

High School Academic Policy Guide



Letter of Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

This High School Academic Policy Guide was originally published in February 2012 as a resource for schools. In response to feedback from principals and other stakeholders, it consolidated the many regulations governing programming, graduation requirements, exam administration, and student data from the City and State into one reference guide. Since then, the guide has been updated several times to include new guidance and regulations relevant to day-to-day school operations and programming.

As a principal, I became intimately familiar with this guide during my years at the High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology. Each day, our school community focused on delivering strong instruction and engaging curricula that met or exceeded State standards. But when questions came up about exactly what those requirements were, or the appropriate ways to track student progress, I found that referring to this guide allowed me to quickly find the answers I needed so that I could focus my energy on teaching and learning.

Our goal with this edition remains the same: to align systems and reporting with policies and regulations, and to provide a one-stop tool that distills regulations and guidance into plain language. Schools should continue to use this guide as a resource as they program students, maintain student records, and ensure that students are provided with the opportunities they are entitled to in order to graduate ready for college and careers in the 21st century.

As you engage in this work, the support structure and central staff are here to assist you. If you have questions about individual students or courses—particularly policies related to current seniors—please reach out to your [academic policy and systems lead](#). As you plan for the upcoming school year and beyond, please refer to this guide and share it with guidance staff and other key members of your school community. The most current digital version of this guide is available on the Department of Education's [academic policy and systems intranet page](#), which also includes links to other policy and systems guidance. Please refer to [Principals' Weekly](#) for updates on additional programming and policy processes.

We hope you will find this resource as useful as I did as a principal. As always, thank you for the incredible work you do to ensure our students' success.

Phil Weinberg
Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

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I. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

[New York State Education Department \(NYSED\) Commissioner’s Regulations Part 100.5](#) establishes the requirements for earning a high school diploma in New York State. To meet diploma requirements, students must earn [specific course credits](#) and pass [specific assessments](#), typically Regents exams or Department-approved alternatives. Additional local policies from New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) are described in this guide.

Students’ progress toward completing course and exam requirements are captured in [STARS](#). STARS is the NYCDOE’s official record of students’ academic programs and grades. The STARS suite of applications reflects academic information for all NYCDOE public school students in grades K–12. STARS data also reflects schools’ alignment to the New York State and New York City academic policies described in this guide. To ensure that STARS data accurately captures students’ academic programs and outcomes, high schools should follow the guidelines described in the [High School Course Code Directory](#). STARS is managed by the NYCDOE’s Office of Academic Policy & Systems. See the [Scheduling in STARS](#) section and visit the [STARS wiki](#) for more information.

[Part 100](#) requires students to earn at least 22 units of credit to earn a diploma. NYCDOE public schools calculate credits towards graduation using a semester-based model, in which the State’s requirement of 22 units of credit equates to 44 credits. Throughout this guide, the NYCDOE semester-based credit model is used.

A. DIPLOMA TYPES

There are three diplomas offered in New York City and State: advanced Regents, Regents, and the local diploma. All of these diplomas are valid within and outside the State and can be used wherever a high school diploma is required. All diplomas require students to earn 44 credits in specific subject areas and pass specific assessments in English language arts (ELA), math, social studies, and science. In special circumstances, some students may be eligible to earn a local diploma, which allows them to graduate with lower exam scores. The [table on the next page](#) outlines specific eligibility requirements.

On pages six and seven, tables summarize the [credit](#) and [assessment](#) requirements for diplomas, by type. A version of the information in the following tables is available in the form of graduation requirements cards for students and families on the [NYCDOE website](#).¹ All students should be encouraged to meet the requirements for the most rigorous option possible.

To support [college and career readiness](#), schools may communicate more rigorous academic expectations than those defined by New York State graduation requirements; however, schools may not withhold diplomas from students who have completed the minimum New York State and City graduation requirements

Students can also earn endorsements or designations to their diplomas for exceeding the requirements and specializing in particular subjects; these are outlined further in the [Diploma Endorsements](#) section of this guide.

Students who are unable to earn a high school diploma may earn non-diploma commencement credentials, which are outlined further in the [Commencement Credentials](#) section of this guide.

¹ Students who entered grade 9 prior to 2007 may have varying requirements as outlined in Part 100.

Diploma Type	Eligibility	Requirements	
		Credits ²	Assessments ³
Advanced Regents	All students	Earn 44 required credits , including at least six credits in languages other than English (LOTE)	Pass nine specific assessments with scores of 65 or higher ^{4,5}
Regents	All students	Earn 44 required credits	Pass five specific assessments with scores of 65 or higher ⁶
Local	<p>All Safety Net-eligible students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) • Students with Section 504 plans that specify Safety Net eligibility • Students with disabilities who were declassified while in grades 8–12 whose last IEP specified Safety Net eligibility <p>Students with specific Regents appeals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with a successful New Arrival ELA appeal • Students with a successful Safety Net appeal • Students with two Low Score appeals on Regents exams, including students without disabilities 	Earn 44 required credits	<p>Pass five specific assessments with scores of 55 or higher, or utilize any of the Safety Net or Regents appeals flexibilities to graduate with lower scores, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeals • Compensatory Score option • Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) • Superintendents' review for students with current IEPs <p>(Many of these options may be used in combination with one another. See the appendix of this guide and the Safety Net flexibilities section for details.)</p>

² The number of credits required for State-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) sequences varies depending on the specific program of study, such that students may be required to earn more than 44 total credits. Students completing Arts or CTE endorsements to the advanced Regents diploma are required to complete only 2 credits of LOTE; see the [Diploma Endorsement](#) section of this guide. In addition, students whose IEPs indicate a disability that affects their ability to learn a language are not required to take LOTE credits. The LOTE credits are replaced with elective courses; see the [LOTE](#) section of this guide.

³ Students who have fulfilled one or more exam requirements using a portfolio-based assessment from an approved school may earn a diploma; see the section on [schools using PBATS](#).

⁴ Students who transfer to New York State schools in grades 11 or 12 and waive specific Regents exams may earn an advanced Regents diploma if they pass all other exams required for graduation; see the [Regents Exam Waivers](#) section of this guide. Also, students completing an approved sequence in CTE or the Arts may earn an advanced Regents diploma without passing the LOTE exam; see the [Diploma Endorsements](#) section of this guide.

⁵ Regents exams in languages other than English (LOTE) are no longer offered by NYSED. NYCDOE LOTE comprehensive exams may be used to fulfill the requirement for the advanced Regents diploma. See [NYC LOTE exams](#) and the [LOTE FAQ](#).

⁶ Students who appeal one Regents exam score of 60–64 may still graduate with a Regents diploma; see the [Appeals to Graduate](#) section of this guide. Students who transfer to New York State schools in grades 11 or 12 and waive specific Regents exams may earn a Regents diploma if they pass all other exams required for graduation; see the [Regents Exam Waivers](#) section of this guide.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS	Local & Regents Diploma	Advanced Regents Diploma
	Minimum Requirements ⁷	
English Language Arts (ELA)	8	8
Math Including at least 2 credits of advanced math (e.g. Geometry or Algebra II)	6	6
Social Studies <i>Distributed as follows:</i> Global History (4) U.S. History (2) Participation in Government (1) Economics (1)	8	8
Science (including labs) <i>Distributed as follows:</i> Life Science (2) Physical Science (2) Life Science or Physical Science (2)	6	6
Languages Other Than English (LOTE)⁸	2	6
Visual Art, Music, Dance, and/or Theater	2	2
Physical Education In every year, distributed in specific patterns	4	4
Health	1	1
Electives	7	3
Total	44 credits	44 credits

⁷ The number of credits required for State-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) sequences varies depending on the specific program of study. Students may be required to earn more than 44 total credits.

⁸ Students completing Arts or CTE endorsements to the advanced Regents diploma are required to complete only 2 credits of LOTE; see the [Diploma Endorsements](#) section of this guide. Students whose IEPs indicate a disability that affects their ability to learn a language are not required to take LOTE credits. The LOTE credits are replaced with elective courses; see the [LOTE](#) section of this guide.

Assessment Requirements ⁹	Local Diploma (<u>Safety Net</u>) ¹⁰	Regents Diploma ¹¹	Advanced Regents Diploma
Regents subject area ¹²	Minimum Requirements¹³		
English Language Arts	55+	65+	65+
Math	55+ on one math exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algebra I, Geometry, OR Algebra II 	65+ on one math exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algebra I, Geometry, OR Algebra II 	65+ on three math exams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algebra I, Geometry, AND Algebra II
Social Studies¹⁴	55+ on one social studies exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. History OR Global History & Geography 	65+ on one social studies exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. History OR Global History & Geography 	65+ on one social studies exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. History OR Global History & Geography
Science¹⁴	55+ on one science exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry, OR Physics 	65+ on one science exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry, OR Physics 	65+ on Living Environment AND one other science exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earth Science, Chemistry, OR Physics
+1 option	55+ on any additional Regents exam or <u>State-approved +1 option</u>	65+ on any additional Regents exam or <u>State-approved +1 option</u>	65+ on any additional Regents exam or <u>State-approved +1 option</u>
Languages Other Than English (LOTE)¹⁵			65+ on one NYCDOE LOTE exam ¹⁵
Total	5 assessments	5 assessments	9 assessments

⁹ In addition to Regents exams, other Department-approved alternatives can be used to satisfy exam requirements; see the [Department-approved alternatives](#) section of this guide.

¹⁰ Students who qualify for the local diploma may graduate with lower scores; see the [Appeals to Graduate](#) and [Safety Net](#) sections of this guide for details.

¹¹ Students may graduate with lower scores; see the [Appeals to Graduate](#) section of this guide.

¹² Other assessments and learning experiences approved by NYSED may fulfill the +1 option or replace a required Regents exam, as described in the [Department-approved Alternatives](#) and [Performance Based Assessment Tasks](#) sections of this guide. Students with disabilities may also take Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) or qualify for the [Superintendent's Graduation Review](#) if they meet the specific requirements as described in the [Safety Net Flexibilities](#) section of this guide.

¹³ Students should be encouraged to work for higher scores in order to demonstrate college and career readiness; see the [College and Career Readiness](#) section of this guide.

¹⁴ Students who enter a NYSED registered high school for the first time in grades 11 or 12 may be exempt from certain Regents exam requirements; see the [Regents Exam Waivers](#) section.

¹⁵ Students completing an Arts or CTE endorsement to the advanced Regents diploma and students whose IEPs indicate a disability that affects their ability to learn a language are not required to take the LOTE exam.

B. COURSE CREDITS —Updated September 2016

According to [Part 100 Regulations](#), students must earn 44 credits, distributed across specific subjects and aligned to specific NYSED [learning standards](#), in order to graduate.¹⁶ All high schools must provide students with the opportunity to take credit-bearing courses in grades 9–12 to satisfy the requirements for a high school diploma. By passing the course successfully, students demonstrate mastery of the content and skills, as set forth in a New York State-developed or locally-developed syllabus aligned to NYSED [learning standards](#).¹⁷

Students' programs are comprised of credit bearing and non-credit bearing units of study. A unit of study is defined as at least 180 minutes of instruction per week throughout the semester or school year. This is the equivalent of 54 hours per credit. To accumulate a credit, students must be provided with the opportunity to receive 54 hours of instruction and must demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes. Schools must provide all students with opportunities to complete the credit requirements and must cover any costs associated with participating in and making up required courses.¹⁸ All credit-bearing courses must address high school (i.e. commencement-level) [learning standards](#), meet instructional time requirements, and be taught by a teacher with a NYSED secondary certification in the course's subject area.^{19 20}

When students miss class time, they must be provided opportunities to make up the classwork, assignments, assessments, and other learning experiences; students are not required to make up the exact amount of instructional time missed due to absence. Students who master the course content and satisfactorily meet the expectations outlined in the syllabus for a course must receive credit for the course; they may not be denied credit based on lack of "seat time" alone.

[School grading policies](#) and course syllabi must outline the extent to which attendance and participation factor into students' grades and might therefore impact whether students earn credit. Determinations of passing or failing must be based primarily on how well students master the subject matter, concepts, content, and skills addressed in a class or course. Students cannot pass or fail primarily based on non-mastery measures such as attendance, participation, preparedness, professionalism, respect, and adherence to the school code of conduct. See the [Grading Policy FAQ and Checklist](#) for more information.

Schools with questions or concerns about particular students or groups of students' progress toward meeting graduation requirements should contact their [academic policy and systems lead](#) prior to making changes which affect progress toward a diploma. Because of data integrity considerations, schools may not change or delete any historical data in source systems, including STARS, without consulting their [academic policy and systems lead](#). See also [Coding and Titles for Required Course Sequences](#) and the subject-specific requirements for the Regents diploma outlined below and summarized in the [appendix](#).

¹⁶ [Part 100](#) requires students to earn at least 22 units of credit to earn a diploma. NYCDOE public schools calculate credits towards graduation using a semester-based model, in which the State's requirement of 22 units of credit equates to 44 credits. Throughout this guide, the NYCDOE semester-based credit model is used.

¹⁷ Course content can be documented in a variety of formats, in a single document, or across multiple documents. See [Documenting Course Content](#) for more information.

¹⁸ Students do not have to pay to take any courses that are offered by their school, including online courses, nor do they have to pay to receive diplomas. See also NYCDOE Chancellor's Regulation [A-610](#).

