

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Purpose

This policy is established by the North Kingstown School Committee for the expressed purpose of setting forth the minimum standards of academic accomplishment that all students must attain to receive the honor and right to obtain a diploma from North Kingstown High School.

Philosophy

The School Committee recognizes that there are many things that are important for students to demonstrate evidences of documented growth and development as a result of their years of participation and attendance within the North Kingstown School District. Although much acquired knowledge is an expected part of a student's general growth and development, some are specific, measurable, and set forth as a mandatory expectation for consideration to a fulfilled program of learning. To this end, the School Committee sets forth the following statement of expectation in regard to satisfactory course completion and graduation with the receipt of a diploma from North Kingstown High School.

Policy Statement

As set forth in the 2011 [K-12 Literacy, Restructuring of the Learning Environment at the Middle and High School Levels, and Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements \(PBGR\) at High Schools Regulation \(Secondary Regulations\)](#), all students must complete each of the following graduation requirements in order to earn a North Kingstown High School diploma:

- (1) Successful completion of a minimum of 24 credits, including required areas
 - a. English (4 credits)
 - b. Math (4 credits)
 - c. Science (3 credits)
 - d. Social Studies (3 credits)
 - e. PE/Health (2 credits)
 - f. Technology Readiness (.5 credit)
 - g. Visual/Performing Arts (.5 credit)
 - h. Electives (7 credits)
- (2) Demonstration of proficiency through performance-based assessments:
 - Successful completion of Senior Project; and
 - Successful completion of ePortfolio (through the Class of 2015) or Comprehensive Course Assessment system (Class of 2016 and beyond); based on attaining a 70% or higher on a minimum number of Anchor Assignments.
- (3) Attainment of the minimum level of proficiency or measurable improvement of the student's initial score on the Grade 11 state assessments.

Students have the opportunity to meet the state initial assessment requirement through the use of other [approved assessments as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Education](#) (RIDE) only after completion of two administrations of the state assessment in the required content areas. In relatively few cases, students who do not meet the required level of proficiency on the state assessment or other approved assessments may apply for a waiver [Appendix 3]. For such students, the North Kingstown School Department has developed and implemented a waiver process, which ensures a fair, efficient, and accurate review of waiver applications.

The 2011 Secondary Regulations describe the conditions under which Local Education Agency (LEAs) may grant waivers for the state assessment requirement for high school graduation for students who have attained and can demonstrate the required level of proficiency, as set forth below:

[L-6-3.3](#). If a student is unable to demonstrate graduation readiness through the state assessment or a Board of Education approved testing alternative, the student may apply to his or her LEA for a waiver of the state assessment

portion of the graduation requirements. LEAs are authorized to grant waivers from the state assessment requirement set forth in this section only in those rare cases in which the state assessment is not a valid means of determining the proficiency of individual students. Waiver eligibility will be considered only for those students for whom: (1) there is a preponderance of evidence of academic content mastery consistent with 6-3.0 of these regulations, and (2) the student has completed the sequence of testing requirements set forth in this section.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WAIVER

Waivers apply to only the state assessment component of the student graduation requirements. A student must meet the eligibility criteria, outlined in the Waiver Protocol, in order to be considered for a waiver. At a minimum, the conditions by which students can be considered for a waiver are:

- (1) Demonstration of academic content mastery consistent with the 9-10 grade level standards;
- (2) Completion of the sequence of state testing requirements including participation and demonstrated effort in their Progress Plan; and
- (3) Completion of all of the other graduation requirements (course work, performance assessments and other local graduation requirements).

The North Kingstown School Department hereby establishes a local process for the review of waivers that includes district-level involvement in the final decision process. This process shall include:

- a. The establishment, adoption and communication of policy and procedures for the waiver.
 - School Committee Approval and publication in the School Committee Policy Manual.
 - Provision of procedures on the North Kingstown High School Website and the Program of Studies beginning in 2014-2015.
- b. Publication and communication of the timeline for requesting waivers, the length of time for reviewing evidence and for making waiver decisions.
 - Waivers will be accepted after a student has received the results of the second administration of the state assessment.
 - Review and decisions will be provided to the students and their families no later than two weeks prior to the third administration to allow time for an appeals decision.
- c. The establishment of a waiver review team.
 - Waiver review team will consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning, Guidance Chair, Proficiency Based Coordinators, Department Chair of area of waiver request, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, and Assistant Superintendent.
- d. Identification of roles and responsibilities for reviewing evidence. [See Waiver Review Team] After making a decision, the decision will be available for RIDE for review and monitor.
- e. Identification of the types and amount of evidence used in making waiver decisions. [See Eligible Evidence Below]
- f. Development and maintenance of a system for managing the evidence used to make waiver determinations.
 - Evidence will be maintained and tracked in Aspen the Guidance Department and the Proficiency Based Graduation Coordinators.
- g. Establishment of a process for documenting and making available waiver decisions.
 - The waiver review team will convene no later than seven school days after receiving an eligible request for a waiver.

