assembly created new graduation requirements for students entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2014-2015 school year. The General Assembly also charged the State Board of Education and Ohio Department of Education staff with creating the many rules and policy decisions needed to guide local implementation. Since then, staff members and the board's Graduation Requirements Committee have worked urgently to craft and adopt these many rules and policies. The following FAQs address the implementation details that the State Board has finalized details.

Ohio's Options for a High School Diploma take effect with the class of 2018. These are students who are entering ninth grade for the first time in the 2014-2015 school year.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Ohio is not administering an algebra II end-of-course test. So, is algebra II or its equivalent still a required course for graduation? (#FAQ2191)

### **END-OF-COURSE TESTS**

1. What are the requirements for students to retake the state end-of-course tests given in 2014-2015? (#FAQ2192)
2. How do I know if a student needs to take a science end-of-course test this year and which science test should the student take? (#FAQ2193)
3. A district identifies a student as accelerated resulting in the student not taking a course that has a required end-of-course test. Is the student still required to take the end-of-course test? (#FAQ2194)
4. May a state end-of-course test be used wholly or in part to satisfy testing out of a course? (#FAQ2196)
5. Some students might take two courses in the same year. For example, an eighth-grader might take math and algebra I or eighth-grade science and biology. Must those students take both tests associated with the grade/course? (#FAQ2197)
6. Do students get to choose whether they take the algebra I or integrated math end-of-course test? (#FAQ2198)
7. If a student earned transcribed credit for a course prior to the test being available, does the student have to take the end-of-course test now? (#FAQ2199)

8. When were the end-of-course tests given for the first time for each of the required courses? (#FAQ2200)
9. What substitute tests are approved for students during the 2015-2016 school year? (#FAQ2201)
10. Substitute tests don't get results until after graduation, so how do we ensure a fair conversion for college-earned grades? (#FAQ2202)

#### **OPTION - GRADUATION POINTS**

1. Who keeps track of all the graduation points students are acquiring? (#FAQ2203)

#### **OPTION - COLLEGE READINESS**

1. Do scores in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and College Credit Plus have to have the same weights in student GPAs? (#FAQ2204)
2. Does the financial literacy requirement for graduation still apply to students who take courses through College Credit Plus? (#FAQ2205)
3. Can College Credit Plus courses in American history, American government and physical science/biology meet the graduation requirements? (#FAQ2206)
4. How many graduation points does a student receive when taking College Credit Plus courses that are substitutes for the American history, American government, biology or physical science (class of 2018 only) end-of-course tests? (#FAQ2207)

#### **OPTION - WORK READINESS AND CREDENTIALS**

1. Not all of the published industry-recognized skills are attainable or possible to be performed by high school students. Why? (#FAQ2208)
2. How was the list built? (#FAQ2209)
3. How do the new graduation options work for dropout recovery or credit recovery schools? (#FAQ2210)

#### **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. How do the new graduation options work for dropout recovery or credit recovery schools? (#FAQ2211)
2. Are there fields in student software systems to fill in and/or track the graduation requirements? (#FAQ2212)
3. Will remediation guidelines be similar to those of the Ohio Graduation Tests? (#FAQ2213)
4. How do the new graduation testing requirements impact students with disabilities? (#FAQ2214)
5. What are the graduation requirements for students who transfer into the district after completing some or all of the courses with tests? (#FAQ2215)

## Course Requirements

### **1. Ohio is not administering an algebra II end-of-course test. So, is algebra II or its equivalent still a required course for graduation?**

Yes, a credit in algebra II or its equivalent is required to meet math curriculum units for high school graduation. There is no end-of-course test for algebra II or its equivalent.

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## End-of-Course Tests

### **1. What are the requirements for students to retake the state end-of-course tests given in 2014-2015?**

Students are allowed to retake the tests at a future date. If a student who had not previously scored proficient on the exam retakes it, the new score will count on the school's Indicators Met measure on the report card. In this situation, the score would count if it was higher or lower than the original score. Still, students may always count their highest scores toward graduation points.

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### **2. How do I know if a student needs to take a science end-of-course test this year and which science test should the student take?**

The department has completed and posted a handout

([http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Testing/Science-and-Social-](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Testing/Science-and-Social-Studies/ScienceTestHandout.pdf.aspx)

[Studies/ScienceTestHandout.pdf.aspx](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Testing/Science-and-Social-Studies/ScienceTestHandout.pdf.aspx)) explaining which state tests in science students in grades 6-12 should take, depending upon which science courses they have enrolled in.

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### **3. A district identifies a student as accelerated resulting in the student not taking a course that has a required end-of-course test. Is the student still required to take the end-of-course test?**

Students should take the end-of-course tests soon after the school certifies mastery in the content. This is normally after the corresponding course. However, in the case of an accelerated student, the department suggests that the district administers the test during the next testing window after the student is identified as accelerated. Here (<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Gifted-Education/Resources-for-Parents/Academic-Acceleration-for-Advanced-Learners>) is more information on acceleration.

