

# POLICY

## HOPEWELL VALLEY REGIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

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HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

### 5460 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

#### M

The Board of Education will recognize the successful completion of the secondary school instructional program by the award of a State-endorsed diploma certifying the pupil has met all State and local requirements for high school graduation. The Board will annually certify to the Executive County Superintendent that each pupil who has been awarded a diploma has met the requirements for graduation.

#### A. High School Graduation Requirements

A graduating pupil must have earned a minimum of no fewer than one hundred twenty credits in courses designed to meet all of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards including, but not limited to, the following credits:

1. Twenty credits in language arts literacy aligned to grade nine through twelve standards, effective with the 2009-2010 grade nine class;
2. Fifteen credits in mathematics, including Algebra I or the content equivalent ("content equivalent" is defined at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3) effective with the 2008-2009 grade nine class, including geometry or the content equivalent effective with the 2010-2011 grade nine class, and including a third year of mathematics that builds on the concepts and skill of algebra and geometry and that prepares pupils for college and 21st century careers effective with the 2012-2013 grade nine class;
3. Fifteen credits in social studies, including satisfaction of N.J.S.A. 18A:35-1 and 18A:35-2; five credits in world history, and the integration of civics, economics, geography, and global content in all course offerings;
4. Fifteen credits in science, including at least five credits in laboratory biology/life science or the content equivalent effective with the 2008-2009 grade nine class, including one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course which shall include chemistry, environmental science, or physics effective with the 2010-2011 grade nine class, and including one additional laboratory/inquiry-based science course effective with 2012-2013 grade nine class;



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5. At least three and three-quarters credits in health, safety, and physical education during each year of enrollment, distributed as one hundred fifty minutes per week, as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:35-5, 7, and 8;
6. At least five credits in visual and performing arts;
7. At least five credits in world languages or pupil demonstration of proficiency as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 (a)2ii(2);
8. At least two and one-half credits in financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy, effective with the 2010-2011 grade nine class;
9. Technological literacy, consistent with the Core Curriculum Content Standards, integrated throughout the curriculum;
10. At least five credits in 21st century life and careers, or career-technical education; and
11. Electives as determined by the high school program sufficient to total a minimum of one hundred twenty credits.

Credit means the award for the equivalent of a class period of instruction which meets for a minimum of forty minutes, one time per week during the school year or as approved through N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)2.

### B. Option II

Option II establishes alternate pathways for pupils of the district to satisfy requirements for high school graduation and meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards in accord with New Jersey Administrative Code [N.J.A. C. 6A:8-S. 1 (a)l ii].

The purpose of Option II is to provide educational experiences that are meaningful and relevant, and that provide pupils with opportunities to explore and achieve at high levels. In order to maximize pupil achievement and meet diverse pathways for learning, Option II permits pupils to employ alternative learning experiences that are stimulating and intellectually challenging, and that enable pupils to fulfill or exceed the expectations set forth in the Core Curriculum Content Standards.



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### 1. Applications for Policy

Employment of Option II may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following alternatives: pupil exchange programs, interdisciplinary or theme-based programs, independent study, internships, community service, accredited college coursework, concurrent enrollment at colleges and universities, meaningful research, and structured learning experiences.

### 2. Eligibility

Option II alternatives requested by eligible pupils must meet or exceed the proficiencies established by the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, receive prior approval by the Option II Review Committee, and demonstrate satisfactory performance as measured by district approved competency assessment instruments in order for credits to be awarded.

It is understood that participation in Option II alternative experiences is voluntary. Pupils may fulfill the requirements for graduation by pursuing credits earned through the traditional classroom environment (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5., through alternative learning experiences availed by Option II [N.J.A.C. 6A:8-S.1 (a) ii], or through a combination of both programs. However, approved participation in Option II activities implies pupil and/or parent responsibility for attendance, transportation, personal safety and well being, specialized equipment, and any and all costs not otherwise provided by the school.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. The Principal shall have primary responsibility and authority for the implementation of the Option II program and will oversee all aspects of the program. All programs of study, individual or group, approved under Option II must meet or exceed the proficiencies and skills identified by the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. Skill proficiency will be measured or demonstrated through assessment instruments established by the Option II Review Committee.
- b. Pupils wishing to pursue programs of study under Option II guidelines must first present their proposal to the Option II Review Committee for approval. The Option II Review Committee shall



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consist of the Principal, Subject Area Supervisor, Supervisor of Guidance, and a minimum of one teacher. Other district personnel may comprise the committee at the discretion of the Principal. The Option II Review Committee will consider a pupil's GPA when determining eligibility for Option II credit.