¹⁹ NYSED has commencement-level learning standards in the following subject areas: English language arts; social studies; mathematics, science, and technology; the arts (including visual arts, music, dance and theater); Languages Other Than English; health, physical education, family and consumer sciences; and career development and occupational studies. Commencement-level learning standards and assessments reflect the knowledge, skills, and understandings all students are expected to know and be able to do upon receiving a high school diploma. Courses that do not align to these high school-level standards, including elective courses, may not be credit bearing. There are no standards in "guidance" or "advisory"; such courses may only bear credit if they are taught by appropriate subject certified teachers, are aligned to commencement-level learning standards, and meet instructional time requirements. See the section of this guide on [electives](#).

²⁰ Through NYSED's [incidental teaching provision](#), there are specific instances where a teacher may teach one period per day in a subject area outside their certification area, provided that they teach within the same student population as their license area and have demonstrated subject matter competency in the subject.

1. English Language Arts

Students must accumulate a minimum of eight core credits in English language arts (ELA) to graduate. NYSED does not define a specific sequence; instead, schools must define a four-year ELA sequence aligned to commencement-level [standards](#), spanning grades 9–12, and progressing in rigor. Schools may also offer “selectives” that address ELA standards, as well as electives in other areas in the English department that support learning in ELA.

As described further in the [Coding and Titles for Required Course Sequences](#) section, courses beginning with the first two characters of ‘EE’ in STARS indicate that the course is aligned to core ELA standards; only courses aligned to ELA standards as evidenced by a syllabus should be counted toward the required 8 credits.²¹ Courses coded with any other letter than ‘E’ in the second character (e.g. ‘EJ’, ‘ES’, etc.) are English electives, as indicated in the [High School Course Code Directory](#).

English as a New Language (ENL) courses that address commencement-level ELA standards in addition to ENL standards, as evidenced by a syllabus, may bear core English or elective English credit and be coded as ‘EE’, per the [High School Course Code Directory](#). [Part 154](#) addresses how schools must identify and serve English Language Learners (ELLs). See the [ELLS](#) section of this guide and the [English Language Learner Policy and Reference Guide](#) for more information.

2. Social Studies

In social studies, students must earn a minimum of eight credits to graduate with a diploma. NYSED defines specific subjects and [standards](#). These requirements apply to all students, regardless of the social studies assessment(s) students use to graduate:

- Four Global history credits (reflected in STARS with codes beginning with ‘HG’)
- Two U.S. history credits (‘HU’)
- One Participation in government credit (‘HV’ or ‘HF’)
- One Economics credit (‘HE’ or ‘HF’)

A yearlong economics course, such as AP Microeconomics or AP Macroeconomics, can fulfill the economics requirement provided that the course syllabus is supplemented to fully address the [NYSED learning standards in economics](#). However, a yearlong advanced economics course cannot substitute for both the economics and participation in government requirements unless the syllabus is supplemented to incorporate both the [economics](#) and [participation in government learning standards](#). In this case, the course should be coded in STARS as ‘HF’ and titled to indicate that it is a combined economics and government course, as described in the [High School Course Code Directory](#). These policies also apply to year-long government courses.

3. Math

Students must earn a minimum of six credits in mathematics, including at least two credits of advanced math (e.g. Geometry, Algebra II, Calculus), to graduate. However, to be college-and-career ready, it is strongly recommended that students receive four years of high-school level math, including instruction in:

- Algebra I (reflected in STARS with codes beginning with ‘ME’)
- Geometry (‘MG’)
- Algebra II (‘MR’)

NYSED allows math courses designed to culminate in a [Regents exam](#) to extend up to four credits. No more than a total of four credits may be awarded for high school-level coursework in any of the following subjects: Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II. Students participating in an extended algebra course must earn at least two commencement-level math credits other than algebra.

High school technology education courses (coded in STARS with the first two characters of ‘MK’ or ‘SK’) may be used to fulfill two credits in mathematics or science, but not both. These courses should be coded in the math or science department to fulfill these requirements, per the [High School Course Code Directory](#).

²¹ Historical course data should not be edited. If a course previously coded as an English elective addressed ELA standards and fulfilled core English requirements for graduation, as evidenced by a course syllabus or other course documentation, the school should retain the documentation in case requested; however they may not alter the historical course codes.

Courses that do not align to high school-level standards (e.g. pre-algebra, math fundamentals) may not bear credit and cannot be used to fulfill the math or elective requirements. Students may also not receive credit for retaking a course they have already passed, even if they are using it to help prepare to take the [Regents exam](#). Regents-preparatory courses may not be credit bearing. See the [non-credit bearing courses](#) section of this guide for additional information.

4. Science

Students must earn a minimum of six credits in science to graduate, including:²²

- Two life science credits (codes beginning with 'SL', 'SB', or 'SW')
- Two physical science credits ('SE', 'SC', 'SP', or 'SD')
- Two additional science credits in life and/or physical science

To be college- and career-ready, it is strongly recommended that students receive four years and eight credits of high-school level science, including living environment, chemistry, physics, and any AP science course.

The required two life science credits listed above can be in living environment or in school-developed courses derived from the living environment standards. Likewise, the required two physical science credits can be in earth science, chemistry, physics, or school-developed courses derived from any of the physical setting standards. Schools may determine which of these courses culminate in Regents exams.

Completing year-long, two-credit science courses supports students in thoroughly mastering the course content; however, students are not required to complete three year-long science courses to earn six science credits. For example, a student who completes one credit of earth science and one credit of chemistry meets the minimum physical science credit requirements. Schools should consider students' post-secondary goals in designing science sequences.

NYSED allows any science course that end in a [Regents exam](#) to extend up to four credits. No more than a total of four credits may be awarded for the following high school-level coursework: living environment, earth science, chemistry, or physics.

High school technology education courses ('MK' or 'SK') may be used to fulfill the remaining two credits in mathematics or science, but not both. These courses must be coded in the math or science department to fulfill these requirements, per the [High School Course Code Directory](#).

While all science courses incorporate lab activities, for those science courses designed to culminate in a Regents, students must also successfully complete an additional required hands-on (not virtual) laboratory component of 1,200 minutes with documented satisfactory lab reports. The lab may not be credit bearing and must be provided in addition to the 54 hours required for each science credit. Labs that correspond to science courses designed to culminate in a Regents exam must be recorded on student transcripts, with a clear indication of whether the student successfully completed the laboratory requirement (e.g. 'P' or 'F' to indicate pass or fail, or the equivalent per the school's grading policy). Labs must be indicated separately in STARS using the appropriate code ('L' in the seventh character) as described in the [High School Course Code Directory](#). Schools can provide the 1,200 minutes of hands-on lab experiences in a single term or across multiple terms. If the 1,200 minutes are scheduled across multiple terms, students must pass all terms to meet the lab requirement.

If students pass a required science lab but fail the Regents, it is recommended, but not required, that they retake the lab in order to retake the Regents.

Students may not receive credit for re-taking a course they have already passed, even if they are using it to help prepare to take the [Regents exam](#). Regents-preparatory courses may not be credit bearing. Please see the section on [non-credit bearing courses](#) for additional information.

5. Languages other than English (World Languages)

Students must earn at least two credits of languages other than English (LOTE) to graduate with a local or Regents diploma; students must earn at least six credits of LOTE to graduate with an advanced Regents diploma. Course credits are typically

²² Some courses may be designed as either life or physical science courses, depending on the [learning standards](#) they address (e.g. environmental science). If the course is being used to fulfill the life or physical science requirement, a school should clearly name and [code the course](#) as either life or physical based on the learning standards the course addresses.

completed in one language but may be completed in multiple languages when appropriate given students' academic needs.

A [student with a disability](#) is exempt from meeting the LOTE requirement only if his/her IEP indicates that the requirement is not appropriate due to a disability that adversely affects his/her ability to learn a language.²³ The student must still earn 44 course credits required for graduation through elective credits earned in other subject areas. See the [NYCDOE LOTE FAQ](#) for more information.

Students may be awarded up to 10 credits in LOTE for documented residence and school attendance in an other-than-English-speaking environment, provided that the experience occurred at age 11 or older; see the [NYSED LOTE FAQ](#) and the [Transfer Credit](#) section of this guide for more information.

Students earning an advanced Regents diploma with an Arts or CTE endorsement are required to complete only two credits of LOTE.

6. Physical Education —Updated September 2016

[Part 135.4](#) defines the minimum requirements for schools to provide physical education (PE) in grades 7–12. High school students must participate in an instructional physical education (PE) program using either the traditional model (90 minutes per week using the “3/2 flip model” or other patterns) or the daily model (180 minutes per week, in all but one term).²⁴ Schools may not count the time for dressing or traveling to an off-site facility toward the instructional time. In order to graduate and earn a diploma, students must successfully earn four course credits in PE. Like all credit-bearing experiences, PE courses must be aligned to NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) and taught by a subject-certified teacher. Class size may not exceed 50 students to one certified PE teacher per the UFT contract.

High School PE Model	Minimum required PE time	Minimum required PE frequency	Credits ²⁵
Traditional model ²⁴	90 minutes per week ²⁴	Every term ²⁴	0.5 per semester, totaling 4.0 credits ²⁵
Daily model	180 minutes per week	Daily, in all but one term	0.58 per semester, totaling 4.06 credits ²⁵

Students may take more than one PE course per term, but students may not accelerate or “bank” PE credits in order to avoid taking PE in later grades.

As in all other courses, grading for PE must be based primarily on content area knowledge and skills and not on non-mastery measures. Students may not be graded solely on attendance, participation, or preparedness. See the [Grading Policy FAQ](#) for more details.

NYSED PE & Health Learning Standards

1. [Personal Health and Fitness](#)
2. [A Safe and Healthy Environment](#)
3. [Resource Management](#)

[NYC FITNESSGRAM](#) is the City’s annual health-related fitness assessment. Schools must complete this assessment for all eligible students each year as part of their PE program; however, performance on this assessment cannot be used to determine student grades.

There are no waivers or exemptions from PE requirements; the only exception where a student does not complete all PE requirements in order to graduate from high school is in the case of early graduation.²⁶ Students with chronic or temporary medical conditions or disabilities must participate in physical education. Students with temporary medical conditions must provide the school with a medical certificate of limitation that indicates the area of the PE program in which the pupil may

²³ This must be indicated in the “Participation with Students without Disabilities” section of the IEP.

²⁴ The traditional PE scheduling model set by Part 135.4 is known as the “3/2 flip,” in which students are scheduled for 3 days per week in one semester and 2 days per week in the other, or for a comparable time each semester, when the school is organized in other patterns. See the [PE FAQ](#) for more information.

²⁵ Other credit values apply, based on the term model. See the [PE FAQ](#) for details.

²⁶ A student graduating high school in fewer than four years may graduate if he/she has met all diploma requirements other than those for PE; in this case, all PE credits must have been earned up to the point of early graduation, but the student would not be required to return to school to complete the PE requirement for any remaining semesters not completed due to early graduation. See the [PE FAQ](#) for more information.

participate. Students with chronic medical conditions or disabilities documented by a [Section 504 Plan](#) or IEP must participate in PE in the least restrictive environment, including general PE or an adapted physical education (APE) program if necessary, as indicated on their IEPs or 504 plans.

7. Health Education —Updated September 2016

[Part 135.3](#) defines the minimum requirements for schools to provide health education instruction, including a minimum of six required annual HIV/AIDS lessons for students in grades 7–12.

All high school students are required to complete a one-credit comprehensive health education course that includes sexual health education.²⁷ Like all credit-bearing experiences, the course must be aligned to [NYSED health education learning standards](#) at the commencement level and must be taught by a certified health education teacher. It is strongly recommended that this course take place during grades 9 or 10, so that students are adequately prepared to make healthy and informed choices throughout high school.

In addition to one credit in comprehensive health education, NYSED mandates six HIV/AIDS lessons for every student every year in grades 9–12. The NYCDOE required curriculum for HIV/AIDS lessons is provided [here](#).

Students may be exempt only from the specific HIV/AIDS and sexual health education lessons that include methods of prevention; all students are required to receive instruction about abstinence, the nature of sexually transmitted diseases, and methods of transmission. Lessons that include abstinence but no other methods of prevention do not qualify for this exemption. The NYCDOE designates [specific “opt out” lessons for each grade level](#) in the provided HIV/AIDS curriculum.

8. The Arts

Students must earn at least two credits in the arts to graduate. Students may take courses in any of the following: dance, music, theater, and/or visual arts. Arts courses can be theoretical (e.g. art history) and/or applied (e.g. ceramics), but must be aligned to the commencement-level [learning standards](#). Students may fulfill the arts requirement through courses in the same discipline or in different disciplines.

A student may obtain arts credits in any discipline by participating in a school’s major performing groups, including band, chorus, orchestra, dance, and theater groups.

Students completing Arts or CTE endorsements to the advanced Regents diploma are required to complete only two credits of LOTE. See the [Diploma Endorsements](#) section of this guide for additional information.

9. Electives —Updated September 2016

Students must earn seven elective credits to graduate with a Regents or local diploma. Students who earn an advanced Regents diploma only need three elective credits, because the remaining four are used to specialize in a [language other than English](#). Elective courses, like all other credit-bearing courses, must align to high school [learning standards](#), be taught by a subject certified teacher, and meet instructional time requirements.²⁸ NYSED has commencement-level [learning standards](#) in the following subject areas: English language arts; social studies; mathematics, science, and technology; the arts (including visual arts, music, dance, and theater); languages other than English; health; physical education; family and consumer sciences; and career development and occupational studies.

Schools should strongly consider students’ post-secondary plans and the extent to which their electives provide meaningful academic experiences. Students who are programmed for four years of math and science in order to meet college-and-career readiness standards can use these courses as their elective credits.