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**4. May a state end-of-course test be used wholly or in part to satisfy testing out of a course?**

Yes, the district may choose to use the results of the end-of-course test to entirely satisfy or as a part of the criteria for testing-out of a course.

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**5. Some students might take two courses in the same year. For example, an eighth-grader might take math and algebra I or eighth-grade science and biology. Must those students take both tests associated with the grade/course?**

The student would take the high school end-of-course test and may not take the eighth-grade level test. If a student is taking two high school courses in the same content area, then the school is to administer end-of-course tests in both courses.

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**6. Do students get to choose whether they take the algebra I or integrated math end-of-course test?**

The content of the course determines the test. Those students who are taking a course sequence that aligns with integrated math should take the integrated math end-of-course test. Districts can use this document ([/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-Graduation-Requirements/Latest-Updates-on-Graduation-Requirements/Graduation-FAQs-for-2015\\_2016/End-of-Course-Tests/7-Do-students-get-to-choose-whether-they-take-the/High-School-End-of-Course-Exam.pdf.aspx](/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-Graduation-Requirements/Latest-Updates-on-Graduation-Requirements/Graduation-FAQs-for-2015_2016/End-of-Course-Tests/7-Do-students-get-to-choose-whether-they-take-the/High-School-End-of-Course-Exam.pdf.aspx)) to determine which state assessment should be given for a specific course

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**7. If a student earned transcribed credit for a course prior to the test being available, does the student have to take the end-of-course test now?**

No. A student who earned transcribed high school credit in any tested courses before July 1, 2015, and a test was not available, the student will receive graduation points based on his or her grade in the course.

A student who took a high school course in the middle school and did not receive transcribed high school credit is still required to take the end-of-course test. The department recommends taking the end-of-course test during one of the two 2015-2016 opportunities.

The following conversion chart should be used to determine the number of graduation points a student will receive based on the transcribed grade the student receives for high school courses prior to an end-of-course test being available.

TRANSCRIPTED HIGH SCHOOL GRADE	OHIO GRADUATION POINTS
A	5
B	4
C Earned Credit or Passed Course	3
D	2
Not applicable	1

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**8. When were the end-of-course tests given for the first time for each of the required courses?**

FALL 2014	SPRING 2015	FALL 2015
Algebra I	Physical Science	Biology
Geometry	American History	
English Language Arts I	American Government	
English Language Arts II		

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**9. What substitute tests are approved for students during the 2015-2016 school year?**

Students in a physical science, American history or American government courses may take substitute tests instead of the state's end-of-course test. Substitute tests are not allowed for the math or English tests. The State Board approved the following substitute tests:

**PHYSICAL SCIENCE**

Advanced Placement Physics 1: Algebra-based (only the class of 2018)

- Advanced Placement Physics 2: Algebra-based (only the class of 2018)
- International Baccalaureate Physics Standard Level (only the class of 2018)
- International Baccalaureate Physics Higher Level (only the class of 2018)

**BIOLOGY**

- Advanced Placement Biology
- International Baccalaureate Biology

**AMERICAN HISTORY**

- Advanced Placement United States History
- International Baccalaureate History – Route Two – including study of the history of the Americas

**AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics

International Baccalaureate course selection will be approved during the 2015-16 school year. The following conversion chart should be used to determine the number of graduation points a student will receive for his or her score on an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate substitute test.

<b>AP AND IB CROSSWALK TO GRADUATION POINTS</b>		
<b>Advanced Placement</b>	<b>International Baccalaureate</b>	<b>Graduation Points</b>
4 or 5	6 or 7	5
3	4 or 5	4
2	2 or 3	3
Not applicable	Not applicable	2
1	1	1

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**10. Substitute tests don't get results until after graduation, so how do we ensure a fair conversion for college-earned grades?**

Although it is true that some tests do not receive scores until after student graduation, most students taking Advanced Placement or college courses already will have satisfied the graduation requirements. Students who have not satisfied the requirements should consider this timing issue when choosing whether to take the state tests or another options.

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## Option – Graduation Points

### **1. Who keeps track of all the graduation points students are acquiring?**

School districts must ensure that students have the required points for graduation.

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## Option – College Readiness

### **1. Do scores in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and College Credit Plus have to have the same weights in student GPAs?**

Yes. This is in state law.

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### **2. Does the financial literacy requirement for graduation still apply to students who take courses through College Credit Plus?**

Integrating the concepts of financial literacy and economics remains a required activity of each school.