- c. All eligible pupils will be afforded equitable access to programs of study under the Option II program. Eligibility will be determined by the Option II Review Committee. In its deliberation, the Option II Review Committee will weigh the overall benefits, costs, advantages and disadvantages, both to the pupil and the district.
- d. All programs of study proposed through the Option II program shall have specific instructional objectives [N.J.A.C. 6A:5-1-(a) ii(c)] aligned with the Core Curriculum Content Standards and comply with all applicable laws and regulations including child labor laws and regulations governing occupational safety.
- e. Individual requests by pupils to employ Option II alternatives must be submitted to the Options II Review Committee prior to the semester in which they are proposed for implementation.
- f. Programs approved and credits awarded toward the attainment of a high school diploma shall be reviewed and determined by the Option II Review Committee.
- g. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and/or pupils may appeal decisions rendered by the Option II Review Committee. Such appeals will be heard by the Superintendent of Schools.
- h. Pupils electing independent study, college coursework, internships, or other programs that are held off the high school campus and approved by the Option II Review Committee, will be responsible for providing their own transportation to and from the work or school site.
- i. Pupils approved for off-campus learning experiences shall be responsible for their personal safety and well-being. Internships or other worksite learning experiences at area businesses will require a signed Memorandum of Agreement among the school, the



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worksite, and the pupil. Such memoranda will specify the roles and responsibilities of each party.

- j. The district bears no responsibility for pupil transportation or personal safety and shall be held harmless for any liability arising from issues of transportation or personal safety for pupils participating in the Option II programs or activities.
- k. Pupils approved for Option II activities must have parental permission to participate in any alternative learning experiences. Such permission will be granted through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and returned to the district before beginning the program.
- l. Pupils approved for college classes or concurrent enrollment at colleges or universities under Option II and through The Governor's Twelfth Grade Initiative [N.J.A.C. 6A:8-S.1(a) ii(3)] must first be approved by the district. Pupils must earn a "D" or better in each college course in order to receive concurrent credit.
- m. Outside coursework for Hopewell Valley Central High School credit will be recorded as pass/fail and will not count toward GPA or WGPA.

### C. Additional Graduation Requirements

- 1. Attendance requirements as indicated in Policy No. 5200.
- 2. Any statutorily mandated requirements for earning a high school diploma;
- 3. Demonstrated proficiency in all sections of the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), Competency Assessments, or Alternative High School Assessment process applicable to the class graduating in the year they meet all other graduation requirements, based on a schedule prescribed by the commissioner in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1 (b) through (d) and
- 4. Those pupils graduating from an adult high school shall demonstrate proficiency in all sections of the HSPA, applicable Competency Assessment, or designated Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA)



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process for any subjects not yet passed on a previously approved Statewide assessment required for graduation.

D. High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA)

1. The district will provide pupils who have not demonstrated proficiency on one or more sections of the HSPA following the 11th grade, or applicable Competency Assessment, with the opportunity to demonstrate such competence through both repeated administrations of the HSPA and the AHSA process conducted in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education.
  - a. The Superintendent shall submit the results of the AHSA process to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools by March 31 of each year, or as otherwise determined by the Commissioner of Education, for approval for graduation in June of the same year. Such results shall include information, as prescribed by the commissioner, pertaining to pupils successfully completing the AHSA process, and to those who fail to complete the AHSA process successfully.
  - b. The Executive County Superintendent, as the Commissioner's designee, shall review the results of each pupil's AHSA and recommend to the Commissioner either approval or disapproval for graduation.
  - c. All English Language Learners (ELLs) shall satisfy the school district's requirements for high school graduation except that any ELLs may demonstrate that they have attained State minimum levels of proficiency through:
    - (1) Passage of the AHSA process in their native language, when available, and passage of an English fluency assessment approved by the Department of Education; or
    - (2) Passage of the AHSA process in English with appropriate accommodations.