²⁷ Comprehensive health education emphasizes skill development around multiple dimensions of health, including physical, mental, emotional, and social health. It also includes these essential content areas: physical activity and nutrition; HIV/AIDS; sexual risk; family life/sexual health; tobacco; alcohol and other drugs; unintentional injury; violence prevention; and other required health areas. For more information, please see [The State's Guidance for Achieving New York State Standards in Health Education](#) or contact the [Office of School Wellness Programs](#).

²⁸ For example, an advisory course may be offered for elective course credit if it meets these requirements. The content of the course should be evidenced in the course syllabus.

C. ASSESSMENTS —Updated September 2016

In addition to fulfilling course credit requirements, students must pass specific culminating assessments, typically Regents exams, in order to meet diploma requirements.²⁹ Students must pass New York State [Regents exams](#) or other [Department-approved alternatives](#) in English language arts (ELA), social studies, mathematics, and science in order to earn a diploma. See [this table](#) for a brief description of the exam requirements by diploma type.

The minimum passing scores vary according to the diploma type being earned and student eligibility criteria, and in some cases, students can [appeal](#) to graduate with lower exam scores or, in limited circumstances, [waive specific assessment requirements](#). Other assessments are also described in this section, which are not required for graduation. These include the [NYSITELL](#) and [NYSESLAT](#).

1. Regents Exams

The Board of Regents administers culminating assessments in subject areas to assess student learning. The [table on the following page](#) summarizes all available Regents exams, created and administered by NYSED, by subject area.³⁰

All students who have enrolled in a course of study leading to a Regents exam have the right to take that exam. Students may not be barred from an exam for disciplinary reasons or because their achievement or attendance in the course is considered unsatisfactory. Schools may not recommend that certain students not take the Regents exam at the end of a course that culminates in a Regents exam; see page nine of the [School Administrator’s Manual for Secondary Level Examinations](#) for more information.

In the 2013–14 school year, NYSED began the process of aligning the existing ELA and mathematics standards and exams to the Common Core; see the [Transition to the Common Core Regents FAQ](#) for more information. All students who entered grade 9 in 2014–15 or later must receive instruction in ELA and math aligned to Common Core standards; these students are required to take the Common Core versions of the Regents exams as they become available. They may not use scores on the Regents exams aligned to the non-Common Core, 2005 State standards to meet graduation requirements. During this transition, high schools are encouraged to focus on increasing the rigor of their courses.

²⁹ In July 2010, NYSED adopted the [Common Core learning standards](#). See the [Transition to the Common Core Regents FAQ](#).

³⁰ LOTE exams, unlike Regents exams, are locally administered by the NYCDOE.

Subject Area	Regents Exams	
English Language Arts (ELA)	English language arts (Common Core)— <i>first admin. June 2014</i> Comprehensive exam in English— <i>last admin. June 2016</i>	
Math	Algebra I (Common Core)— <i>first admin. June 2014</i> Geometry (Common Core)— <i>first admin. June 2015</i> Algebra II (Common Core)— <i>first admin. June 2016</i>	Integrated Algebra— <i>last admin. June 2016 (special administration)</i> Geometry— <i>last admin. Jan 2016</i> Algebra 2/Trigonometry— <i>last admin. Jan 2017</i> Mathematics A— <i>last admin. Jan. 2009</i> Mathematics B— <i>last admin. June 2010</i>
Social Studies	Global History and Geography U.S. History and Government	
Science³¹	Life Sciences: Living Environment	Physical Sciences: Chemistry Earth Science Physics
NYCDOE LOTE exams³²	Available at all schools offering these courses: French German Hebrew Italian Latin Spanish	Available at hub sites: Albanian Arabic Bengali Chinese—Simple Chinese—Traditional Haitian Creole Hindi Japanese Korean Polish Punjabi Russian Urdu Vietnamese

2. Department-Approved Alternatives and the 4+1 Policy —Updated September 2016

Effective June 2015, the exam requirements in New York State changed to provide students more flexibility regarding the assessments required for graduation. The [4+1 Option](#) is available to all students eligible to receive a high school diploma in June 2015 and thereafter; these are the current exam requirements for graduation requirements in New York State. To earn a local or Regents diploma, students must earn the 44 required course credits and pass at least one [Regents exam](#) or [Department-approved alternative](#), in each of these four subject areas:

- English language arts (ELA)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social studies

For their fifth required assessment, or +1 option, students may now pass any of the following:

- Any other Regents exam not counted toward the above requirements.
- Any one item from these additional approved options, including:
 - One [Department-approved alternative](#) in English language arts, social studies, mathematics, or science
 - One [approved examination](#) in Career and Technical Education (CTE), following successful completion of a State-approved CTE program
 - One [approved examination](#) in the Arts

³¹ All science courses that culminate in a Regents exam must be accompanied by a non-credit bearing lab. See the [Science](#) section of this guide.

³² Regents exams in languages other than English (LOTE) are no longer offered by NYSED. NYCDOE offers LOTE comprehensive exams in the former Regents languages as well as in additional lower incidence languages. While these exams can be counted toward an advanced Regents diploma, they cannot be counted as a [+1 option](#). See [NYC LOTE exams](#) and the [LOTE FAQ](#). Students must have earned six LOTE credits in order to take a LOTE exam. These may include transfer credits and credits earned in middle school and must be documented on the transcript.

- The experiences that count for the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential. Students who have engaged in work-based learning and CTE experiences can use those experiences to help them earn their diplomas by choosing the CDOS for their +1 option. These students must complete all the requirements for the CDOS [specified here](#).

A [Department-approved alternative](#) can substitute for any one required Regents exam. Students earning an advanced Regents diploma and/or a diploma with an honors designation may use up to two Department-approved alternative exams towards the diploma. Schools must display the equivalent Regents exam on the STARS transcript through a transcript update. The Regents exam that the [Department-approved alternative](#) is replacing must be recorded using a mark of 'WX' (see the [Course and Exam Marks Tables](#)). For students using the [4+1 option](#), schools should document this via the [GRDT](#) screen in ATS by using the exam override code 'S'. See the [4+1 Graduation Option FAQ](#) for additional examples and guidance.

Department-approved alternatives may not be included in the calculation to determine whether the student has achieved an average of 90 or above on the required exams, for students pursuing a diploma with honors; see the section on [diploma endorsements](#) this guide.

3. Appeals to Graduate with Low Scores on Regents Examinations —Updated September 2016

NYSED allows a student who has met specific eligibility requirements to appeal to graduate with a low score on up to two Regents exams. The Regents exam appeal options described below are designed for students who are unable to achieve a passing Regents exam score despite multiple attempts and support to achieve a higher score. There are currently three types of low score Regents appeals that are available to students. For more information, see the [Overview of Appeals to Graduate with Low Scores on Regents Examinations](#).

	Low Score Appeal Appeal to graduate with a score of 60–64 on Regents exams ³³	New Arrival ELA Appeal Appeal to graduate with a score of 55–59 on the ELA exam for newly-arrived ELLs only	Safety Net Appeal Appeal to graduate with a score of 52–54 on Regents exams for Safety Net-eligible students
Eligible Students	All students that meet the criteria listed below	Only for ELL students that arrived in the US for the first time in grades 9–12 and who meet the additional criteria listed below	Only for Safety Net-eligible students who meet the additional criteria listed below
Test Score Requirements	60–64 on up to two of any of the required Regents exams	55–59 on an ELA Regents	52–54 on up to two of any of the required Regents exams
Type of Diploma	One successful appeal results in a Regents diploma. Two successful appeals result in a local diploma.	A new arrival ELA appeal always results in a local diploma (even if student also appeals another Regents score of 60–64).	A Safety Net appeals always result in a local diploma.
Process	Request must be made in ATS using the RQSA screen, RGT option	Request must be made in ATS using the RQSA screen, ELL option	Request must be made in ATS using the RQSA screen, RGT option

³³ Adopted as an [amendment to Part 100.5\(d\)\(7\)](#) in March 2016.

To be eligible for these appeals, students must have:

- Taken the exam(s) under appeal at least two times
- Scored within the point range on the exam(s) under appeal
- Earned a passing score on the other Regents exams required for graduation
- Earned or be on track to earn a passing grade in all courses required for graduation in the subject area of the exam under appeal
- Been provided academic intervention services in the subject area of the exam under appeal
- Been recommended by a teacher or department chairperson for the appeal

To be eligible for the New Arrival ELA appeal to appeal a score of 55–59 on the ELA Regents exam, students must be a current ELL student or have been an ELL student at time of ELA Regents administration; and have enrolled in any United States school for the first time in grades 9–12.

To be eligible for the Safety Net appeal to appeal a score of 52–54 on the Regents exam, students must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP); have a 504 plan specifying Safety Net eligibility; or be a student with a disability who was declassified in grades 8-12 and the last IEP specifies Safety Net-eligible.

All appeals to graduate with a low score on the Regents exam must be submitted to the superintendent for approval. See [appendix B](#) for eligibility requirements, by appeal, and the process for submitting an appeal using the [RQSA](#) function in ATS. Once an appeal is approved by the superintendent, the school must [update the student's transcript](#) with a new instance of the exam and 'WG' as the score, in order to represent a successful appeal. The original examination score may not be changed. For example, if a student has successfully appealed the U.S. History exam with a score of 63, the school must leave the original 63, and add a new U.S. History exam, using the transfer exam code ('HXRGW') with a score of 'WG'. Instructions for completing transcript updates are available on the [STARS wiki](#) and in the [Transcript Update FAQ](#). See also the [Overview of Appeals to Graduate with Low Scores on Regents Examinations](#) and the [Course and Exam Marks Tables](#).

4. Safety Net Flexibilities —Updated September 2016

[Students with disabilities](#), like all students, should be encouraged to pursue the most rigorous diploma option available and to achieve high scores on Regents exams when possible. The “Safety Net” provides additional flexibilities to support students with disabilities in earning a diploma. The following students are Safety Net-eligible:

- Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Students who were declassified in grades 8–12 and whose last IEP specifies Safety-Net eligibility
- Students with a [Section 504 plan](#) specifying Safety Net-eligibility

As part of the Safety Net, these students have the following options to earn a local diploma if they cannot meet or exceed the requirements for an advanced Regents or Regents diploma:

- Graduate with exam scores of 55 or higher
- Qualify for the [Safety Net appeal](#), provided they meet the other eligibility requirements
- Use the [compensatory score option](#) to graduate, provided they meet the other eligibility requirements
- Use Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) to graduate, provided they meet the other eligibility requirements
- Qualify for a [superintendent's review](#), provided they meet the other eligibility requirements. Note that this review is only for students with current, active IEPs.

These are combinable in many cases, and are described in more detail in the sections that follow and in the [appendix](#) of this guide.

a. Safety Net Appeal

Safety Net-eligible students may appeal a score of 52–54 on up to two of the required Regents examinations, provided that they pass the remaining Regents exams with a score of 55 or above and meet the additional criteria.³⁴ Students can earn a local diploma if they successfully appeal a score of 52–54 on any Regents exam and a score of 55 or above on the remaining exams. See the [Appeals to Graduate with Low Scores on Regents Examinations](#) section for more information.

³⁴ [Amendment to Part 100.5\(d\)\(7\)](#)

b. Compensatory Score Option

The [compensatory score option](#) allows eligible students to earn a local diploma with one or two Regents exam scores of 45-54 by compensating each low score with a score of 65 or higher on another required Regents exam. To be eligible for the compensatory score option, students must:

- Be Safety Net-eligible
- Earn a score of 55 or higher on the ELA and a math Regents exam³⁵
- Earn or be on track to earning a passing grade in all courses required for graduation in the subject area of the exam being compensated
- Have satisfactory attendance rate, as defined by their school

The compensatory score option, like other options for Safety-Net-eligible students, continues to apply to students using the additional flexibility of the 4+1 option. The compensatory score option may also be used in conjunction with the Safety Net appeal. See the [Overview of Appeals to Graduate with Low Scores on Regents Examinations](#) for examples.

c. Regents Competency Tests (RCTs)

RCTs are State assessments available to [Safety Net-eligible](#) students who entered grade 9 prior to September 2011.³⁶ NYSED is phasing out RCT exams as these cohorts of students graduate. Eligible students with disabilities may fulfill the exam requirement for the local diploma using RCTs if they are unable to pass the corresponding Regents exam with the needed score. Students may pass all Regents, all RCTs, or a combination of both. If a student is using an RCT score towards the fulfillment of the local diploma requirement, he/she must have taken each of the five required Regents exams at least once.³⁷

The RCTs may be combined with the [4+1 policy](#) only in very specific cases. Because RCTs may only be used when a student is unable to pass the corresponding Regents exam, a student may not count both an RCT exam pass and a Regents exam pass in the same content area toward graduation requirements. The only exception is in social studies because the U.S. History & Government RCT and Global Studies RCT cover a different set of standards. See the [4+1 Graduation Option FAQ](#) for additional information and examples.

The RCT option and the compensatory score option may not be combined to qualify for the local diploma. While taking an RCT exam does not prohibit a student from using the compensatory score option, any student using an RCT to fulfill one of the five Regents exam requirements may not use the compensatory score option.

