

GRADUATION/DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Students who have completed all required course work, as set forth below, but who have not successfully completed all state mandated achievement or graduation assessment requirements may return at subsequent regularly scheduled achievement or graduation assessment administrations to retake failed areas. Upon the successful completion of achievement or graduation assessment requirements such student shall be eligible to be awarded a high school diploma.

Each diploma shall be signed by the President and Chief Financial Officer of the Board, the Superintendent, and the Principal of the High School and shall bear the date of its issue.

The requirements for graduation and participation in commencement shall be the completion of work and studies representing the instructional program assigned to grades 9 through 12, including all state mandated achievement or graduation assessments. The requirements will be sent annually to parents of students entering Mentor High School. They will also be published annually in the Mentor High School student handbook and posted annually on the Mentor High School electronic student management system.

The Superintendent shall determine whether the credit that a student has earned from another school satisfies any of the educational unit requirements for graduation, as set forth below.

Students Who Entered Ninth Grade for the First Time Before July 1, 2010

The requirements for participation in commencement and receiving a diploma shall include twenty-one (21) units earned in grades 9-12 to be distributed as follows:

1. English language arts, four units;
2. Health, one-half unit;
3. Mathematics, three units;
4. Physical education, one-half unit;
5. Science, three units, which at all times shall include both of the following:
 - a. Biological sciences, one unit;
 - b. Physical sciences, one unit.
6. Social studies, three units, which shall include all of the following:
 - a. American history, one unit;
 - b. American government, one-half unit;
 - c. Economics, one-half unit;

- d. Beginning with students who enter 9th grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2017, at least one-half unit of instruction in the study of world history and civilization.
7. Elective units, seven units.

Each student's electives shall include at least one unit, or two half units, chosen from among the areas of business/technology, fine arts, and/or foreign language.

Students Who Entered Ninth Grade for the First Time On or After July 1, 2010

Beginning with students who enter the ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2010, the requirements for participation in commencement and receiving a diploma shall include twenty-one units in grades 8-12* to be distributed as follows:

1. English language arts, four units;
2. Health, one-half unit, which shall include instruction in nutrition and the benefits of nutritious foods and physical activity for overall health;
3. Mathematics, four units, which shall include one unit of Algebra II or its equivalent. However, students who enter ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2015, and who are pursuing a career-technical instructional track, shall not be required to take Algebra II, and instead may complete a career-based pathway mathematics course approved by the Ohio Department of Education as an alternative;
4. Physical education, one-half unit;
5. Science, three units with inquiry-based laboratory experience that engages students in asking valid scientific questions and gathering and analyzing information, which shall include the following or their equivalent:
 - a. Physical sciences, one unit;
 - b. Life sciences, one unit;
 - c. Advanced study in one or more of the following sciences, one unit:
 - i. Chemistry, physics, or other physical science;
 - ii. Advanced biology or other life science;
 - iii. Astronomy, physical geology, or other earth or space science.

6. History and government, one unit, which shall include both of the following:
 - a. American history, one-half unit;
 - b. American government, one-half unit;

Beginning with students who enter the ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2012, the content shall include the study of the Declaration of Independence; the Northwest Ordinance; the U.S. Constitution and its amendments, with emphasis on the Bill of Rights; and the Ohio Constitution; including study of such documents in their original context. In addition, such content shall include the historical evidence of the role of documents such as the Federalist Papers and the Anti-Federalist papers to firmly establish the historical background leading to the establishment of the provisions of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights;

7. Social studies, two units, which shall include the following:
 - a. American history, one-half unit;
 - b. Economics, one-half unit;
 - c. An elective, one full or two half units.

The study of economics and financial literacy as expressed in the social studies content standards shall be integrated into one or more existing social studies credits or into the content of another class. The academic content standards for financial literacy and entrepreneurship shall be integrated into one or more existing social studies credits or into the content of another class.

Beginning with students who enter 9th grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2017, the two units of instruction prescribed by this paragraph shall include at least one-half unit of instruction in the study of world history and civilization.

8. Six units consisting of one or any combination of foreign language, fine arts (two (2) semesters in any of grades 7-12), business, college/career-technical education, family and consumer sciences, technology, agricultural education, or English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies not otherwise required.

Units earned in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies that are delivered through integrated academic and career-technical instruction are eligible to meet graduation requirements.

