

Your Question:

You asked about changes to graduation requirements.

Our Response:

Below, we have summarized relevant legislation related to graduation requirements. This summary covers legislation enacted between 2019 and 2021 and excludes temporary changes or waivers made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

High School Graduation Legislation

Civics/Naturalization Test Requirements	
IN SB 132	Requires that each high school administer the naturalization examination provided by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services as part of the United States government credit awarded for the general, Core 40, Core 40 with academic honors and Core 40 with technical honors diploma designations.
TN SB 1243/HB 1016	Changes the composition of the United States civics test all students must pass before graduating from high school from between 25 and 50 questions from the civics test administered by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens to at least 50 questions from the test. It also requires a student to earn at least a 70% on the test to pass.
OK HB 2030	Requires the United States naturalization test as a graduation requirement beginning with the 2022-23 school year.
SC S 38	Amends current law to include the Emancipation Proclamation in required instruction for all public high schools and public institutions of higher learning and makes instruction in that topic a graduation requirement for public high schools and public postsecondary institutions.
Computer Science/STEM Courses	
AL HB 216	Specifies that beginning with the class of 2021, a computer science course will be equivalent to one mathematics credit or one science credit for the purposes of high school graduation requirements and for satisfying math or science freshman admission requirements for a public institution of higher education in the state
IN HB 1549	Permits a high school to count a course in any combination of science, technology, engineering or math as satisfying the Indiana diploma with a Core 40 with academic honors designation or another designation requirement. It also establishes criteria for Cambridge International courses to count toward high school graduation requirements.
VA SB 323	Requires the board of education, in establishing high school graduation requirements, to permit a student who is pursuing an advanced diploma and whose individualized education program specifies a credit accommodation for world language to substitute two standard units of credit in computer science for two standard units of credit in a world language.

WA SB 5299	Allows a student to substitute a computer science course aligned to state computer science learning standards for either a third-year math or science course.
Comprehensive Graduation Requirement/Pathway Changes	
IL HB 2170	Makes adjustments to high school graduation requirements starting in the 2024-25 school year. In addition to other requirements, students entering ninth grade must complete the following courses: four years of language arts, two years of writing intensive courses, three years of math, two years of laboratory sciences, two years of social studies and one year of music, art or foreign language. Starting in the 2028-29 school year, students entering ninth grade must take two years of foreign language to graduate. These graduation requirements do not apply to students with an IEP.
OH HB 491	Extends alternative high school graduation pathways similar to those for students in the class of 2018 to students in the classes of 2019 and 2020, allowing more students in those classes to graduate on time. It also requires the department of education to make recommendations for new permanent graduation requirements and to present them to the House and Senate Education Committees by April 1, 2019.
WA HB 1599	Adds a new section on public high school graduation that establishes new requirements for graduating and earning a high school diploma beginning with the class of 2020 and lists those requirements. It also outlines all eight options for graduation pathways and encourages school districts to make all pathway options available but gives them discretion in determining which options to offer. Finally, it authorizes the state board of education to adopt rules of implementation for graduation pathway options.
Financial Literacy/FAFSA Completion	
AZ SB 1184	Requires that the academic standards incorporated into the graduation requirements prescribed by the state board include at least one half of a course credit in economics, which shall include financial literacy and personal finance management.
IL HB 2719	Requires that beginning with the 2020-21 school year, completion of a FAFSA form is a prerequisite for graduation from a public high school. It also provides an exemption if the student or parent has filed a waiver indicating they know what the FAFSA is and have chosen not to fill it out. It requires that each district with a high school provide compliance support to meet the requirement.
TX HB 3	Each student must complete and submit a FAFSA or Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) before the student can graduate. It also creates provisions for the student to be exempted from the requirement if a signed form is submitted or the school counselor determines and authorizes the student's decline.
Waived Requirements	
MD SB 564	Allows waiving of certain graduation requirements for students experiencing homelessness or in foster care in grades 11 or 12.
Standardized Assessments	
IN HB 1630	Removes end of course exams from the list of postsecondary competencies that may be included in graduation pathway requirements.
MD HB 1019	Mandates that the state board only require a passing score on a standardized assessment to evaluate a student for high school graduation after the assessment has been field-tested and piloted for at least one year.

TX SB 213	Extends by four years (until 2023) an initiative that allows a student who does not pass end-of-course assessments to still receive a high school diploma if the student meets other graduation requirements and receives a proficient score on the Texas Success Initiative diagnostic assessment.
Volunteering/Miscellaneous Additions or Substitutions	
FL HB 7011	Allows high school tutoring of K-3 students to be used toward graduation requirements.
ID S 1060	Provides that a high school student may take a flexible schedule and outlines eligibility requirements. If a student meets the requirements, the student may be relieved from completing high school graduation requirements in order to take elective courses, participate in an apprenticeship or internship, act as a tutor or engage in other activities as defined by the board. It also establishes that a student who opts for a flexible schedule may use the student's allotment of advanced opportunities funds for flexible schedule activities. It provides that a high school student may graduate early and outlines eligibility requirements.
IN HB 1627	Allows a coalition member school to replace high school courses with courses within the same subject matter of equal or greater rigor to the required ones. It also establishes that a replacement course that meets this standard may satisfy the equivalent diploma requirements.
MI SB 171	Allows CTE or arts curriculum, among others, to replace foreign language requirements.
ME HP 740	Adds language to minimum diploma requirements so that students may meet the required years of instruction in English, social studies and history, math, science and fine arts or the equivalent in standards achievement.
ND SB 2147	Allows for the GED to be used toward receiving graduation requirements.
NM HB 664	Allows students to count career and technical education courses or approved work-based training toward one of four credit requirements in both English and math and one of three credit requirements in science.
OH HB 166	Adds to graduation requirements that students entering ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2019 must attain a competency score on Algebra I and English Language II end-of-course examinations.
VA SB 112	Directs the board of education to offer a dual enrollment or work-based learning option to fulfill graduation requirements.
VA HB 2662	Directs the board of education, in establishing high school graduation requirements, to require students to complete a senior capstone project, portfolio, performance-based assessment or structured experiment that relates to a work-based learning, service-learning or community engagement activity and aligns with and further develops the knowledge and skills attained through the activity. The provisions shall not become effective unless reenacted by the 2020 Session of the General Assembly.
WA HB 1424	Amends provisions for career and technical education course equivalencies and requires that each district must grant academic course equivalency for at least one statewide course equivalency for career and technical education.