RCTs are currently offered in the following subject areas: math, science, global studies, United States history and government, reading, and writing. Students must pass both the reading and writing RCTs and take the English Regents exam if using the RCTs to fulfill the English exam requirement.

d. Superintendent Review —Updated September 2016

Effective June 2016, NYSED requires superintendents to conduct a review of eligible students with IEPs who do not meet the graduation requirements through the existing Safety Net options (i.e. the compensatory score option, Safety Net appeal, and RCTs). Superintendents must review and approve students for graduation with a local diploma if the students have a current IEP and meet other specific eligibility criteria. Schools must follow specific procedures as outlined in the [Superintendent's Graduation Review for Students with IEPs](#) to complete this review process.

³⁵ Safety Net-eligible students may appeal a score of 52-54 on up to two Regents exams, including the ELA and math Regents.

³⁶ See [Diploma Types](#). The RCT option may not be combined with the compensatory score option.

³⁷ Students may take the Regents and RCTs in any order (i.e. a student may take the Regents exam and then the RCT, or vice versa). Students must pass both the Reading and Writing RCTs and take the English Regents exam if using the RCTs to fulfill the English exam requirement. For more information on RCT administration, refer to the [School Administrator's Manuals](#).

5. Regents Exam Waivers

Students who enter a New York State registered high school for the first time in grade 11 or 12 (excluding students who have been home-schooled and students who have been enrolled in a registered or non-registered public or non-public New York State high school) may be exempted from certain Regents exam requirements:³⁸

- Students who meet the criteria above and transfer in grade 11 are exempt from the Regents exam in Global History and Geography. These students may graduate with a combination of four exam passes; one math, one science, ELA, and U.S. History.
- Students who meet the criteria above and transfer in grade 12 are exempt from the Regents exams in science and in Global History and Geography. These students may graduate with a combination of three exam passes; one math, ELA, and U.S. History.

If a student is utilizing this waiver to support the fulfillment of diploma requirements, the exam must be recorded on the [student's transcript with 'WA'](#) as the exam mark (see the [Course and Exam Marks Tables](#) and the [Transcript Update FAQ](#)). The student's NYCDOE transcript and original transcript from his/her previous school serve as documentation for the transcript update. For students pursuing a diploma with honors, the waived exams should not be included in the calculation to determine whether the student has achieved an average of 90 or above on the required exams.

If a student transfers into the NYCDOE with a preliminary grade 11 or 12 placement, but the school subsequently adjusts the student's grade level based on the transcript evaluation, the new grade level must be used to determine whether the student is eligible for Regents exam waivers. For more information, see the [Transfer Credit FAQ](#).

6. Schools using Portfolio-Based Assessments Tasks (PBATs) in Lieu of Regents Exams —Updated September 2016

To meet diploma requirements, all students must earn required course credits in specific subjects and must pass specific assessments. A [specific list of schools](#) within the NYCDOE have permission to use performance-based assessment tasks (PBATs) in lieu of certain Regents examinations. Students must earn credits in the specific subject areas required for graduation regardless of whether or not they are required to pass Regents assessments, Department-approved alternatives, or PBATs in that subject area. All schools must follow the standardized code deck conventions, rules, and programming practices outlined in the [High School Course Code Directory](#). The PBATs being used to fulfill graduation requirements must be [reflected on the STARS transcript](#).

To support college and career readiness, schools may communicate more rigorous academic expectations than those defined by State and City graduation requirements. However, schools may not withhold diplomas from students who have completed the minimum graduation requirements. See this guidance on policies affecting [Schools Administering PBATs in lieu of Regents Exams](#) for more information.

³⁸ See [Part 100.5\(d\)](#). The 4+1 flexibility cannot be applied for students who are utilizing these waivers. For example, a grade 11 student cannot substitute Global History for U.S. History.

D. DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENTS —Updated September 2016

Students may obtain one or more designations or endorsements to certain diploma types as follows:

Arts Endorsement ³⁹		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
Students enrolled in schools with approved arts sequences	Advanced Regents, Regents, and local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn 10 credits in a single art form (dance, theater, music, or visual arts), which may include those required to meet the 44 credits for graduation • Pass the NYCDOE assessment in that art form/discipline⁴⁰ • For the advanced Regents diploma only, two LOTE course credits instead of six credits are required, and the LOTE exam is not required⁴¹
Seal of Biliteracy		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
All students	Advanced Regents and Regents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn three points in the criteria for demonstrating proficiency in English and earn three points in the criteria for demonstrating proficiency in a world language. See the NYSED Seal of Biliteracy Handbook for details.
Career and Technology Education (CTE) Endorsement		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
Students enrolled in New York State-approved CTE programs	Advanced Regents, Regents, and local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn course credits in New York State-approved CTE sequence (number of credits varies by sequence but must be a minimum of 7, including 1 course credit in Career and Financial Management [CFM]) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CFM can be embedded to fulfill a distribution requirement or can be offered stand-alone ○ Students may be required to exceed 44 total credits ○ For the advanced Regents diploma only, 2 LOTE course credits instead of 6 are required, and the LOTE exam is not required • Pass the CTE technical assessment that corresponds to the New York State-approved sequence in which the student earns credits • Complete Work-Based Learning (WBL) requirement
Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Endorsement		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
All students who participate in standard State assessments	Advanced Regents, Regents, and local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and successfully pass 216 hours (or four, 54-hour units of study) in CTE and/or work-based learning courses; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This must include, at minimum, 54 hours of supervised work-based learning experiences related to career awareness, exploration, or preparation. These experiences may be completed in conjunction with CTE courses or as other work-based learning experiences.

³⁹ Students may earn a Certificate of Arts Achievement by completing a 6-credit arts sequence in dance or visual arts and passing the NYCDOE assessment in that art form. The Certificate of Arts Achievement is not a NYSED or NYCDOE diploma endorsement.

⁴⁰ Contact the [Arts and Special Projects team](#) about ordering arts assessments for eligible students.

⁴¹ Students completing six credits of LOTE to fulfill the advanced Regents diploma requirement only need to earn nine Arts credits in a single art form to meet the credit requirements for the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation in the Arts.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The remaining three units (162 hours) may be completed through CTE courses, work-based learning experiences, or other career preparation activities such as internships, service-learning, community service, school-based enterprise, or job shadowing. ● Demonstrate achievement of the commencement-level CDOS learning standards ● Complete and annually review a career plan; and ● Within one year prior to the student’s exit from high school, complete a work skills employability profile detailing the student’s attainment of the CDOS learning standards through work-related and academic experiences. This must be maintained in the student’s permanent record. ● See the CDOS FAQ for additional information.
Honors Designation		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
All students	Advanced Regents and Regents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve 90+ average on all required Regents exams for the diploma the student is earning⁴²
Mastery in Math Designation		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
All students	Advanced Regents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve a score of 85+ on each of the three required math Regents exams (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
Mastery in Science Designation		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
All students	Advanced Regents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve a score of 85+ on any three science Regents exams. While two science Regents exams are required for the Advanced Regents diploma, three are required for the Mastery in Science endorsement.
Service Seal		
Who can earn?	Eligible diploma	Requirements
All students	Advanced Regents, Regents, or Local; may also be added to either of the commencement credentials described further here .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet a minimum of 100 hours of independent service, service-learning, and/or a school-led service program over the students’ high school years.

In addition, schools may award “merit,” “citizenship,” and other school-based endorsements in accordance with their school policies. Schools utilizing these endorsement options should clearly document their policies for awarding such endorsements and communicate them to students and families. School-based endorsements entailing additional coursework or exams may be offered to students; however, schools may not withhold diplomas from students who have completed the minimum New York State and City graduation requirements.

E. COMMENCEMENT CREDENTIALS —Updated September 2016

In lieu of the [diploma types](#), students who meet specific criteria may be eligible to earn the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential or the Skills and Achievement commencement credential. These

⁴² For students pursuing a diploma with Honors and using a Dept-approved alternative assessment and/or a waiver, as appropriate in accordance with [Part 100.5](#), the alternative exam and/or exam waiver should not be included in the calculation to determine whether the student has achieved an average of 90 or above on his/her exams.

exiting credentials are not equivalent to a high school diploma and do not have credit or exam requirements. They do not guarantee qualification in situations where a high school diploma is required.

1. Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential

The Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential is offered to all students in New York State, including students with disabilities that participate in standard assessments and meet the requirements. It is designed to recognize students’ mastery of the career-readiness skills defined in the [Career Development and Occupational Studies \(CDOS\) learning standards](#).

The CDOS commencement credential is not equivalent to a high school diploma. All students, including students with disabilities, must receive the opportunities and support needed to earn a high school diploma. Unlike a diploma, the CDOS credential does not require students to earn credits or pass exams. As a standalone credential earned in place of a high school diploma, the CDOS does not guarantee employment where a diploma is required and does not qualify students to enter the military or enter many post-secondary institutions. For these reasons, schools should only offer students CDOS-aligned work-based learning and CTE experiences alongside the academic coursework required for a diploma.

Commencement Credential	Student Eligibility	Requirements
<p>Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential</p> <p>The CDOS may be awarded to students who participate in standard assessments as an endorsement to an advanced, Regents, or local diploma; as a +1 option in lieu of a fifth Regents exam; or as the student’s sole exiting credential from high school.</p>	<p>Students who participate in standard assessments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and successfully pass 216 hours (or four, 54-hour units of student) in CTE and/or work-based learning courses. This must include, at minimum, 54 hours of supervised work-based learning experiences, related to career awareness, exploration, or preparation. The remaining three units (162 hours) may be completed through CTE courses, work-based learning, or other career preparation activities (i.e. internships, service-learning, community service, etc.); • Demonstrate achievement of the Career Development and Occupational Students (CDOS) learning standards; • Complete and annually review a career plan; and • Complete a work skills employability profile detailing the student’s mastery of the CDOS learning standards.

Students who earn the CDOS credential without earning a high school diploma must receive written assurance of their right to return to high school and work towards earning a diploma. Students remain eligible through the end of the full school year (including the summer) in which they turn 21, or until they have earned a diploma, whichever comes first.

As of June 2016, all students who participate in standard assessments may earn the CDOS credential as an endorsement to any diploma. Students also may use the experiences aligned with the CDOS as a [+1 option](#) in lieu of a fifth Regents exam when working towards a diploma, as described further in this [CDOS policy guidance](#).

2. Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential

The Skills and Achievement credential can be awarded to only students with an IEP who participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) in place of standardized assessments.⁴³ It is the [sole exiting credential available to NYSAA-eligible students](#). Students who earn this credential without earning a high school diploma must receive written assurance of their eligibility to stay in high school through the school year in which they turn 21. The Skills and Achievement commencement credential should be awarded in alignment with the transition planning process for students with IEPs.

Commencement Credential	Student Eligibility	Requirements
Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential	<p>Students with severe cognitive disabilities who participate in NYSAA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon reaching the end of the school year in which the student turns 21; or • Upon application of the student or his/her parent/guardian at the completion of at least 12 years of schooling, excluding kindergarten 	<p>The credential must be issued together with a summary of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance and must include documentation of the student’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement against the Career Development and Occupational Students (CDOS) learning standards; • Level of academic achievement and independence as measured by NYSAA; • Skills, strengths, interests; and • As appropriate, other achievements and accomplishments. • Schools should use the exit summary and directions provided by NYSED.

F. GRADUATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Below are policies and procedures relevant to high school graduation requirements. Refer to the [academic policy and systems intranet page](#) for the most up-to-date guidance and FAQs on specific policies.

1. Grade Level and Promotion Standards

[Chancellor’s Regulation A-501](#) specifies promotion standards for all NYCDOE students. Promotion decisions for students in grades 9-12 are based on credit accumulation, successful completion of course work, and passing of Regents exams.

Through the Promotion in Doubt (PID) process, schools formally notify families, in writing, that their child is at risk of not meeting promotion standards and being retained in the same grade for the upcoming school year. This mid-year notification, which occurs in January and February, enables schools and families to plan for the needed supports and interventions to help students achieve promotion standards by June.

Principals must make promotion decisions for all students in mid-June. Promotion decisions should be communicated to students and families before the end of the school year. High school students who do not meet promotion requirements in June have the right to attend summer school and be promoted in August if promotion standards are met at that time.

The grade-by-grade promotion standards are outlined below; these standards reflect only the minimum criteria for promotion from the student’s current grade to the next grade.

⁴³ These credentials supersede the IEP diploma; the last IEP diplomas were issued in June 2013.

Grade Level	Coursework/Exams	Minimum Credits
9	Successful completion of standards in academic subject areas	8 credits
10	Successful completion of standards in academic subject areas	20 credits (Including 4 in English and/or ESL and 4 in social studies)
11	Successful completion of standards in academic subject areas	30 credits
12	Successful completion of standards in academic subject areas	44 credits in required subject areas

Student grade levels for each school year are decided in the prior spring and summer based on student outcomes in June and August, in accordance with the [NYCDOE promotion policy](#). While grade level placements must be indicated in ATS for operational and accountability purposes, schools may choose how to communicate placements to students. Depending on the culture and instructional model of a school, it may be appropriate to communicate student progress toward graduation to students and families in other ways. For example, transfer schools may follow an “un-graded” approach, where students track progress based on credits earned and exams passed, but do not associate with particular grade levels.

For more information about student grade levels and cohort placement, and related accountability implications, see the [Graduation Accountability FAQ](#).

2. Graduation Cohort Policy —Updated September 2016

Students’ graduation accountability for New York State and [New York City reporting](#) is determined by three factors:

- Cohort year;
- Accountability status (“report status”); and
- Accountable DBN (“grad cohort DBN”).