*Advanced student work completed prior to the ninth grade shall be applied toward graduation requirements if the advanced work was taught by a teacher who possessed a license valid for teaching high school and designated by the Board of Education as meeting the high school curriculum requirements.

Graduation Requirements Opt-Out Alternative

Students who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2010, and before July 1, 2016, may qualify for graduation without completing the requirements for graduation upon satisfying all of the following conditions:

1. During the student's third year of attending high school, as determined by the school, the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian sign and file with the school a written statement asserting the parent's, guardian's, or custodian's consent to the student's graduating without completing the requirements for graduation prescribed by O.R.C. §3313.603(C) and acknowledging that one consequence of not completing those requirements is ineligibility to enroll in most state universities in Ohio without further coursework. The District shall notify the Ohio Department of Education of the number of students who choose to qualify for graduation in this way and the number of students who complete the student's success plan and graduate from high school.
2. The student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian and a representative of the student's high school jointly develop a student success plan for the student in the manner described in O.R.C. §3313.6020(C)(1). The student success plan must specify the student matriculating to a two-year degree program, acquiring a business and industry-recognized credential, or entering an apprenticeship. The high school shall provide counseling and support for the student related to the plan during the remainder of the student's high school experience.
3. The student successfully completes, at a minimum, the curriculum prescribed for participation in commencement and receiving a diploma listed in the paragraph entitled "Students Who Entered Ninth Grade Before July 1, 2010," above.
4. Beginning with students who enter ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, a student shall be required to complete successfully, at a minimum, the curriculum prescribed for participation in commencement and receiving a diploma listed in the paragraph entitled "Students Who Entered Ninth Grade Before July 1, 2010," above, with the following exceptions:
 - (a) Mathematics, four units, one unit of which shall be one of the following:
 - (i) Probability and statistics;
 - (ii) Computer programming;
 - (iii) Applied mathematics or quantitative reasoning;
 - (iv) Any other course approved by the ODE using standards established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
 - (b) Elective units, five units;

- (c) Science, three units, which shall include inquiry-based laboratory experience that engages students in asking valid scientific questions and gathering and analyzing information.

A student who participates in interscholastic athletics, marching band, show choir, or cheerleading for at least two full seasons is not required to complete the physical education one-half unit to graduate, although the student must complete one-half unit in another course of study. A student who participates in an approved JROTC program for at least two full school years is not required to complete the physical education one-half unit to graduate, and credit received for participation shall satisfy the requirement for one-half unit in another course of study.

The District may integrate academic content in a subject area for which the state board has adopted standards under O.R.C. §3301.079 into a course in a different subject area, including a career-technical educational course, in accordance with guidance for integrated course work developed by the ODE. Upon successful completion of an integrated course, a student may receive credit for both subject areas. Units earned for subject area content delivered through integrated academic and technical instruction are eligible to meet graduation requirements.

Additional High School Diploma Requirements for Students Entering Ninth Grade On or After July 1, 2014

In addition to the applicable curriculum requirements, each student entering ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, but prior to July 1, 2019, shall satisfy at least one of the following conditions in order to qualify for a high school diploma:

1. Be remediation-free, in accordance with standards adopted under O.R.C. §3345.061, on each of the nationally standardized assessments in English, mathematics, and reading;
2. Attain a score specified under O.R.C. §3301.0712(B)(5)(c) on the end-of-course examinations prescribed under division O.R.C. §3301.0712(B);
3. Attain a score that demonstrates workforce readiness and employability on a nationally recognized job skills assessment selected by the state board of education under O.R.C. 3301.0712(G) and obtain either an industry-recognized credential, as described under O.R.C. §3302.03(B)(2)(d), or a license issued by a state agency or board for practice in a vocation that requires an examination for issuance of that license.

A student may choose to qualify for a high school diploma by satisfying any of the separate requirements prescribed by divisions (1) to (3) of this section. If the District does not administer the examination prescribed by one of those divisions that the student chooses to take to satisfy the requirements of this section, the District may require that student to arrange for the applicable scores to be sent directly to the District by the company or organization that administers the examination.

College and Work Ready Assessment System

Beginning with students who enter the ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, the system of college and work ready assessments adopted by the State Board of Education shall replace the Ohio graduation tests as a measure of student academic performance and one determinant of eligibility for a high school diploma in the manner prescribed by rule of the state board, adopted under O.R.C. §3301.0712(D).

