

# PENNSYLVANIA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS: PARENTS' GUIDE TO PROPOSED CHANGES

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*In order to graduate from a public high school in Pennsylvania, your child must meet specific requirements established by the Local Education Agency (district, charter school, or career and technical center) in which s/he is enrolled. These local requirements include graduation requirements mandated by the Commonwealth to guarantee that a Pennsylvania diploma reflects the knowledge and skills that our graduating students need to be successful in college and the workplace in an increasingly complex and challenging economy. This guide is designed to assist you in understanding how proposed changes to Pennsylvania's Public School Code, which authorizes commonwealth graduation requirements, will impact your child.*

**PLEASE NOTE: The new high school graduation requirements, if approved by the State Board of Education, will apply ONLY to students graduating from high school in (or after) 2017.**

## *Proposed High School Graduation Requirements for Students Graduating in (or after) 2017...*

- ✓ S/he WILL NOT be required to complete a culminating project (a current commonwealth requirement), unless one will be required by your Local Education Agency (LEA).
- ✓ S/he WILL be required to demonstrate proficiency in each of the content areas listed below by passing a Keystone Exam, an Advanced Placement (AP) Exam, an International Baccalaureate (IB) Exam, or a local exam<sup>1</sup> in the related content area.

### *Proposed Pennsylvania Requirements*

<b>Class of 2017 Required Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2018 Required Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2019 Required Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2020 Required Exams</b>
Algebra I	Algebra I	Algebra I	Algebra I
Biology	Biology	Biology	Biology
Literature	Literature	Literature	Literature
		English Composition*	English Composition*
			Civics & Government*

\* English Composition and Civics & Government Exams will be required only if funding is available for the Commonwealth to develop and validate relevant assessments. If the funding is not available, Pennsylvania will require student proficiency in just Algebra I, Biology, and Literature.

<sup>1</sup> Your LEA has the option to offer an assessment other than a Keystone, AP, or IB Exam provided the local assessment meets specific criteria established by the Commonwealth.

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Beginning in 2012, Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature Exams will be provided annually so that your child may be tested during the same year in which s/he completes the coursework. Should funding become available for Composition and Civics & Government, Exams will be offered beginning in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

### *Proposed Alternative for Students Unable to Pass a Keystone, AP, IB, or Qualifying Local Exam...*

- ✓ S/he will be permitted to demonstrate proficiency in a content area through a project-based assessment if the student has:
  - Met the school's attendance requirements,
  - Completed the related coursework,
  - Participated in at least two years of supplementary instruction, and
  - Failed the related exam twice\*.

\*Exceptions may be made for high school seniors introduced to the coursework for the first time in twelfth grade.



IN ADDITION to demonstrating proficiency in each of the content areas above, your child may be required by the LEA to pass an exam in one or more of the following content areas in order to fulfill local graduation requirements:

#### *Proposed Options for LEA Use*

<b>Class of 2017 Additional Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2018 Additional Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2019 Additional Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2020 Additional Exams</b>	<b>Class of 2021 Additional Exams</b>
Geometry*	Geometry	Geometry	Geometry	Geometry
	US History*	US History	US History	US History
		Algebra II*	Algebra II	Algebra II
			Chemistry*	Chemistry
				World History*
*Exams available beginning 2016	*Exams available beginning 2017	*Exams available beginning 2018	*Exams available beginning 2019	*Exams available beginning 2020

PLEASE NOTE: As with English Composition and Civics & Government, these exams are contingent upon funding availability.