These variables are displayed in the ATS [HEOY](#) function and are determined as described below.

a. Cohort year

A student’s cohort year directly corresponds to the year in which he or she began ninth grade for the first time, anywhere in the country or world. In addition to informing graduation accountability, cohort year determines the graduation requirements that apply based on students’ ninth grade entry years. For transfer students, cohort year also represents the first year of enrollment at any high school in the world.⁴⁴

As an exception, students with disabilities who are eligible for the New York State Alternate Assessment ([NYSAA](#)) at non-District 75 high schools or in District 75 inclusion programs are assigned cohorts on their ninth grade entry year or their seventeenth birthday year, whichever comes first. All other NYSAA-eligible students in District 75 programs are assigned cohorts based on their seventeenth birthday year. See the [Graduation Accountability FAQ](#) for more information on cohort assignments for NYSAA-eligible students, the [Alternate Assessment FAQ](#), and the section of this guide on students with disabilities who are [alternately assessed](#).

In order to accommodate the above rules, students are assigned their appropriate cohort letter based on their grade level at the end of their first year of enrollment. It is the school’s responsibility to ensure that the cohort year is accurate and corresponds to the year in which the student first entered ninth grade anywhere in the word. Corrections should be made

⁴⁴ It is the responsibility of the principal or his/her designee to award transfer credits in a timely fashion, as outlined in the [Transfer Credit FAQ](#), so that appropriate student programming decisions can be made. See also the section of this guide on [awarding transfer credit](#).

in the first year. Only in the following pre-determined situations beyond this timeframe, may schools request a change to a student's cohort using the [UGNO](#) function in ATS:

- If the student's cohort does not accurately reflect his/her real ninth grade entry year due to error (e.g. the student was assigned to an incorrect grade level at the end of the first year of enrollment in the NYCDOE, and, as a result, the cohort year does not correspond to his/her real first year of ninth grade entry anywhere in the world). In this case the school must submit an [UGNO](#) request, indicate the reason in the comments, and retain supporting documentation to demonstrate the student's true first year of ninth grade.
- The student is an English Language Learner who fulfills all of the specific criteria below. In this case, the school may make a one-time request to move the student to the cohort corresponding to the year prior to his/her ninth grade entry year, provided that:
 - The student has never had such a request granted before;
 - The student was newly arrived to the United States in his/her first year of high school and placed directly into ninth grade;
 - The student is in exactly his/her second year of enrollment in high school;
 - The student is an English Language Learner and has a low level of literacy in his/her native language; and
 - The school has determined, before the end of the second year of enrollment, that the proper grade level of the student is still ninth grade.

In order to be considered and approved, [UGNO](#) requests must be accompanied by an explanation in the comment field. Note that students may not be assigned to cohorts whose four-year graduation rate has already been reported to NYSED and on the School Quality Reports (i.e. "closed cohorts"). Schools may not adjust students' cohort rates because of factors not described above, including, for example, because a student is struggling to meet graduation requirements, has tested at a lower proficiency level or below grade level in one or more subjects, or because they disagree with an NYCDOE schools' previous assessment of a transfer students' records.

b. Accountability Status ("Report Status")

A student's report status—"accountable" or "non-accountable"—indicates whether the student is included in graduation rate calculations. Accountable students include those who are active in the NYCDOE, have dropped out, or have graduated. Non-accountable students are those who were discharged with a cohort-removing code and students who were never enrolled in a diploma-granting high school. For additional guidance on cohort removing discharges, see the [Graduation Accountability FAQ](#) and [Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation Code Guidelines](#).⁴⁵ Report status locks in ATS on June 30th of a student's fourth year of high school.

c. Accountable DBN ("Grad Cohort DBN")

The grad cohort DBN is the last diploma-granting school that the student was enrolled in for one day or more; this school is accountable for the student's graduation for the Progress Report and State accountability purposes.

If a transfer occurs between NYCDOE schools, it changes the grad cohort DBN if both of the following are true:

- The new school is a regular diploma-granting high school; and
- The effective date of the transfer is before June 30th of the fourth year of high school. Like report status, grad cohort DBN locks on June 30th of the fourth year for the New York City six-year graduation rate. However, transfers between accountable schools occurring before June 30th of a student's fifth year will result in changes to the cohort DBN for New York State's five-year graduation rate.

For the purposes of calculating the six-year graduation rate, accountability status and accountable DBN are determined outside of ATS. For additional information on how the six-year graduation rate is calculated, including how accountability is determined for students who enroll in transfer schools and YABC programs, see the [Graduation Accountability FAQ](#).

⁴⁵ The cohort-removing discharge codes are 8, 10, 11, 15, 20, and 25. Students discharged with codes 8, 10, or 11 with documentation or reason code of 'X' remain accountable. See the [Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation Code Guidelines](#) for information on updating these codes.

3. Certifying Students for Graduation —Updated September 2016

Schools must have clearly defined procedures for regularly tracking student progress towards meeting diploma requirements. These procedures should begin in grade 9 to ensure that students have opportunities to take the courses and exams needed to meet the most rigorous diploma option possible and to provide all students with the opportunities to achieve college-and career-readiness.

Certifying high school seniors for graduation is one of the most important procedures performed by high schools. In certifying a student for graduation, the principal is attesting that the student has completed all State and City requirements for graduation and should receive the designated high school diploma from that school. Every high school must have clearly defined procedures for certifying students for graduation. Schools should consult [Certifying Seniors for Graduation: An Overview for High School Personnel](#) or contact their [academic policy and system leads](#) for support in developing or refining school-based certification processes. Principals and their designated staff must still review all graduating students' transcripts for completion of all specific requirements, and the principal remains ultimately responsible for certifying students as graduates.

a. Using GRDT in ATS —Updated September 2016

ATS uses data from STARS and ATS to flag students who may not meet the most standard requirements of the diploma associated with the [discharge codes](#) entered for a student. When appropriate, schools have the ability to override these flags to indicate reasons why standard graduation requirements do not apply. Schools may use a credit or exam [override code](#), as appropriate, once approved by the principal. For example, schools use the 'S' exam override code to graduate students who are fulfilling the fifth exam requirement with a Department-approved alternative or 4+1 option with an additional math or science exam. Override codes must be submitted to the principal for approval using this [Override Code Review Form](#) before they are entered into ATS.

b. Students Returning from Non-Diploma Granting Programs —Updated September 2016

High schools are responsible for awarding diplomas to students, including those that were previously enrolled in their high school, but have completed diploma requirements while enrolled at other non-diploma granting programs. These programs include Young Adult Borough Centers (YABC), District 79 involuntary programs, and District 75 non-diploma granting programs, such as home or hospital instruction. In these instances, the guidance counselors, other school staff from the non-diploma granting institution, and the student's high school are encouraged to collaborate to ensure a smooth transition and graduation certification process for each student. Specific roles and responsibilities for graduating the student are outlined below:

- The non-diploma granting institution at which the student is enrolled in is responsible for:
 - "Pre-certifying" the student, i.e. reviewing the student's transcript to ensure that the student has met all credit and exam requirements for the relevant diploma and that these are reflected in STARS. This includes submitting any low score appeals and updating the student's transcript if the appeal is approved.
 - Returning the student to his/her previous high school with the "January/June/August Graduate" indicator using the [HSRE](#) screen in ATS⁴⁶
- The student's previous NYCDOE high school is responsible for:
 - Certifying the student for graduation
 - Entering the student as a graduate in ATS using the appropriate [diploma code](#)
 - Awarding the student a high school diploma from the school

⁴⁶ In the case of home and hospital instruction, students in shared instruction must be ended in ATS by the home or hospital program using the [SIGS](#) screen.

The responsibilities of the previous high school that are outlined above apply regardless of the length of time the student has been enrolled at the non-diploma granting institution. In most cases, the previous high school is accountable for the graduate for New York State and Federal accountability and NYCDOE accountability purposes.⁴⁷

In cases where a student has no prior enrollment in a NYCDOE high school or a student previously attended a NYCDOE high school that has since closed, the non-diploma granting institution should follow the steps outlined above.⁴⁸ The [HSRE](#) screen in ATS automatically transfers the student to a central location (02M972). Once a school has pre-certified a graduate and transferred the student to '02M972', the school must notify their [academic policy and system leads](#), so that the academic policy and system lead can coordinate the certification process with Central and make arrangements with designated partner high schools to award the student a diploma and ensure he or she ultimately receives it.

4. Early or Late Graduation

Any student who has not yet received a high school diploma is entitled to a [free public education](#) through the end of the school year in which he/she turns 21, inclusive of summer school.⁴⁹

A student who meets graduation requirements in fewer than four years may choose to receive a diploma and leave school early, provided all graduation requirements are completed. The student does not need to remain in school for the sole purpose of completing remaining PE requirements if he/she is graduating early. Schools cannot require students who have met graduation requirements in fewer than four years to remain enrolled. The principal must discuss with the parent and student post-secondary plans.

Students have the right to remain enrolled if they wish to do so through the end of their fourth year of high school or until the end of the school year in which they turn 17 years old, whichever comes first.

A student who meets graduation requirements in more than four years may be awarded a diploma upon completing graduation requirements. If a student in the fifth or sixth year of high school completes the requirements mid-year, the school can discharge the student as a graduate. The school does not need to wait until the normal graduation periods in January, June, or August. Schools cannot require students who have met graduation requirements in more than four years to remain enrolled through the end of the year.

5. Student Participation in Commencement Ceremonies

Per [NYCDOE policy](#), high school students must meet promotion/graduation requirements to participate in their school's moving up or graduation ceremony. Schools must clearly communicate these expectations to students and families.

Schools may prohibit a student from attending commencement-related activities or graduation ceremonies when he/she poses a real threat of violence or disruption to the event. It may also be possible to bar a student from graduation when his/her conduct has been particularly egregious, and where the student has previously been advised in writing. Students who are already on suspension at the time of the commencement ceremonies also may be prohibited from attending these events, but the exclusion must be proportionate to the infraction committed. Note that students who earn [commencement credentials](#) in lieu of Regents diplomas are equally entitled to participate in graduation ceremonies with their peers; schools may not exclude these students from walking in their ceremonies.

G. CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY) ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS —Updated September 2016

1. CUNY Four-Year Colleges

Candidates for freshman admission to a bachelor's degree program must show proficiency in reading, writing, and math to be admitted. While completing the minimum high school credit and exam requirements may earn students a diploma, completing these course sequences can support students in successfully transitioning to college and the workplace:

⁴⁷ The previous high school is accountable for the graduate if they were the last diploma-granting school before June 30 of the student's fourth year of high school.

⁴⁸ Please see this guidance on [Supporting Students Who Have Met Graduation Requirements at YABCs When Their Home Schools Have Closed](#).

⁴⁹ Per [New York State Education Law, Section 3202](#)

- Math: 8 Regents-level credits, including a sequence that consists of at least the following: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.
- Science: 8 Regents-level credits, including a sequence that consists of at least three of the following: Living Environment, Chemistry, Physics, and an AP science course.
- Advanced Courses: [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#)[®] courses, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, and courses for college credit such as College Now or CUNY Early College.

Candidates also must show proficiency by achieving specific exam scores in order to avoid remediation at CUNY. See the [CUNY website](#) for exact details on admission requirements, recommended exam scores, up-to-date information, and frequently asked questions about admissions and remediation.

2. CUNY Community Colleges

Candidates for freshman admission to an associate program do not have to demonstrate the skills proficiencies as outlined on the [CUNY website](#). However, entering students who are not proficient based on these criteria will be required to take the CUNY assessment test to determine if they require remedial coursework to build their skills in any areas in which they have not met the proficiency requirement. See the [CUNY website](#) for specific up-to-date information and frequently asked questions about admissions and remediation.

Students with lower exam scores typically cannot begin a full program of college-level work in an associate program until they have completed remedial courses and demonstrated proficiency in reading, writing, and math. Remedial courses do not bear credit towards a degree and tuition is charged for these courses. Students are strongly advised to demonstrate proficiency before admission to CUNY to avoid remediation. Given the gap between the requirements for a high school diploma and the requirements for college-and-career-readiness, schools are urged to encourage students to attempt courses and exams beyond the minimum requirements for graduation.

II. COURSE CREDIT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. CREDIT BEARING COURSES

All credit-bearing courses must, at minimum, address NYSED’s high school (i.e. commencement-level) [learning standards](#), meet instructional time requirements per credit earned, and be taught by a teacher with a NYSED secondary certification in the course subject area.⁵⁰ Note that:

- A unit of study is at least 180 minutes of instruction per week throughout the school year, or the equivalent of 54 hours per semester (108 hours per year) of instruction.
- A unit of credit is awarded after mastery of the learning outcomes set forth in a State-developed or locally-developed syllabus for a given high school subject, after a student has had the opportunity to complete a unit of study in the given subject matter area.
- Learning experiences that take place outside the traditional classroom and school day may be considered as inclusive of the instructional time required to bear credit (i.e. 54 hours per credit, or 180 minutes per week), provided they are instructed or supervised by a subject-certified NYCDOE teacher and the content is aligned to NYSED’s commencement-level [learning standards](#). This includes:
 - Online learning and blended experiences⁵¹
 - Learning experiences that take place inside and/or outside the classroom or school building in non-virtual

⁵⁰ Through NYSED’s [incidental teaching provision](#), there are specific instances where a teacher may teach one period per day in a subject area outside their certification area, provided that they teach within the same student population as their license area and have demonstrated subject matter competency in the subject.