Pursuant to O.R.C. §3301.0712, beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, if a student is enrolled in an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course or is enrolled under any other dual enrollment or advanced standing program, that student shall take the advanced placement or international baccalaureate examination or applicable examination under dual enrollment or advanced standing in lieu of the physical science, American history, or American government end-of-course examinations prescribed under O.R.C. 3301.0712(B).

No student shall take a substitute examination or examination prescribed under O.R.C. §3301.0712(B)(4)(a) in place of the end-of-course examinations in English Language Arts I, English Language Arts II, Algebra I, or Geometry prescribed under O.R.C. §3301.0712(B)(2).

Any student who received high school credit prior to July 1, 2014, for a course for which an end-of-course examination is prescribed by O.R.C. §3301.0712(B)(2), shall not be required to take that end-of-course examination. Receipt of credit for that course shall satisfy the requirement to take the end-of-course examination.

Honors Diploma

Shall be granted in accordance with Ohio law. However, no student shall be eligible for graduation honors unless they have been enrolled for two (2) consecutive semester(s) prior to the final semester utilized for purposes of determining such honors.

Veterans Diploma

The Board may grant a diploma for veterans of World War II, the Korean conflict, or the Vietnam conflict in accordance with Ohio law.

The Board may also grant a diploma to any woman who left high school in any state during World War II, the Korean conflict, or the Vietnam conflict to support her family or the war effort in accordance with Ohio law.

Alternative Conditions for Graduation

This section shall apply to diplomas awarded after September 15, 2006, to students who are required to take the five Ohio graduation assessments. This section does not apply to any student who enters ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014.

As an alternative to the requirement that a person successfully complete all of the Ohio graduation assessments in order to be eligible for a high school diploma, a person who has successfully completed all but one of the assessments may be awarded a diploma if he or she has satisfied all of the following conditions:

1. On the assessment that the person failed to attain the designated score, he or she missed that score by ten points or less;
2. The person has a ninety-seven per cent school attendance rate in each of the last four years of school, excluding any excused absences;
3. The person has not been expelled from school in any of the last four school years;
4. The person has a grade point average of at least 2.5 in the subject area of the assessment that he or she failed in accordance with rules established by the State Board of Education;
5. The person has completed the high school curriculum requirements in the subject area of the assessment that he or she failed;
6. The person has taken advantage of any intervention programs provided by the District or school in the subject area of the assessment that he or she failed, and has a ninety-seven per cent attendance rate, excluding any excused absences, in any of those programs that are provided at times beyond the normal school day, school week, or school year or has received comparable intervention services from a source other than the District or school;
7. The person holds a letter recommending graduation from each of his or her high school teachers in the subject area of the assessment that he or she failed and from the High School Principal.

This section shall apply only to students who are enrolled in the District who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, but prior to July 1, 2017. This section does not apply to any student who entered ninth grade for the first time prior to July 1, 2014, or to any student who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2017.

In lieu of qualifying for high school graduation under O.R.C. §3313.61, a student shall be eligible to receive a high school diploma if the student:

1. Takes all of the end-of-course examinations prescribed under O.R.C. §3301.0712(B)(2) required for the student, or takes the assessment prescribed under O.R.C. §3313.619, as applicable;
2. Retakes, at least once, any end-of-course examination in the area of English language arts or mathematics for which a student received an equivalent score of lower than “3”;

3. Completes the required units of instruction prescribed by the District or school;
4. Meets at least two of the following conditions:
 - a. For a student who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, but prior to July 1, 2016, the student has an attendance rate of at least 93% during the twelfth grade year.
 - b. The student takes at least four full-year or equivalent courses during the twelfth grade year and has at least the following grade point average:
 - i. For a student who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, but prior to July 1, 2016, 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for the courses completed during the twelfth grade year;
 - ii. For a student who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2016, but prior to July 1, 2017, a cumulative 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 for the courses completed during the eleventh and twelfth grade years.
 - c. During the twelfth grade, the student completed a capstone project. However, in the case of a student who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2016, but prior to July 1, 2017, the capstone project shall comply with guidance developed by the ODE describing the components of a successful capstone project and the process for evaluating each component.
 - d. During the twelfth grade, the student completed 120 hours of work in a community service role or in a position of employment, including internships, work study, co-ops, and apprenticeships. However, in the case of a student who entered ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2016, but prior to July 1, 2017, the student's completion of such work shall comply with guidance developed by the ODE describing requirements for District approval and verification of the work.
 - e. The student earned three or more transcribed credit hours under the College Credit Plus program at any time during high school.
 - f. The student passed an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate course, and received a score of three or higher on the corresponding Advanced Placement examination, or a score of four or higher on the corresponding International Baccalaureate examination, at any time during high school.

