# Graduation FAQs

**Must a student take the end-of-course exam when he/she is enrolled in the course?**

Yes, it is the expectation for students to take the state end-of-course exam when they are taking the course. Here is the schedule for when end-of-course exams will be available.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | Fall Block 2014-2015 Dec - Jan | Spring Windows Feb - May 2015 | Fall Block 2015-2016 Dec - Jan | Spring Windows  Feb - May 2016 |
| English Language Arts I | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| English Language Arts II | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Algebra I | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Geometry | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Math I | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Math II | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| American History | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| American Government | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Biology | No | No | Yes | Yes |

**Students receive three graduation points for high school courses prior to July 1, 2015, if an end-of-course exam is not available. Are there other options for these students to earn more than three points?**

In addition to automatically earning three points upon course completion prior to July 1, 2015, students have two other options. First, the students may use the course grade (as it appears on their transcripts) to earn graduation points. In early 2015, Ohio’s state superintendent of public instruction and chancellor of higher education will identify how course grades will translate into a number of earned graduation points. Second, students may still take the exam when it is available to achieve more than three graduation points.

**A student who completed and received credit for a high school course in middle school prior to July 1, 2014 earns three graduation points. If the student takes the associated end-of-course exam in the effort to score higher and scores a 1 or 2 on the exam, will the student lose the three points already earned?**

No, the student keeps the three points. A higher score of 4 or 5 on the end-of-course exam counts for the student’s graduation points. If the student takes the end-of-course exam, the score (higher or lower) may be included on the school and district report card.

**A district tests and identifies a student as accelerated but the student does not take a high school course that has a required end-of-course exam. Is the student still required to take the end-of-course exam?**

The student must take the end-of-course exam to earn an Ohio High School Diploma.

If the district allows a student, prior to July 1, 2015, to test out of a course as part of a credit flexibility plan, the district must give the state end-of-course exam. Testing out is one component of receiving credit to meet the testing requirement.

**Can a student take both Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate substitute exams and the state end-of-course exam and use the higher score for graduation points?**

The Ohio Department of Education does not recommend the double testing of students. If students are taking the AP or IB exam, we recommend that the district use that exam for graduation points. For students who take an AP or IB course but do not choose to take the associated exam, they must take the state end-of-course exam for that course.

**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 physical science. Must those students take both tests associated with the grade/course?**

The student would take the high school end-of-course exam 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 student must take end-of-course exams in both courses.

**Ohio is not administering an algebra II end-of-course exam. 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.

**Do students get to choose whether they take The algebra I or integrated math end-of-course exam?**

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 exam.

**Which students must take the biology end-of-course exam?**

* Students in grade 8 and below (graduating classes of 2019 and beyond) must take the biology end-of-course exam to meet their science graduation requirement.
* Students in grade 9 (graduating class of 2018) have the option to take either the physical science or the biology end-of-course exam to meet their science graduation requirement.
* Students in grades 10-12 do not take an end-of-course exam in science. They are still under the Ohio Graduation Tests to meet their science graduation requirements.

**If a ninth-grade student does not score a three or higher on the physical science end-of-course exam, must the student retake the physical science end-of-course exam or can the student take the biology test after completing that course?**

Ninth-graders who do not score a three or higher on the physical science end-of-course exam may either retake the physical science end-of-course exam or take the biology end-of-course exam, after completing the course work. Either exam will meet the science graduation requirements and the highest score will count for graduation.

**Will the biology exam data be on the 2014-2015 report card?**

No. The reporting of data for the end-of-course biology exam will begin with the report card for the 2015-2016 school year.

**Some eighth-graders may be taking a physical science course this school year. Should they still plan to take the physical science end-of-course exam or must they wait to take the biology test when available?**

Students currently in grade 8 must take a science test to meet No Child Left Behind requirements. This test should best reflect the content they have learned. This means that grade 8 students taking a high school physical science course should take the physical science end-of-course exam. However, these students must still meet the biology end-of-course exam requirement for graduation upon completion of the biology course.

**There are some students in grade 9 who took a biology course in grade 8. Are they required to take the course in high school to receive graduation points?**

No, since the test will not be given until the 2015-2016 school year. In place of taking the test, any student who took a biology course prior to the test being available will have the opportunity to receive three points or points based on a course grade as determined by the superintendent and chancellor.

**Will the practice test be available for the biology test before it is given in the 2015-2016 school year? Will this test be available in both online and paper versions? What is the testing window for administering the test?**

A practice test will be available in the spring/summer of 2015.

There will only be online versions of all state end-of-course exams beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, including biology. Paper forms will be available as an accommodation.

The biology test will be operational starting with the fall block schedule in the 2015-2016 school year.

**Which graduating class is required to take world history?**

The freshmen who enter high school for the first time after July 1, 2017 (class of 2021), are the first class required to have the one-half credit of world history and civilizations.

**Is the one-half unit for world history in addition to the two required units of social studies?**

No. Students entering ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2017, must complete one-half unit in American history, one-half unit of American government, and two units of social studies, which will include at least one-half unit of world history and civilizations.

**Will there be an end-of-course exam in world history?**

No, state law prohibits the Ohio Department of Education from developing a world history end-of-course exam.

**How do the new graduation 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.

**Which test will be required for college and work readiness?**

School districts may choose to administer a college admissions tests from the approved list. The State Board of Education will select these tests through a competitive bidding process over the next few months.

**Students receive three graduation points for high school courses prior to July 1, 2015, if an end-of-course test is not available. Are there other options for these students to earn more than three points?**

In addition to automatically earning three points upon course completion prior to July 1, 2015, students have two other options. First, the students may use the course grade (as it appears on their transcripts) to earn graduation points. In early 2015, Ohio’s state superintendent of public instruction and chancellor of higher education will identify how course grades will translate into a number of earned graduation points. Second, students may still take the test when it is available to achieve more than three graduation points.

**In order to receive three graduation points when the end-of-course test is not available, do students have to receive high school credit for the course?**

Yes, the law is specific on this. Students who took a high school course prior to grade 9 **MUST** receive high school credit for the course in order earn three graduation points without taking an end-of-course test for that course.

There are two requirements for a high school course:

1. An appropriately licensed educator teaches the course; and
2. The requirements for the course are the same as for the high school course.

Additionally, the student’s high school transcript must begin after completion of the high school course.

**Must students earning credit through a postsecondary program like College Credit Plus take the state end-of-course exam? If not, how do they receive graduation points?**

Students earning credit in courses for mathematics and English language arts must take the state end-of-course exams. Students earning credit in tested science and social studies courses do not have to take the state end-of-course exams. A student’s course grade will determine the graduation points for the student. Ohio’s state superintendent of public instruction and chancellor of higher education will identify the method for translating course grades to earned graduation points in early 2015. During the transition school year of 2014-2015, students may decide to use either their course grades or three graduation points.