⁵¹ The location where students participate in online learning determines whether the scheduled class time can count towards students’ required daily instructional hours. Students in grades 7-12 must be programmed for a minimum of 5.5 hours of daily instruction. Students who participate in online learning at an off-site location (e.g. at home or the public library) cannot count the class time towards the 5.5 hours of daily instruction as described in further detail in the [Online and Blended Learning FAQ](#). However, the time spent completing the online course or digital learning portion of a blended course does count towards the 54 hours of instruction per credit.

settings, such as structured work experiences designed to address NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) as a component of a course

- The principal must evaluate all course components (including those that occur virtually and/or non-virtually inside and/or outside the classroom and school day) and attest that the course provides students with the opportunity for at least 180 minutes of instruction per week, or the equivalent.

Credit-bearing courses must provide the opportunity for 54 hours per credit. If a student misses class time, he/she must be provided with opportunities to make up the classwork, assignments, assessments, and other learning experiences. Students are not required to make up the exact amount of instructional time missed due to absence. Schools may not withhold credit from students who have mastered the course content and achieved the expectations in the course syllabus but missed instructional time. See the [Accreditation Committee/Course Proposal Review Form](#) for a sample template on documenting course instructional time.

a. Blended/online learning —Updated September 2016

High schools may incorporate blended and online learning experiences into their academic programs.⁵² A blended course is defined by instruction in a specific subject that occurs through a combination of classroom-based and digital and/or internet-connected media. An online course is defined by instruction in a specific subject that occurs almost exclusively through digital and/or internet-connected media.

A credit-bearing online or blended course must be in alignment with the following policies:

- The course must align to NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) for the subject area, as outlined in the course syllabus.
- Instruction must be provided or supervised by a subject-certified teacher from the NYCDOE.⁵³
- The course must include regular and substantive interaction between the student and the teacher, which may occur in person and/or virtually.
- Instruction must satisfy the unit of study and credit requirements for instructional time (i.e. 180 minutes per week throughout the school year or the equivalent).
- The student must demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes for the subject, including passing the Regents exam in the subject area if he/she has not already passed an exam that counts toward a diploma in that subject area.

Students must be scheduled for online and blended courses in STARS in the same way they are scheduled for traditional classroom courses in STARS. Blended and online classes must be identified in STARS using the [section properties](#) screen. For additional guidance on implementing blended and online courses, see the [Blended and Online Courses FAQ](#).

b. Internships and Service-Learning

Schools can choose to award credits for internships and service learning experiences if they meet specific criteria. Internships and service-learning courses that bear course credit must:

- The experience must align to NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) for the subject area, as outlined in the course syllabus.
- The experience must include a classroom/seminar/workshop component in addition to learning time spent in an educational internship.
 - Schools may determine the structure and content of the classroom/seminar/workshop component, including the instructional time provided. There is no required minimum for the amount of time spent in the classroom/seminar/workshop component; this component should provide sufficient time for meaningful teacher-student interaction.
- The experience must have a syllabus that clearly outlines the standards addressed, how student learning is assessed, and expectations for students in both the classroom and internship components of the course.

⁵² Courses must be indicated as online using “section properties” in STARS Admin.

⁵³ Schools may not offer any online courses in which students work entirely independently of a subject-certified NYCDOE teacher. See the [Blended and Online Courses FAQ](#) for additional information about the role of the teacher in an online or blended course.

- The experience must be overseen by a subject-certified teacher, in collaboration with a supervisor at the internship site.⁵⁴
 - The subject-certified teacher overseeing the internship course is responsible for overseeing the syllabus, monitoring and assessing student progress, overseeing the classroom/seminar/workshop component, and awarding the course grade. Teachers do not need to accompany students to off-site course components, but should work closely with individuals at the site to monitor student performance and the alignment of off-site activities to the expectations defined in syllabus.

Internships that are part of [New York State-approved CTE sequences](#) or [work-based learning programs](#) have specific requirements. For guidance implementing internships and service-learning courses, see the [Off-Site Courses FAQ](#).

Schools should maintain systems and structures (e.g. an accreditation committee) for regularly reviewing course offerings, including existing courses and new course proposals, course sequences, and course credit values. Sample templates for the accreditation committee are included in [the appendix](#); these may be adapted to meet individual school needs in alignment with their established systems and structures.

All service-learning experiences may count towards the diploma [Seal of Recognition for Service](#). The requirements for credit-bearing service learning are more stringent than those required for the service seal. Therefore, although all hours of credit-bearing service-learning may be counted toward the seal, not all hours counted toward the seal will necessarily bear credit.

B. NON-CREDIT BEARING COURSES

Per NYSED policy, students may not be awarded credit for the following:

- **Courses that repeat standards for which students have already received credit:** Schools may not award credit for the same course content multiple times. For example, students may not earn credit for U.S. history and for a corresponding Regents preparation course. See the [Additional Programming Options](#) section of this guide for guidance on ways to support students who need additional time to master course content.
- **Courses that address middle school learning standards:** Schools may not award credit for courses that do not meet commencement-level standards. For example, students may not receive credit for a course aligned to pre-algebra standards designed to prepare students for a high school algebra course.
- **Academic Intervention Services (AIS), Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) (previously called “Resource Room”), or Related Services:** These services may be provided as stand-alone periods or integrated into general classroom instruction, depending on the needs of the student and as specified in the IEP, as appropriate. While the services may not be credit-bearing, they may be integrated into other credit-bearing courses as appropriate.
- **Science laboratory:** Schools may include a lab within a science course as long as the course meets seat time requirements for both the course and the lab (at least 180 minutes per week or the equivalent for the science course and 1,200 minutes for the lab). Credit may not be awarded for the lab itself and the 1,200 minutes of lab work must be in addition to, not included in, the 180 minutes per week or equivalent of the science course. Regardless of inclusion within credit bearing science courses, lab courses must be coded separately, denoted by an ‘L’ in the seventh character as outlined in the [High School Course Code Directory](#).

C. ADDITIONAL/FRACTIONAL CREDIT FOR COURSES

Credits should be awarded in whole-credit or half-credit increments whenever possible. Because of differences in schools’ scheduling models, scenarios may arise where it is most appropriate for courses to be worth other fractional credit values, particularly in cycle and trimester-based schools.

Awarding additional/fractional credit is appropriate in the following circumstances:

⁵⁴ Through NYSED’s [incidental teaching provision](#), there are specific instances where a teacher may teach one period per day in a subject area outside their certification area, provided that they teach within the same student population as their license area and have demonstrated subject matter competency in the subject.

- **Dividing a year-long course sequence into a trimester- or quarter/cycle-based program**, for example, awarding 0.25 credits each quarter for a total of one credit at the end of the year for a one-credit course.
- **Accelerating or extending a course up to the total number of credits in the core sequence**, for example, a school may award 1.5 credits per semester for a course that meets for 70 minutes per day, four days per week (280 minutes per week), for a total of six credits at the end of four semesters. A school may award 0.67 credits per semester for a course that meets for 120 minutes per week, for a total of two credits at the end of three semesters.
- **Physical education courses**, which use specific credit models. Semester-based schools should award either 0.5 or 0.58 credits for PE courses, depending on the school's PE program model (traditional or daily, respectively). See the [PE FAQ](#) for a full list of credit values schools may assign.
- **Courses providing fewer than 180 minutes per week, including elective courses:** For example, a health course which provides 90 minutes of instruction per week over two semesters may be worth 0.5 credits per semester. Similarly, an elective music class addressing high school level music standards that meets for 90 minutes per week may be awarded 0.5 elective credits.
- **Intra- and inter-disciplinary courses:** Fractional credit can provide schools with flexibility to combine different areas of course content within and across subjects, organizing content and time in innovative ways to support student engagement and learning. A school may design an integrated course that awards credit in two different topics within a discipline or across disciplines, in increments of 90 minutes of instruction per week for 0.5 credits for a semester.⁵⁵ For example, an English class that meets for 270 minutes per week for one semester and integrates an additional poetry unit throughout the semester may be worth one English credit and 0.5 additional poetry (elective English) credits. See [Interdisciplinary Courses](#) for information and examples of where fractional credit may be awarded.

Schools may not use fractional credit values to award additional or fractional course credit in the following circumstances:

- **For additional instructional time:** Schools may not award additional credit for increasing or decreasing a course's instructional time while addressing the same [learning standards](#).⁵⁶
- **For additional rigor:** Schools may not award additional credit for increasing the rigor of a course (e.g. an Honors course). However, schools can choose to weight more rigorous courses more heavily in a student's GPA; see the section of this guide on [Calculation of GPA](#).
- **For minimal additional time and additional learning standards added to a course:** For example, students in an English class that meets for 220 minutes per week (44 minutes per day) for one semester are eligible to receive one credit in English, not one credit in English and 0.2 elective credits for the eight additional minutes of instruction and content per day.
- **Above and beyond the total number of credits in a course sequence as outlined in NYSED Regulations:** For example, a student may not earn more than a total of four credits in the high school Global history sequence.

D. INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES

Interdisciplinary programming combines [learning standards](#) from two different content areas in a single course. An interdisciplinary course must be taught by a teacher certified in at least one of the subjects. Interdisciplinary courses may be awarded credit in the following ways:

- **Interdisciplinary courses that fulfill two distribution requirements:** An interdisciplinary course that meets for 180 minutes per week, or the equivalent, throughout one semester can count for one credit, and successful completion of the course may be used to meet the distribution requirements in more than one subject area. In this case, students must still earn 44 total credits to meet diploma requirements. Alternatively,

⁵⁵ Schools operating on a trimester model may offer fractional credit in increments of 0.3 credits per trimester for no less than a total of 16.2 hours (972 minutes) per trimester where the school plans to offer the course over at least two trimesters.

⁵⁶ As an exception, NYSED allows students to earn up to 4 credits in any math or science course that culminates in a Regents examination. In this case, the course syllabi should be designed to address an extended sequence.

an interdisciplinary course that meets for 180 minutes per week or the equivalent throughout one semester can be worth 0.5 credits in one subject area and 0.5 credits in the other.

Example: A student takes an interdisciplinary course that covers the learning standards for math and physical science. At the end of the semester, the student has demonstrated mastery of the course and earned a passing grade. The student earns one credit in math and meets the distribution requirement for science. The student will now need to earn one more physical science credit to earn a total five science credits, to meet the Regents diploma requirements. The student will still need a total of 44 credits, with the interdisciplinary course counting as one of those 44 required credits.

Example: A student takes an interdisciplinary elective course that covers the learning standards for ELA and social studies. The course meets for 180 minutes per week. The course is programmed in STARS such that at the end of the semester, students who master the course content earn 0.5 credit in ELA and 0.5 credit in social studies.

Example: An integrated course that is part of a [State-approved CTE program](#) that meets for 180 minutes per week throughout the semester and addresses the relevant learning standards in a required subject area plus industry-defined content in the CTE program area counts for one credit in the required subject area, and may also meet distribution requirements for the requisite course in the school's State-approved CTE program.

- **Interdisciplinary courses that meet for extended time:** An interdisciplinary course that meets for additional time and addresses the learning standards in two disciplines may be awarded credit in both subject areas in increments of 0.5, e.g. a semester-long interdisciplinary art history course that meets daily for 55 minutes, where the syllabus includes history content through the lens of art, may be awarded one credit in social studies and 0.5 credits in art, as long as the relevant learning standards are addressed. See discussion of fractional credits for intra-disciplinary integrated courses in [Additional/Fractional Credit](#).

In some cases, students enrolled in an interdisciplinary course may need to earn credit in different subject areas to stay on track to graduate. For example, some students in an interdisciplinary humanities course (which meets for 180 minutes per week or the equivalent throughout the semester and addresses both English and social studies [learning standards](#)) may need to earn one credit in English, while others may need to earn one credit in social studies. Schools are permitted to award credits to students as needed, in accordance with the interdisciplinary policies outlined above.

Schools should enter actual marks in accordance with their grading policy in one of the two areas and a mark of 'ND' in the other subject area. This indicates that the student met the distribution requirement in both areas, but only earned one credit for the course. For more information, see the [STARS wiki on Interdisciplinary Courses](#).

E. TRANSFER CREDIT

Per NYSED policy, the principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, is responsible for evaluating transcripts and awarding transfer credits for students enrolling in a New York City high school.

Schools must maintain procedures for the timely request and evaluation of transcripts from previous institutions to ensure that students are programmed for needed courses and exams using the required [transfer credit equivalency form](#), required [transcript update form](#); a [sample checklist](#) for supporting transfer students is also provided.⁵⁷ See the [Transfer Credit FAQ](#) for additional information.

- **For students transferring from a registered public or nonpublic high school in New York City or New York State:**⁵⁸ The principal is required to grant transfer credit for all credit awarded by any New York State registered public or nonpublic high school provided they conform to New York State policies.
- **For students transferring from non-registered New York State schools, schools outside New York State, schools outside the United States, and home schools:**

⁵⁷ The [Transcript update form](#) was modified as of January 2016 and is required. See the [appendix](#) for a list of all required forms.

⁵⁸ Students from schools who have passed PBATs in place of Regents exams in math, science, or social studies may use these PBATs to fulfill Regents exam requirements upon transfer to a non-PBAT administering school.