The Superintendent is hereby directed to ensure the North Kingstown School Department waiver process grants waivers only in those specific conditions described in this policy and the attached waiver protocol. It is explicitly acknowledged that RIDE will monitor the North Kingstown School Department waiver process and the granting of waivers during the diploma system review process. It is the responsibility of North Kingstown School Department to store all sources of evidence used to make waiver decisions and to make such evidence available as part of student records, upon request in response to appeals, or as part of the diploma system review process.

Appendix 1: Waiver Protocol

Establishment of the Waiver Process

Waivers are not the same as exemptions from participation in a particular administration of the state assessment. Exemption decisions are made at the time of each administration of the state assessment on the basis of established criteria.

Students are not eligible to begin the waiver process until they have completed, at minimum, the second administration of the state assessment in the required content areas.

As part of establishing a waiver process, the Superintendent shall be responsible for the completion of the following five steps for successful implementation of a Waiver Process.

1. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To the extent possible, information on the waiver process will be integrated into the Individual Learning Plan and/or existing monitoring processes. This includes monitoring students' potential eligibility for a waiver based on prior testing and performance and communicating to students and their families of the specific conditions in which a waiver may be granted. Communication to families will be in the preferred language or mode of communication unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. Waivers are intended only for students for whom there is clear evidence that they have reached the required level of proficiency as defined by RIDE.

To determine if a student is eligible for a waiver, there must be evidence that the student has met the following criteria.

The student has:

- Successfully completed all elements of their local graduation requirements except for the state assessment; and
- Completed the sequence of state testing requirements, including multiple opportunities if needed, as set forth in the RIDE Secondary Regulations; and
- Documented evidence of academic content mastery consistent with the 9-10 grade level standards, which include multiple [a minimum of two] and different types of evidence; and
- Demonstrated effort to improve their skills through participation in their Progress Plan/associated interventions and demonstrated commitment to their academic success through the completion of their senior year; and
- Where appropriate, a documented pattern of discrepancy between their demonstrated level of proficiency and their performance on standardized assessments.

2. ELIGIBLE EVIDENCE

The criteria used to determine if evidence is eligible must, at a minimum be aligned to the 9-10 grade level standards.

The list below provides examples of eligible evidence and a few examples of ineligible evidence. **NOTE:** Multiple pieces of evidence [minimum of two] are necessary to demonstrate sufficient levels of meeting the proficiency requirement in the waiver determination.

Examples of Eligible Evidence*

1. Portfolio work aligned to 9-10 grade level standards in required areas.
2. Outside activities/projects aligned to the grade 9-10 grade level standards.
3. Outcome data collected from interim and/or progress monitoring assessments.
4. Outcome data collected from high quality assessments administered by a certified test administrator.

a. [See RIDE Approved Assessments- http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Diploma-System/RIDE-Approved-Tests-Revised2013.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Diploma-System/RIDE-Approved-Tests-Revised2013.pdf)

5. A language proficiency adjustment (LPA) score for eligible ELL students.
6. Course performance in academic content aligned to 9-10 grade level standards that reflect the proficiency descriptions [Appendix 2] as measured by:
 - Course work, course assessments and course grades.
 - Performance assessments/tasks in math and/or reading.
 - Virtual Learning Math Modules.
 - Relevant activities/material in progress plan.

*Evidence can include activities or products that were accomplished with appropriate accommodations but not those activities accomplished with modifications that alter the content of the 9-10 grade level standards.

Examples of Evidence Not Sufficient for Supporting Waiver Eligibility

1. Performance in courses below the 9-10 grade level standards.
2. Performance on assessments modified below the 9-10 grade level standards.
3. Letters of support.
4. Student attendance records.
5. Number of credits earned.
6. Outside activities unrelated to the testing domain.

3. EVIDENCE EVALUATION

a. Individual courses or sequences of courses that must be completed. Course content must include, at minimum, state adopted standards for Algebra I and Geometry and required standards for 9-10 grade level standards English Language Arts. Courses should be aligned to national codes such as SCED codes. These courses are identified in the Program of Studies.

b. The level of performance in those courses indicates a demonstrated level of proficiency that reflects the 9-10 grade level standards. The level of required performance is similar to that of students in those same courses who have met the state assessment requirement. This level of proficiency is measured by a minimum score of 70% on the Comprehensive Course Assessments.

c. The level of achievement on performance based diploma assessments may contribute evidence of student proficiency is defined by a minimum score of 70% on the Comprehensive Course Assessments without modifications or a proficient level on two proficiency-based common tasks as identified in the program of studies per each core course at the 9th and 10th grade level.

d. Performance evidence, such as successfully completed course work or progress monitoring assessment results, gathered through the Progress Plan may contribute evidence of student proficiency, will be monitored by guidance and the Proficiency Based Graduation Coordinator through Aspen X2 as well as the interventionist. Note: successful completion of a Progress Plan alone will not provide sufficient evidence to grant a waiver.

e. Common non-school sources of evidence that will be considered include dual enrollment courses, accredited virtual high school courses, earned technical credentials or licensure, extended learning opportunities, etc., in the tested content areas.