- g. The student earned at least a level three score on each of the “reading for information,” “applied mathematics,” and “locating information” components of the job skills assessment selected by the State Board of Education under O.R.C. §3301.0712(G), or a comparable score on similar components of an successor version of that assessment.
- h. The student obtained an industry-recognized credential, as described under O.R.C. §3302.03(B)(2)(d), or a group of credentials equal to at least three total points.
- i. The student satisfies the conditions required to receive an OhioMeansJobs-readiness seal.

In lieu of qualifying for high school graduation under O.R.C. §3313.61, a student shall be eligible to receive a high school diploma if the student:

1. Takes all of the end-of-course examinations prescribed under division (B)(2) of O.R.C. §3301.0712(B)(2) required for the student, or takes the assessment prescribed under O.R.C. §3313.619, as applicable;
2. Completes the required units of instruction prescribed by the District;
3. Completes a career-technical training program approved by the Department of Education that includes at least four career-technical courses;
4. Meets one of the following conditions:
 - a. Attains a cumulative score of at least proficient on career-technical education assessments, or test modules, that are required for a career-technical education program;
 - b. Obtains an industry-recognized credential, as described under O.R.C. §3302.03(B)(2)(d), or a group of credentials equal to at least 12 points;
 - c. Demonstrates successful workplace participation, as evidenced by documented completion of 250 of workplace experience and evidence of regular, written, positive evaluations from the workplace employer or supervisor and a representative of the District or school. The workplace participation shall be based on a written agreement signed by the student, a representative of the District, and an employer or supervisor.

Children of Military Families Who Have Transferred from Another State

Pursuant to O.R.C. §3301.60, for students who are children of military families and have transferred to the District from another state (the “sending state”), the District shall waive specific courses required for graduation if the student satisfactorily completed similar

coursework in a public school district in the sending state or shall provide a reasonable justification for the denial of a waiver. If a waiver is not granted, the District shall provide an alternative means for the student to acquire the required coursework so the student may graduate on time.

Where assessments are required for graduation, the District shall accept the exit or end-of-course assessments required for graduation in the sending state, national norm-referenced achievement test, or alternative testing.

If a student who has transferred into the District at the beginning of or during his or her senior year is ineligible to graduate after the District has considered the above-referenced alternatives, the District shall work with the student's prior public school district in the sending state to determine if the student meets the graduation requirements of that district. If the sending state is not a member of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, the District shall use its best efforts as set forth above to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student.

Graduation Under House Bill 197

This section applies to students meeting both of the following criteria:

- 1) The student was enrolled in the twelfth grade in the 2019-2020 school year or was on track to graduate in the 2019-2020 school year, as determined by the District, regardless of the graduation cohort in which the student is included; and
- 2) The student had not completed the requirements for a high school diploma under O.R.C. §§3313.61, 3313.612, or 3325.08 or under Section 3 of H.B. 491 of the 132nd General Assembly, as of March 17, 2020.

The District shall grant a high school diploma to any student meeting the above criteria, if the student's principal, in consultation with teachers and counselors, reviews the student's progress toward meeting the requirements for a diploma and determines that the student has successfully completed the curriculum in the student's high school or the individualized education program developed for the student by the student's high school pursuant to O.R.C. §3323.08, or qualified under O.R.C. §3313.603(D) or (F), at the time the District closed pursuant to the Director of Health's Order O.R.C. §3701.13, "In Re: Order the Closure of All K-12 Schools in the State of Ohio," issued on March 14, 2020. No high school diploma shall be granted under this section after September 30, 2020.

LEGAL REFS: O.R.C. §§3301.60, 3313.61, 3313.603; 3313.615; 3313.618; 3301.0712
H.B. 197 (03-27-20)

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