- The decision to award transfer credit must be based on whether the transcript and other records indicate that the work is consistent with NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) and is of comparable scope and rigor to that which would have been done in the school awarding the credit. This decision is to be made by the principal, after consultation with relevant faculty. Based on the student's transcript or other records, the principal awards the appropriate transfer credits towards a high school diploma.
- Schools are responsible for ensuring that transcripts in a language other than English are translated effectively so that transfer credit can be awarded appropriately.⁵⁹
- Schools may award up to 10 [languages other than English \(LOTE\)](#) credit for students with documented residence and school attendance in a language other-than-English-speaking environment, provided that the experience occurred at age 11 or older. Two credits are awarded per year. In determining the number of credits to be awarded, the school should consider both the student's prior academic record and future academic experience. Schools should include some form of documentation in the student's record that can serve to demonstrate the student's residence and school attendance in an "other-than-English-speaking environment."
- **For students who completed coursework at other educational or cultural institutions (i.e. study abroad programs, college courses, etc.):** Principals may award transfer credit for work completed through study abroad courses or other educational or cultural institutions. The decision of whether to award transfer credit for work done at educational or cultural institutions other than New York State-registered high schools is based on whether the transcript and other records indicate that the work is consistent with NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) and is of comparable scope and rigor to that which would have been done in the school awarding the credit.

Students entering a New York State high school for the first time in grade 11 or 12 are exempt from certain Regents examination requirements; see [Regents Exam Waivers](#).

All transfer credits must be reflected in [STARS](#), using the standardized [transfer course codes](#). Transfer credits may be designated within the term and year in which the student completed each course or within the term and year immediately prior to the student's enrollment in the NYCDOE school. Transfer credits are reflected on transcripts with a 'W' in the third character and a grade of 'CR.' Schools use the [transcript update function](#) in STARS to award transfer credits; see the [Transcript Update FAQ](#) for additional information on how to complete this type of transcript update.

For students who transfer between NYCDOE schools or programs (e.g. from a high school to a YABC), the STARS [course codes](#) used to capture the previous school's academic sequence may not align with those used by the receiving school.⁶⁰ The receiving school should program students for the course(s) which best cover the remaining learning standards in a sequence, even if the code does not perfectly align with the previous school's coding scheme. In such instances, the receiving school should maintain documentation that justifies the student's program placement, such as diagnostic assessment results or syllabi for the courses the student has previously completed. Schools receiving students back from other high schools or programs (from a YABC to the home school) should accept a variety of course coding schemes as long as the program can document that the course(s) taken cover the required [learning standards](#) and number of credits to complete the sequence. For more information see the [Awarding Transfer Credits FAQ](#). For information on transfer credit for students with disabilities, see the [NYSED Transfer Student Q&A](#).

1. Grade and Cohort Placement of Transfer Students

When students transfer to a NYCDOE high school from a non-NYCDOE school, they are assigned an initial grade level by the Office of Student Enrollment. For most students, this grade level is based on the first year the student entered grade 9 at any school in the world. Based on this grade level entered into the system, students are then also assigned a provisional cohort. This matches the [definition of cohort](#) established by Federal and State governments. It is important to note that cohort is not determined by credit accumulation, nor by a student's ability to stay on track toward graduation requirements. For more details on the definition of cohort, please see the section of this guide on [cohort policy](#).

⁵⁹ Schools may contact the student's home country embassy or consulate for assistance. It is not appropriate for the student or student's family members to complete the translation, or for the cost of translation to be passed along to the student.

⁶⁰ For example, two schools might cover the same Algebra I [learning standards](#) over a different number of terms; therefore, students' transcripts may reflect different STARS [course codes](#) for the same content.

Upon receiving a transfer student, high schools must carefully evaluate transcripts and other academic records and award high school transfer course and exam credits, according to the guidelines in the section on [Transfer Credit](#). This evaluation should be conducted in a timely manner to ensure that the student is programmed for needed courses.

Upon evaluating the transcript and awarding transfer credit, a school may change the grade level to more accurately reflect the students' real experience, if documentation supports that the student's real year of entry into ninth grade is inaccurate. To do this, schools must use the credit requirements outlined in the [promotion standards](#) section of this guide. If a student transfers into the DOE with a preliminary grade 11 or 12 placement, but the school subsequently adjusts the student's grade level based on the transcript evaluation, the new grade level must be used to determine whether the student is eligible for [Regents exam waivers](#).

F. MIDDLE SCHOOL ACCELERATED COURSE CREDIT —Updated September 2016

Students in grade 8 have the opportunity to take high school courses for credit as appropriate.⁶¹ There are two ways for grade 8 students to earn credits for high school-level courses:

- **Option 1:** In traditional grade 8 acceleration, students take an accelerated course in middle school aligned to high school level standards, culminating in a Regents exam. They earn credit after passing both the course and the assessment, provided they meet the policies described below.
- **Option 2:** In cases where a grade 8 class does not exist, individual students may attend a course at a high school with high school students and earn credit on the same basis as the high school students in that course.

See the [Middle School Academic Policy Guide](#) for more information on how accelerated credit is awarded to middle school students.

High schools must accept all accelerated high school credits a student earned in middle school. High school principals receiving incoming freshman who have earned high school credits through accelerated courses should provide opportunities for such students to continue advancing their study in the disciplines in which they have accelerated.

If a high school receives a student who has earned accelerated course credit in math or science, e.g. Algebra I or Living Environment, but needs additional support to meet college and career readiness standards, the school may consider the following:

- For students who have earned credit in Algebra I but need additional support, program the student for an extended geometry sequence (e.g. 1.5 or 2 years) which reinforces algebra skills through the lens of geometry in the first semester.
- Program the student for additional instruction in the accelerated math or science course in accordance, for a total of up to four credits in the subject (including the accelerated course credit). In this case, the school should use diagnostic assessments and other data to determine the students' learning needs and program the student for a course designed to meet these needs.

G. CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Students may earn up to a total of 13 credits without completing units of study if they score 85 or above on the corresponding Regents exams and meet all of the following criteria:

- The student has not previously failed or failed to complete the course for which he/she is attempting to earn credit.
- Based on the student's past academic performance, the high school superintendent or his/her designee (which may include the high school principal) determines that the student will benefit academically by exercising this alternative.

⁶¹ Per [Part 100.4\(d\)](#), students in grade 8 have the opportunity to earn high school credits in subjects including mathematics, science, languages other than English (LOTE), social studies, English, art, music, and career technical education (CTE). Students in grades 6 and 7 are not eligible to earn high school credit through accelerated courses, except for in LOTE; see the [LOTE FAQ](#) for details.

- The principal determines that the student successfully completed an oral examination or special project demonstrating proficiency of the subject matter developed in the course, but not measured by the relevant exams.
- The student attends school, or receives substantially equivalent instruction elsewhere, in accordance with New York State education law.
- Students attempting to earn credit-by-examination in science still must meet the 1,200 minute laboratory requirement with satisfactory documented laboratory reports.

Students may earn up to two credits per exam subject through credit-by-examination. Please note that:

- Regents exams in languages other than English (LOTE) are no longer offered by NYSED. The NYC LOTE comprehensive exam may not be used to earn credit by exam, per NYSED policy.
- Students may not use an ELA Regents exam taken in grade 11 to give credit for grade 12 English courses, which would otherwise be completed after the ELA Regents exam.
- While rare, it is permissible for a middle school student to use credit-by-examination, provided the conditions outlined above are satisfied.
- Credit by examination is entered into STARS as a transcript update, as detailed in the [STARS wiki](#) and in the [Transcript Update FAQ](#).

H. AWARDING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT FOR COLLEGE COURSES

Schools may offer advanced courses that bear credit toward a high school diploma and also bear higher education credit through arrangements with higher education institutions (e.g. Early College programs). This is detailed further in the [College Courses FAQ](#). A high school may not impose any charge or fee on students for any required instruction or program leading to a high school diploma, including for such college courses. In instances where high school credit and higher education credit are awarded, the high school must determine the appropriate high school credit value for the course. These courses, when in partnership, should be scheduled in STARS, as outlined in the [High School Course Code Directory](#).

A high school principal may also choose to award high school transfer credit for college courses students have completed independently, in accordance with the policies outlined in the [transfer credit](#) section.

For additional information, see the [College Courses FAQ](#) and [Off-site Courses FAQ](#).

I. INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students may use independent study for the electives credit requirement. No more than six elective credits towards a Regents diploma may be awarded for independent study. Students' participation in independent study must be approved by a school-based panel consisting of, at a minimum, the principal, a teacher in the subject area for which independent study credit is sought, and a guidance director or other administrator. The panel must approve the student's participation provided the student has demonstrated readiness in the subject area in which he/she is undertaking independent study and is on track to graduate.

Independent study must be academically rigorous, align to NYSED commencement-level [learning standards](#) as outlined in a syllabus, and be of comparable scope and rigor to a regular course. The principal, after consultation with relevant faculty, awards credit to the student for successful completion of the independent study and demonstrated mastery of the learning outcomes for the subject.

J. WAYS TO EARN CREDIT AFTER PREVIOUSLY FAILING A COURSE

Teachers must enter final grades into STARS no later than 20 days (or four weeks) after their courses are over. Within this window, some teachers and schools choose to give students a few extra days right after the end of the course before grades are entered and finalized to turn in work. This option must be clearly outlined for students in the school's [grading policy](#). Once grades are final and entered, they cannot be changed without completing a [Transcript update form](#).

After final course grades are officially on students' transcripts, there are three options for helping students who have failed courses earn credits in those courses. Students can:

- **Retake the course.** Students who have missed significant amounts of class time or have not yet mastered a large portion of the subject matter can benefit from retaking the entire course again. These students can make up the course in another term during the school year or in summer school. They might also be offered the course again as an online or blended course.
- **Take targeted credit recovery.** Eligible students who previously failed a course may also have the option to make up credit through credit recovery. Targeted credit recovery is specifically for students who have already attended most of the course and mastered the majority of the content. In this option, the student to pass the course and master the content that was in need of improvement. The student does not retake the full course again, but instead works with a teacher to make up and subsequently master only the particular portion of the course he/she still needs additional instruction in. However, there are specific NYCDOE and NYSED policies regarding the use of [credit recovery](#) that schools must implement in order for schools to award credit through targeted credit recovery. See the [Credit Recovery FAQ](#) for student eligibility requirements, the form a school-based panel must use to approve the course, and a full list of all policies.
- **In special circumstances, receive an incomplete ('NX' or 'NL') in accordance with the [policies for those marks](#).** Students who receive a grade of 'NX' or 'NL' must successfully complete remaining course requirements by the end of the next semester in order to receive a final grade and credit, if applicable.

Schools may not change grades previously recorded for the original course the student failed, regardless if the student is making up credit by repeating the course or taking targeted credit recovery. Students must be scheduled for the make-up credit or targeted credit recovery course using the [High School Course Code Directory](#) and the student must receive a grade (and credit, as appropriate) in the semester the course or targeted credit recovery was completed.

III. POLICIES FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

A. ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLs)

Schools identify students as ELLs based on the results of the [Home Language Identification Survey](#) (HLIS) and, if appropriate, the students' English proficiency level on the [New York State Identification Test for ELLs](#) (NYSITELL). Note that students who arrived in the country during high school are eligible to [appeal the ELA Regents exam](#).

1. New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL)

The NYSITELL is used to initially identify English Language Learners.⁶² A new entrant whose [Home Language Identification Survey](#) indicates languages other than English spoken in the home takes the NYSITELL to determine if he/she is eligible for bilingual and/or English as a New Language (ENL) services. Based on NYSITELL results, the student receives a proficiency level, and this determines the services received. [Part 154 regulations](#) address how schools must identify and serve ELLs. See [NYSED's website](#) and the [ELL Policy and Reference Guide](#) for more information.

2. New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT)

Schools must annually administer the NYSESLAT to [ELLs](#) to determine how well they are learning English as part of the required annual assessment and tracking of ELLs' English proficiency. The NYSESLAT assesses students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills using grade bands. Students' NYSESLAT results determine their proficiency level and the types of services they receive. The NYSESLAT also determines when students exit from ELL status. [Part 154 regulations](#) address how schools must identify and serve ELLs. See [NYSED's website](#) and the [ELL Policy and Reference Guide](#) for more information.

B. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The NYCDOE seeks to ensure that all students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are provided with access to his/her [least restrictive environment \(LRE\)](#).

⁶² Effective February 1, 2014, the NYSITELL [replaced the Language Assessment Battery-Revised \(LAB-R\)](#) as the approved means of initially identifying ELLs in New York State.

Students with IEPs should, regardless of their disability:

- Have access to a rigorous academic curriculum that sets high academic standards, enabling them to fully realize their potential and graduate prepared for independent living, college, and careers
- Be taught in the least restrictive environment, and, as often as possible, alongside students without disabilities
- Receive special education services that are targeted to their needs and provide the appropriate level of support throughout the school day
- Be able to attend their zoned schools or the school of their choice, while still receiving the supplementary services and supports required

All students with disabilities and their families must feel welcome at every school. The [School Implementation Team \(SIT\)](#) facilitates the strategic planning to ensure that every school communicates appropriately and adequately serves, all students. The SIT works with other school teams but is not intended to usurp the function of the school-based [Committee on Special Education \(CSE\)](#).

Schools should review each new student's IEP or Section 504 Plan upon entry. If a child's IEP or Section 504 Plan recommends programs or services that the school does not currently have, the school should first make it clear to the parents and student that they are committed to providing the programs and services that are recommended on the IEP or Section 504 Plan, beginning on the student's first day at that school. For questions related to programming for students with disabilities, schools may contact their [Administrator of Special Education \(ASEs\)](#). For questions related to Section 504 Plans, see the [Office of School Health's](#) guide and the [Section 504 Policy and Procedures for Students](#).

A student's status as a student with an IEP, and any information related to the disability, is private information. Schools should ensure that the transcript does not reveal a student as having a disability. For example, schools should not list courses titled as "Resource Room" on a transcript.