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- d. Pupils with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3 or eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and who participate in the AHSA process are not required to participate in repeated administrations of the HSPA.

### E. Attendance

Regular attendance is required for the successful completion of a course of study and graduation. Pupils are expected to be present in every scheduled class except as their attendance is excused in accordance with Board Policy 5200.

### F. Pupils with Disabilities

1. The district, through the IEP process and pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11, Graduation, may for individual pupils with disabilities as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3, specify alternate requirements for a State-endorsed diploma.
2. The district shall specifically address any alternate requirements for graduation in a pupil's IEP, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11.
3. The district shall develop and implement procedures for assessing whether a pupil has met any alternate requirements for graduation individually determined in an IEP.
4. If a pupil with a disability attends a school other than that of the school district of residence which is empowered to grant a diploma, the pupil shall have the choice of receiving a diploma of the school attended or a diploma of the school district of residence.
  - a. If the school the pupil is attending declines to issue a diploma to the pupil, the district of residence Board of Education shall issue the pupil a diploma if the pupil has satisfied all State and local graduation requirements, as specified in the pupil's IEP.
5. Pupils with disabilities who meet the standards for graduation according to the school district's graduation requirements shall have the opportunity to



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participate in graduation exercises and related activities on a nondiscriminatory basis.

6. A pupil with a disability whose individualized education program prescribes continued special education programs beyond the fourth year of high school shall be permitted to participate in commencement ceremonies with his/her graduating class and shall receive a certificate of attendance, provided the pupil has attended four years of high school.
  7. When a pupil with a disability graduates or exceeds the age of eligibility, the pupil shall be provided a written summary of his or her academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the pupil's graduation or the conclusion of the school year in which he or she exceeds the age of eligibility. The summary shall include recommendations to assist the child in meeting his or her post secondary goals.
- G. High School Diploma
1. The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to prospective graduates who have met all of the requirements adopted in accordance with State and local requirements.
  2. The board of Education shall not issue a high school diploma to any pupil not meeting the criteria specified in State and local requirements.
    - a. The district shall provide pupils exiting grade twelve without a diploma the opportunity for continued high school enrollment to age twenty, or until the requirements for a State-endorsed diploma have been met, whichever comes first.
    - b. The district shall allow any out-of-state individual to age twenty who has other wise met all State and local graduation requirements, but has failed to pass the HSPA or applicable Competency Assessments to return to school at scheduled times for the purpose of taking hte necessary test. Upon certification of passing the test applicable to the pupil's class in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6AS:-5.1(a)8, a State-endorsed diploma shall be granted by the high school of record.



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- (1) The commissioner of Education shall award a State-issued high school diploma in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A: 8-5.2(2) and (d).
- (2) The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any currently enrolled pupil formally requesting an early award of the diploma in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(e) and Board Policy 5465.

### H. Notification

Each pupil who enters or transfers into the high school and the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be provided a copy of the school district's requirements for a State-endorsed diploma, and those programs available to assist pupils in attaining the state endorsed diploma.

### I. Reporting

The Superintendent, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-7 and 18A:7E-3, shall report annually at a public meeting not later than September 30, to the Board of Education and the Commissioner:

1. The total number of pupils graduated;
2. The number of pupils graduated under the AHSA process;
3. The number of pupils receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternative requirements for graduation as specified in their IEPs;
4. The total number of pupils denied graduation from the 12th grade class; and
5. The total number of pupils denied graduation from the 12th grade class solely because of failure to pass the HSPA or AHSA, based on the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)3.

- J. The Superintendent shall provide the district's graduation requirements each year they are evaluated through the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) to the Executive County Superintendent and update this filed copy each time the graduation policy and requirements are revised.



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N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-1 et seq.; 18A:35-1; 18A:35-4.9; 18A:35-7;  
18A:36-17

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1 et seq; 6A:8-5.1; 6A:8-5.2; 6A:14-4.11 et seq.

Cross reference: Policy Guide Nos. 5200, 5410, 5465

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