4. APPLICATION REVIEW SYSTEM

Waiver review team will consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning, Guidance Chair, Proficiency Based Coordinators, Department Chair of area of waiver request, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, and Assistant Superintendent.

5. EVIDENCE COLLECTION

North Kingstown High School will collect and maintain evidence used to develop proficiency profiles for student waiver decisions. This collection will be kept for no less than one year from the time of decision. The summary form [Appendix 3] will be kept for a period of five years from the date of decision.

Upon review of individual waiver applications, recommendations shall be forwarded by the review team to the Superintendent for final approval and signature.

APPEALS

Students and families retain the right to appeal overall graduation decisions in accordance with the LEA appeal policy. Appeals encompass all components of the state graduation requirements as well as any local graduation requirements. All students and their families may appeal a graduation decision made by the LEA.

The district School Committee hears and is the decision-making body for appeals. This is different from the waiver process, which is only applied to the state assessment component of the high school diploma requirements.

EXEMPT STUDENTS

The Secondary Regulations state that students who participate in the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA) are not eligible to receive a high school diploma and therefore are not eligible for consideration of a waiver.

Appendix 2: Proficiency Descriptions

Content area specialists at RIDE developed the following with input from district content specialists as part of the suite of guidance documents for the implementation of the secondary regulations. These descriptions are intended to describe a student who is proficient at the 9-10 grade level standards. The state assessment requirement is for students to demonstrate partial proficiency at the 9-10 grade level standards.

For the purposes of determining eligibility for a waiver from the state assessment, a district may use the following strategy to identify the minimum level of proficiency required for a waiver:

- Identification of the students who are doing well on the state assessment (Partially Proficient or Proficient on NECAP/PARRC);
- Determining their level of performance on local performance based assessments and courses; and
- Examining their course enrollment patterns.

This will help establish a profile of the level of performance required for graduation and will provide a profile of what an eligible student should look like in the evidence collected in coursework, performance assessments and other eligible activities.

Reading Proficiency Description

Students are prepared to read materials in post-secondary settings or in the workplace beyond high school. The student uses a variety of strategies to read with accuracy to understand (summarize and interpret) a range of literary and informational texts across content areas. The student identifies purpose for reading, uses literary elements, text structures, and/or text features to make and support assertions about texts. The student reflects on and can describe the role of reading in an area of specialized interest (e.g. flexible and appropriate use of strategies for different texts, reading for research, self-selecting text based on topic, interest, etc.).

Mathematics Proficiency Description

Students can demonstrate a conceptual understanding of number and operations; algebra and functions; data, statistics, and probability; and geometry and measurement. Students can apply a variety of strategies to determine and defend the reasonableness of solutions through correct, clear, and concise explanations by solving real-life situations. Students can generalize and apply these understandings to new situations and problems. Students can work within and across all types of real numbers and number systems. Students can understand concepts of and use properties of various functions represented in symbolic, graphic, and tabular form. Students analyze and interpret data presented in tables

and graphs and use statistical models to prove and defend a position. Students can prove and justify geometric relationships.

LEGAL REFERENCE

Regulations of the Board of Education: K-12 Literacy, Restructuring of the Learning Environment at the Middle and High School Levels, and Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR) at High Schools – Section [L-6-3.3](#), Use of state assessments for High School graduation. HISTORY RIDE: Initial Guidance for High School Regulations.

Adopted: 2/16/93

Amended: 5/24/07, 1/14/14

Appendix 3: Waiver Application

Waivers are intended only for those students for whom there is clear evidence that he or she has demonstrated the required level of proficiency to earn a diploma. This summary report must be kept for a period of five years from the date of decision and available for review.

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Name		Expected Graduation Date	
School	North Kingstown High School	Date Waiver Submitted	
ID #		School Counselor	
DOB		Advisor	
Grade			

PROGRESS TOWARD DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:

Credits	Progress	Credits	Progress	State Assessment	School Year:	School Year:
4 Math		.5 Art/Music/Theater		Math		
4 English		6.5 Electives		Reading		
3.5 Social Studies		2 PE/Health				
3 Science		.5 Tech Readiness				
Other		24 Total Credits Required	[# / XX]			

Performance Assessments	Progress/Completion

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT PROFICIENCY:

Evidence Documentation Name	Type of Evidence
Progress Plan Participation	
	[] Coursework [] Third Party Evidence [] Performance/ Diploma Assessment [] Other
	[] Coursework [] Third Party Evidence [] Performance/ Diploma Assessment [] Other
	[] Coursework [] Third Party Evidence [] Performance/ Diploma Assessment [] Other
	[] Coursework [] Third Party Evidence [] Performance/ Diploma Assessment [] Other

WAIVER APPROVAL:

Waiver Approved Waiver Rejected

Principal Date

Superintendent Date