

Local Board of Education Responsibilities

Each local school district's board of education retains the authority to develop its own high school graduation requirements, so long as those local high school graduation requirements meet or exceed any minimum standards or basic core competencies or skills identified by the Colorado State Board of Education based on skills students will need to be successful after graduation.

The requirements for earning a Colorado high school diploma must be aligned with current entrance requirements for postsecondary education, military, and the workforce. Evidence that a student is ready for these post high school experiences includes eligibility for credit bearing college courses, proven academic workforce skills, and academic qualifications preferred for leadership careers in the armed forces. The following define local school board responsibilities in developing high school graduation policies.

1. Local district high school graduation policies must state the minimum academic competencies needed for students to demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness and the types of measures that the district is using to determine such attainment. For the entering 9th graders in 2014 districts may use the state's Minimum College and Career Ready Determinations as guideposts in setting those competencies (see chart below). For the entering sixth graders of 2014, districts must meet or exceed the state's Minimum College and Career Ready Determinations. These options and their respective thresholds will be refined as new state assessments, industry certifications, and district capstone experiences are clarified.

Minimum Colorado College and Career Ready Determinations Established by the Colorado State Board of Education

The state's minimum College and Career Ready Determinations for English, math, science and social studies are set to match proficiency levels on the state assessment, higher education's cut scores for placement in credit bearing classes, industry certificates, and the military's cut scores for academic consideration for preferred career training. They are designed to be of approximate comparable rigor and will be refined, improved, and added to over time.

Students must demonstrate competency in each content area using any one of the items in the competency demonstration menu for that content area. Students wishing to attend four-year postsecondary institutions will also need to meet the entrance requirements for their institutions of interest.

Competency Demonstration:	English	Math	Science	Social Studies
TCAP (2013-14 only)	663	627		
State Test (2013-14 onward)			TBD	TBD
PARCC (2014-15 onward)	4 or higher	4 or higher		
ACT ¹	18	19	TBD	
SAT ¹	430	460		

International Baccalaureate	3 or higher	3 or higher	3 or higher	3 or higher
Advanced Placement	3 or higher	3 or higher	3 or higher	3 or higher
Verified District Capstone² (Start 2015-16)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Concurrent Enrollment College Course	C- or higher	C- or higher	C- or higher	C- or higher
ASVAB (military) preferred AFQT score for career level jobs	50	50		
Select, Earned Industry Certificate	Awarded (Depending on the certificate, may qualify as interdisciplinary proofs; list of eligible certificates will be developed in 2013-14)			
Additional State Board Approved Demonstrations of Student Competency	Additions will be made as advances in competency demonstrations become more standardized			

¹ Recognized for entrance into postsecondary institutions.

² The Council is recommending this option with conditional criteria. As with the other measures or methods on the menu, these capstone projects must be proven as: valid, comparable in rigor to the other choices, standardized in their administration, free from outside assistance, credibly judged by a third party and aligned to the standards. Specific rubrics for district use in each subject area will be created and verified among and between high school educators and pertinent, subject-specific industry and college advisors.

- The local district has the authority to add measures of competency in other subject areas (such as world language, music, art, etc.) to serve as minimum criteria for graduation.
- In 2013-14, the state will administer new science and social studies assessments. Readiness determinations for science and social studies will then be set in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Higher Education.
- In 2014-15, the state will administer the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments in English language arts and mathematics. These will replace the TCAP exams.
- Note that the ACT, SAT, AP, IB, and college credit determinations are set at the spring 2013 thresholds for "no need for remediation" as outlined in the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Admission Remediation Policy. These thresholds are under review. Updated thresholds are expected in the fall of 2013.
- While no single competency demonstration in the above menu fully measures the new academic K-12 standards, the determinations begin the transition to a competency-based system. While not identical instruments, the menu of competency determinations shares thresholds of approximately comparable levels of rigor.
- Local districts have the authority to adapt the determinations of competencies to accommodate students with exceptionalities (i.e., students with disabilities and students who are gifted and talented).

2. Local district high school graduation requirements must include student demonstrations of 21st Century skills in addition to the attainment of the minimum academic competencies. The skills include critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy, collaboration, self-direction, and

invention. These skills are embedded in the Colorado Academic Standards. As a result, students' successful completion of coursework and/or other learning experiences aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards may provide one method for students to demonstrate 21st Century skills. Student engagement in and completion of extracurricular activities, service learning experiences, capstone projects, and other student demonstrations may also serve as demonstrations of 21st Century skills.

3. Local district high school graduation requirements must include successful completion of the Individual Career and Academic Plan, known as the ICAP. Required by state statute for every ninth through twelfth grade student (or in the years required for a student to graduate), the ICAP is designed to assist a student and his or her parent or legal guardian in exploring the postsecondary career and educational opportunities available to the student, aligning course work and curriculum, applying to postsecondary education institutions, securing financial aid, and ultimately entering the workforce. ICAP attributes can be found at [http://www.cde.state.co.us/secondaryinitiatives/downloads/ICAP/ICAPItemsmatrix2011\(final\).pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/secondaryinitiatives/downloads/ICAP/ICAPItemsmatrix2011(final).pdf).
4. Local district high school graduation policies must allow students multiple, equally rigorous and valued ways to demonstrate competency of the knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary education and meaningful careers. Districts are encouraged to benchmark their programs of study off of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Higher Education Admissions Requirements.
5. Local districts may permit students longer or shorter time to earn their diploma.
6. Local school district high school graduation requirements must align with the postsecondary and workforce readiness definition and description adopted by the State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education in 2009. This description is at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/downloads/PWRdescription.pdf>.
7. Local school district high school graduation requirements must align with the Colorado Academic Standards, Colorado English Language Proficiency Standards, and the Colorado Career and Technical education standards. The standards can found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/StandardsAndInstruction/ColoradoStandards.asp>, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/CoEngLangProf/StateStandards.asp>, and at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas/CareerandTechnicalEd.asp>.
8. Local district graduation policies should recognize and acknowledge the importance of education in world languages, comprehensive health, physical education, music, dance, performing arts, visual arts, and career and technical education in strengthening student learning in other subjects and in supporting students' ability to succeed in the 21st Century.
9. Beginning no later than the sixth grade, districts must provide information to students and their families about the requirements for high school graduation and successful entry into college and careers. It is recommended that districts also share with each student their academic readiness for graduation beginning in elementary school. Such information might take the form of current grade level proficiency in math and reading, attendance rate and forms of a student's active participation in their own learning.