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### **3. Can College Credit Plus courses in American history, American government and physical science/biology meet the graduation requirements?**

College Credit Plus courses, in the subject area, will satisfy the graduation requirement of American history, American government, physical science and biology; and the college course grade earned under College Credit Plus will substitute for the end-of-course exams as follows to quantify student graduation point requirements

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### **4. How many graduation points does a student receive when taking College Credit Plus courses that are substitutes for the American history, American government, biology or physical science (class of 2018 only) end-of-course tests?**

The following conversion chart should be used to determine the number of graduation points a student will receive based on the grade he or she receives for a College Credit Plus (dual enrollment) course that substitutes for physical science, biology, American history or American government.

<b>COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS COURSE GRADE</b> <i>(SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE SUBSTITUTE COURSES)</i>	<b>OHIO GRADUATION POINTS</b>
A or B	5
C	4
D	3
Not applicable	2
Not applicable	1
F – Fail or drop the course	0

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### Option – Work Readiness and Credentials

**1. Not all of the published industry-recognized skills are attainable or possible to be performed by high school students. Why?**

The list is used for purposes beyond graduation requirements for traditional high school students. For example, it also applies to students enrolled in the Adult Diploma Pilot Program, which is an avenue for high school dropouts to transition to the workforce. This is why some of the credentials require previous experience.

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**2. How was the list built?**

The State Board of Education approved the methodology for building the credential list in September 2014.

The two ways the department will add credentials to the list include:

1. Updating credentials tied to Ohio's in-demand occupations; and
2. Reviewing and considering suggestions submitted from the public.



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### **3. How do the new graduation options work for dropout recovery or credit recovery schools?**

Students at dropout recovery or credit recovery schools also must be prepared to follow one of the three pathways (i.e., accumulate 18 points on the end-of-course tests; earn remediation-free scores on the college readiness assessment; or obtain industry-recognized credentials and pass the WorkKeys assessment). However, these schools have the option of not administering the end-of-course tests if students are not at the appropriate place in the school's competency-based curriculum at the time of the testing window. Each school or district makes a local decision about how to best prepare students to meet those requirements.

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## General Questions

### **1. How do the new graduation options work for dropout recovery or credit recovery schools?**

Students at dropout recovery or credit recovery schools also must be prepared to follow one of the three pathways (i.e., accumulate 18 points on the end-of-course tests; earn remediation-free scores on the college readiness assessment; or obtain industry-recognized credentials and pass the WorkKeys assessment). However, these schools have the option of not administering the end-of-course tests if students are not at the appropriate place in the school's competency-based curriculum at the time of the testing window. Each school or district makes a local decision about how to best prepare students to meet those requirements.

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### **2. Are there fields in student software systems to fill in and/or track the graduation requirements?**

Districts should consult with their information technology centers and student software providers to get answers to software coding questions.

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### **3. Will remediation guidelines be similar to those of the Ohio Graduation Tests?**

The Ohio Department of Education will not provide specific remediation guidelines for students retaking the assessments. Students who were to take a state end-of-course test during the 2014-2015 academic year may retake any test because of student safe harbor requirements.

It is the recommendation that districts set remediation policies that would require students to receive support in proportion to their success on the state end-of-course tests prior to retaking the tests.

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**4. How do the new graduation testing requirements impact students with disabilities?**

All students, including students with disabilities, must participate in state assessments. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team may exempt a student with disabilities from consequences of not being proficient on end-of-course tests. When the IEP team determines a student is exempt from being proficient on an end-of-course test, the student may receive three points (equivalent to proficient) for each exempted test required for graduation. There is no alternate test for end-of-course tests.

Some students may be eligible to participate in an alternate assessment per the Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities participation guidelines. For these students, a proficient score in each of the content areas – English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies – may replace the graduation requirement of a minimum composite score on the seven end-of-course tests.

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**5. What are the graduation requirements for students who transfer into the district after completing some or all of the courses with tests?**

Students who transfer into a district with no previous scores and only a few courses with corresponding tests will have their graduation point requirement minimum prorated. The table below shows how the points change based on the number of tests remaining:

GRADUATION POINTS REQUIREMENT FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS			
Tests Remaining	Points Required	Tests Remaining	Points Required
7	18	4	10
6	15	3	8
5	13	2	5

*Note: Students must earn a minimum of five points across the English II and either the Integrated II or Geometry end-of-course tests.*

Regardless of the tests remaining, transfer students must earn a minimum of five points across the English II and either the integrated math II or geometry end-of-course tests in order to

graduate. So, if a student transfers in with only geometry and American government left to take, the student would be required to take an English II test to reach the five points (unless the student scores a five on the geometry).

If a student transfers in with only one test or no tests remaining, the student will take the college admissions test right away. If the student does not earn a remediation-free score, then the student must take the English II and geometry/integrated math II end-of-course tests and earn at least five points across the two in order to graduate.

The graduation point option takes effect with the class of 2018. These are students who are entering ninth grade for the first time in the 2014-2015 school year.

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