

Graduation Flexibility – 2021 and Beyond

The cancellation of Ohio's State Tests in spring and summer of 2020 due to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) health crisis and ordered school-building closure impacts students' abilities to meet graduation requirements in future years. During these unprecedented times, Ohio's education community understands it is necessary to provide continued flexibility for students to meet these graduation requirements. It is important to ensure students can receive diplomas and successfully transition to college, the workforce, the military or self-sustaining vocations. This document is designed to help districts and schools implement the flexibility granted by House Bill 164 (<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-164>).

Course Grade Substitutions

Recently enacted legislation (HB 164 - Section 12 (<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-164>)) allows districts and schools to substitute an eligible student's final course grade in an eligible course for the corresponding high school end-of-course examination. Substituting course grades will ensure minimal disruption to a student's education experience by eliminating the need to take the missed examinations for the purposes of graduation. Students who completed qualifying courses in the 2019-2020 school year also may elect to take the associated end-of-course examinations in a future administration. For example, students who took algebra I in spring 2020 have the choice to either substitute their final course grades for a corresponding point value or performance level on the algebra I end-of-course exam or take the exam in a future year and use that test score.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students are eligible for this flexibility if they were either:

Taking a qualifying course AND scheduled to take an end-of-course examination for the first time in the 2019-2020 school year but did not take the test because the administration of the examination was canceled;

Scheduled to retake an end-of-course examination in the 2019-2020 school year and did not retake the test because the administration of the examination was canceled.

COURSE ELIGIBILITY

For an eligible student, a qualifying course is any course associated with an end-of-course examination. This includes courses taken at any grade level, including prior to high school. Qualifying courses include the following:

English language arts I;

English language arts II;

Algebra I or integrated math I;

Geometry or integrated math II;

Biology;

American history; and

American government.

COURSE GRADE SUBSTITUTION — GRADING SCALES

Eligible students who were scheduled to take or retake end-of-course examinations in spring or summer 2020 now have the opportunity to substitute corresponding course grades for a skill level or point value on end-of-course tests. Students who were scheduled to take the examination for the first time should use the grades for the courses in which they were enrolled in spring or summer 2020. Students who were scheduled to retake tests may use previous corresponding eligible course grades for the purposes of substitution.

A-F Grading Scale

In cases where a student is given a final course grade using an A through F grading scale, a student's final course grade will be translated to an equivalent skill level or point value according to the following scale:

FINAL COURSE GRADE	SKILL LEVEL / POINT VALUE
A	Advanced and Competent/5
B	Accelerated and Competent/4
C	Proficient and Competent/3
D	Basic and Not Competent/2
F	Limited and Not Competent/1

Pass/Fail Grading Scale

In cases where a student is given a final course grade of pass/fail, complete/incomplete or another similar measure, a "fail" or equivalent designation would earn a student a skill level and point value equivalent to an "F" grade in the table above. In these cases, districts and schools are responsible for determining the equivalent grade or appropriate skill level assigned to a "pass" grade. For the purposes of competency in Ohio's long-term graduation requirements, a "pass" designation will be equivalent to competency and a "fail" designation will not meet the competency requirement.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are using accommodations and/or modifications per an individualized education program (IEP) to access qualifying course content are equally eligible for course grade substitutions as outlined above.

Impact on Specific Graduation Pathways

A student graduating after Sept. 30, 2020, has access to many graduation pathways that require demonstration of proficiency, competency and readiness through Ohio's State Tests. Regardless of the chosen graduation pathway, students in all graduation cohorts are required to take all required end-of-course examinations, unless specifically exempted as discussed above. For all pathways, a student's course grade substitution will count toward the end-of-course examination requirement for graduation purposes for eligible students. For example, if a student substitutes a course grade of "B" for the biology end-of-course examination, the student would meet

the requirement to test in biology and would not have to take that test in the future unless the student chooses to do so. The following graduation pathways are impacted by this flexibility:

OHIO'S STATE TESTS PATHWAY — AVAILABLE TO THE CLASSES OF 2018-2022:

To graduate using this pathway, a student must earn a minimum of 20 course credits in specified subject areas and must earn at least 18 points on Ohio's State Tests. Each examination score earns a student up to five graduation points. Students must earn a minimum of four points in math, four points in English language arts and six points between science and social studies.

With the flexibility provided by course grade substitutions, eligible students have the opportunity to substitute final course grades as equivalent points for all qualifying courses completed in spring 2020 or if they were scheduled to retake any end-of-course examinations associated with qualifying courses in spring or summer of 2020.

LONG-TERM REQUIREMENTS PATHWAY — AVAILABLE TO THE CLASSES OF 2018 AND BEYOND:

To graduate using this pathway, a student must earn a minimum of 20 course credits in specified subject areas, (<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements/Courses-and-Requirements>) show competency in English and mathematics, and earn two diploma seals. Ohio's high school end-of-course examinations play a direct role in determining student competency and earning seals. Of the 12 seal options, three seals directly rely on end-of-course examination results to determine seal attainment.

- *Competency:* To meet competency requirements, a student must earn a score of 684 or higher on Ohio's high school algebra I and English language arts II end-of-course examinations. Students who do not pass one or both of these tests must be offered additional support and must retake the test(s) at least once before accessing competency alternatives. Completion of an eligible course in the 2019-2020 school year shall count as an attempt at the corresponding examination.

A student earning a final course grade of "pass" or a grade of C or higher in an eligible course shall be deemed to have met the competency requirement. Students earning a final course grade of "fail" or a grade of D or F shall be deemed to have **not** met the competency requirement.

Science Seal: One way a student may earn the Science Seal is by earning a score of proficient or higher on the biology end-of-course examination. A student earning a final course grade of C or higher in a biology course may earn the Science Seal. In the case of "pass/fail" grading scales, it is up to a student's district or school to determine whether a grade of "pass" would earn a student the Science Seal. A student earning a "fail" or equivalent designation would not meet this requirement to earn the Science Seal.

Click here for more information on the Science Seal. (http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements_Long-term-Requirements-2023-and-Beyond.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US)

Citizenship Seal: One way a student may earn the Citizenship Seal is by earning a score of proficient or higher on the American history and American government end-of-course exams.

Eligible students may earn the Citizenship Seal by attaining a final course grade of C or higher or a "pass" or its equivalent in an American history and American government course. In the case of "pass/fail" grading scales, it is up to a student's district or school to determine whether a grade of "pass" would meet the requirement for the Citizenship Seal. A student earning a "fail" or equivalent designation would not meet this requirement to earn the

Citizenship Seal. Eligible students may combine a final course grade equivalency with an end-of-course examination score or use two course grade equivalencies to meet the requirements of the seal.

Click here for more information on the Citizenship Seal. (http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements_Long-term-Requirements-2023-and-Beyond.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US)

Seal of Biliteracy: To earn the Seal of Biliteracy, a student must show proficiency in English and another language. One of the options for showing proficiency in English is earning a score of proficient or higher on the English language arts I and II end-of-course examinations (only English language arts II for the class of 2023 and beyond). Eligible students also may show proficiency in English by earning a final course grade of C or higher or a “pass” or its equivalent in the relevant English language arts courses. Students in the classes of 2022 and prior may combine a final course grade equivalency in English language arts I or II with an end-of-course examination score or use two course grade equivalencies to meet the English language proficiency requirements for the seal.

Click here for more information on the Seal of Biliteracy. (http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements_Long-term-Requirements-2023-and-Beyond.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US)

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