For other policies related to students with disabilities, see the sections on [Testing Accommodations](#), [NYSAA](#), [Commencement Credentials](#), [Transition Services for Students with Disabilities](#), and [Scheduling in STARS](#).

1. New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)

The NYSAA is an assessment for students with severe cognitive disabilities who are unable to participate in general education assessments. It is offered in ELA, math, science, and social studies.⁶³

Students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may participate in a variety of assessment programs, depending on their needs and as specified on their IEPs. The Committee on Special Education (CSE) or IEP team determines eligibility. Student eligibility for NYSAA is determined on a case-by-case basis and is documented on an IEP in the Special Education Student Information System (SEIS). The student's IEP must clearly state why the student cannot participate in the general assessment program and the rationale for NYSAA eligibility.

NYSAA-eligible students are assessed according to their chronological age and against grade level standards set by NYSED;⁶⁴ in high school they are tested one time per each subject in ELA, math, science, and social studies. The ELA and math NYSAA exams are administered via a computer. As of 2013-14, the ELA and math NYSAA are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards. The science and social studies NYSAA exams measure ability by collecting both baseline and final data points in a datafolio.

Because they do not take Regents exams, NYSAA-eligible students do not earn high school diplomas. Instead, they may earn the [Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential](#).

⁶³ NYSED defines this as "students who have limited cognitive abilities combined with behavioral and/or physical limitations and who require highly-specialized education and/or social, psychological, and medical services in order to maximize their full potential for useful and meaningful participation in society and for self-fulfillment." See [section 100.1 \(2.\)\(iv\)](#). There is no one disability that automatically qualifies a student to participate in NYSAA.

⁶⁴ Students eligible for NYSAA must be assessed on the grade-appropriate content that is consistent with the student's chronological age. See the [age ranges for 2013-14](#) to determine chronological ages and corresponding grade levels.

Please see the [Alternate Assessment FAQ](#) for more information on NYSAA policies and procedures. See also the [Students with Disabilities](#) section of this guide.

2. Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

The NYCDOE’s goal is to prepare all students for postsecondary college and career readiness, and for students to exit high school with the highest diploma option available. High expectations, rigorous instruction, access to effective teaching practices, and quality Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) with deliberately planned transition services help to ensure that each student with a disability is on [A Shared Path to Success](#). NYSED specifies the requirements for determining and documenting postsecondary [transition plans for students with disabilities](#), beginning no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student is age 15, and updated annually. Transition services are formalized plans documented in each student’s IEP for continuing education, vocational training, employment, adult services, independent living and/or community participation, and tailored to student needs, abilities, and interests. Specific requirements include:

- A statement of the student’s needs, taking into account the student’s strengths, preferences and interests, as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities
- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals relating to education, training, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills
- A statement of the transition service needs of the student, including activities to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities, such as instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, etc.
- A statement of the responsibilities of the school district and, when applicable, participating agencies for the provision of such services and activities that promote movement from school to post-school opportunities, or both, before the student leaves the school setting.

Schools must also provide a summary prior to school exit for students whose eligibility for special education services terminates due to graduation from secondary school with a high school diploma or due to the students’ ages.

For more information on transition planning and services, see [Understanding Transition Services](#) and [Transition from School to Post School for Students with Disabilities](#).

C. TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Testing accommodations are changes to test format and/or administration procedures to support students in overcoming or working around their disability or English proficiency to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and abilities. Testing accommodations are intended to remove barriers and increase access to the general education curriculum. Testing accommodations do not change the skill or content that the test is measuring, nor are they intended to make tests less rigorous. The following students may be eligible for testing accommodations:

- [Students with disabilities](#), including those with IEPs and [Section 504 Plans](#)
- Students with disabilities who were declassified in grade 8 or above
 - The accommodations specified on the student’s declassified document must continue until the student graduates from high school.
- [ELLs](#) and former ELLs
 - Former ELLs who were identified as English language proficient based on their scores on one of the two most recent administrations of the [NYSESLAT](#) are eligible to receive these testing accommodations for only an additional two years after testing out of ELL status.⁶⁵
- Occasionally, other students, in emergency situations and with special approval
 - Students who demonstrate disabilities 30 days or fewer before the administration of a State or district-wide assessment may receive certain testing accommodations if authorized by the principal. For example, a student who breaks his/her arm days before an exam may be approved for a scribe. Such decisions must

⁶⁵ Per the [testing manuals](#), ELL accommodations may not be provided to former ELLs who were identified as English language proficient prior to the 2009 NYSESLAT administration.

be carefully documented to NYSED Office of State Assessment and the Borough Assessment Implementation Director (BAID).

Decisions to provide accommodations, as well as the specific accommodations themselves, are made on a case-by-case basis and are highly dependent upon individual student needs. Examples of testing accommodations include:

- Flexible test schedules or time limit extensions;
- Flexible test settings and special locations;
- Method of presentation, test directions, and assistive technology; and
- Method of test response, content, or physical support.

See the [Testing Accommodations FAQ](#) for additional information.

D. HOME AND HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION

Home and hospital instruction programs provide educational services to students who cannot be accommodated in a regular school facility because of a medical or physical condition and/or a severe emotional, psychological, or behavioral disability that prohibits the student from attending school. Interim home and hospital instruction programs are operated by District 75 and provide academic services to limit the educational effects of a long-term absence.

All students on home or hospital instruction must receive instruction that corresponds to courses required for graduation, as appropriate. Ideally, students receive instruction in courses that mirror their academic program. Students in grades 7-12 who receive home or hospital instruction must receive a minimum of ten hours of instruction per week, to the extent possible given the student's condition. As a result, high school students can generally earn no more than three credits per semester while on home instruction.

Students who apply and are approved for home instruction must be affiliated with a New York City school. The affiliate school is the public, parochial, or private school that the student will return to after home or hospital instruction has ended. The purpose of affiliation/shared instruction is to support the staff responsible for ensuring continuity of instruction so students remain on track to meet all academic requirements, and to ensure the student maintains a strong connection to the New York City school he/she will return to after home and hospital instruction has ended.

While the affiliate school and home and hospital instruction program are to form a collaborative relationship and communicate on a regular basis, each school is the primary owner of certain tasks and responsibilities. The affiliate school is primarily responsible for the student's academic programming while home and hospital instruction programs are primarily responsible for providing instruction. Specific roles and responsibilities are outlined in the [Home and Hospital Instruction Programs: Academic Policy and Systems Guidance](#). These are suggested responsibilities and may change based on the student's expected duration in home or hospital instruction. A change in responsibilities should be coordinated between the affiliate school and the home or hospital instruction program, specific to each student. Keeping an open line of communication is particularly important as students will return to New York City schools after home or hospital instruction has ended.

For information on student eligibility for home instruction, the process for referring a student to home or hospital instruction, and approval for a student to begin home instruction, see [Chancellor's Regulation A-170](#) and the [Home Instruction Schools webpage](#). For information on NYCDOE home and hospital instruction policies and implementation, see the [Home and Hospital Instruction Programs: Academic Policy and Systems Guidance](#).

E. HOME SCHOOLING

Families who opt for home schooling should understand that homeschooling is governed by a separate set of policies. For more information, see the [Office of Home Schooling website](#) and the [NYSED FAQ](#) on home schooling.

F. STUDENTS RETURNING FROM COURT-ORDERED SETTINGS —Updated September 2016

Students who are or have been involved with the juvenile court systems are entitled to specific rights related to their educations:

- The right to enroll in school in a timely manner;
- The right to continue to receive appropriate special education services, where an IEP is in place; and

- The right to receive assistance from the NYCDOE in obtaining records and updating the student’s DOE transcript to reflect credits earned while in a court-ordered setting. For assistance evaluating non-DOE transcripts, schools should contact their [academic policy and systems leads](#).

In this case, students in court-ordered settings refers to:

- Students who attend Passages Academy:⁶⁶
 - When students under age 16 are detained in New York City following an arrest, they are under the supervision of the Administration for Children’s Services, Division of Youth and Family Justice (DYFJ) while in detention. These students attend a NYCDOE school at one of the sites of Passages Academy, a program operated by District 79. ATS will indicate that the student has been transferred to Passages Academy (which is coded in ATS as 79X695).
 - Under the Close to Home Initiative, some students may also remain under the supervision of DYFJ after they are adjudicated in Family Court. These students are considered to be in “placement.” Most of these students remain in New York City and attend Passages Academy.
- Students in an Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) or Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) placement:
 - Some students are placed by the Family Court or Supreme Court in the custody of OCFS, ACS, or OCFS/ACS-contracted facilities (e.g. Children’s Village, Greenburgh-Graham, etc.) and receive educational programming from a non-DOE entity.
 - These students are discharged from Passages (79X695) with a discharge code ‘10.’ Upon the end of their court-ordered involvement, students are to appear at their Family Welcome Center to re-enroll in a DOE school.

See the [J.G. Best Practices Guide](#) and [J.G. Checklist](#) for information on these policies, including how to support a student’s transition back to his/her NYCDOE home school.

IV. PROGRAMMING AND SYSTEMS POLICIES

High schools have a critical responsibility to program students towards rigorous diploma options and provide students with schedules that account for prior coursework and earned credits. All NYCDOE middle and high schools are required to have student and teacher academic programs accurately reflected in STARS. The accuracy of these data should be maintained throughout the school year. Maintaining accurate student and teacher schedules in STARS reduces data requests from central offices to schools and it ensures schools, students, and families understand how a student is progressing towards graduation.

A. SCHEDULING IN STARS

A school’s academic program is operationalized through its [master schedule](#). The master schedule encompasses the locations and meeting times of all courses a school currently offers. Each course has the following six basic attributes that can be used in creating both student and teacher schedules:

- Course code;
- Section number;
- Period;
- Rotation (i.e. number of days per week the course meets);
- Location; and
- Teacher(s) of record (i.e. the subject-certified teacher responsible for designing the syllabus, providing instruction, monitoring student progress, and awarding grades).

Once a master schedule is created and finalized, students can be scheduled for their courses.

Each school indicates the courses it currently offers by designating active course codes. These course codes provide important information about the subject matter being delivered and its alignment to NYSED learning standards, as well as the instructional level and model, and are used for student schedules, report cards, transcripts, and NYCDOE data

⁶⁶ Passages Academy is a program of [D79](#). Passages Academy has the DBN 79X695.

and accountability purposes. Codes may have up to eight characters. The use of the standardized codes outlined in the [High School Course Code Directory](#) allows users within and outside the school community to understand what the course codes signify. Many NYCDOE reports, tools, and data feeds use the rules established in the [High School Course Code Directory](#) to inform business rules. Schools must ensure their courses are coded in alignment with this directory.

Prior to building the term's master schedule, schools should review their course offerings and [active codes](#) for the given year/term and ensure the courses will again be available.

Schools use the [section properties](#) function to provide additional information about a course or section.⁶⁷ This function includes other attributes like a secondary teacher, the language of instruction, the special education model, the [ELL](#) model (English as a Second Language, Dual Language, or Transitional Bilingual Education), whether the course is online or part of the [iLearn program](#), if the course includes Computer Science for All content, and other applicable properties.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that all students, including students who are absent for extended periods of time (LTAs), are provided with an academic program that moves them toward graduation and college and career readiness. Schools must prepare academic programs in STARS for all students by the first day of school. In the event that a student is absent unexpectedly for more than 20 consecutive school days, the following policies apply:

- To ensure that the student receives support in the event of an absence of more than 20 consecutive school days, the school may modify the student's schedule in following ways:
 - Add administrative block(s) to serve as a transition schedule, in which the student will meet with a counselor, administrator, and/or other school staff members prior to his/her return to classes. These courses should be coded using 'ZA' in the first two characters, as described in the [High School Course Code Directory](#).
 - In addition, the school may partially or fully remove the student from the academic program for which he/she was previously scheduled. The school should retain a copy of the academic program in the student's cumulative record to facilitate the process of recreating the program in STARS at a later date if needed.

1. CODING AND TITLES FOR REQUIRED SEQUENCES ON STUDENTS' TRANSCRIPTS

STARS course codes capture information about the subject area, course content, and position of a course within a sequence. For courses required for graduation, schools must follow the coding practices below to ensure that course sequences can be interpreted by other NYCDOE schools and NYCDOE graduation tracking tools.

- The titles of courses required for graduation should be easy for an external reader to interpret. Information about the themes and topics covered in required courses can hinder postsecondary institutions' ability to understand a student's academic history. This information can be communicated with students and families through course catalogs and other materials.
- Courses for which a standard code is not available are generally coded using 'Q' in the second character. The titles of these courses should be descriptive so that the reader of the transcript can interpret them. For example, the course "MQS11: Math Topics" does not provide any information about the content of the course and whether it is high-school level, while "MQS11: Pre-Algebra" clearly describes the course content.
- Course titles may never indicate that a course is designed specifically for students with disabilities (e.g. courses should not be titled "Resource Room" or "English Special Ed.")
- The first five characters of the course code should serve as unique identifiers. The same course code generally should not appear on students' transcripts twice, especially if the course is credit-bearing. This implies that students have repeated the same course for credit, rather than progressing to more challenging coursework.
 - If a student already received credit for a course but is auditing the same course again to prepare for a Regents exam, the student should receive a mark of 'NC' or 'NU' for the second course in order to avoid double-crediting.
 - In some cases, it may be impossible to avoid duplicative codes; for example, if a school offers two "other math" courses, both beginning with MQ. In this case, the school can use the seventh and eighth characters to distinguish between the courses. Credit-bearing math courses should generally be coded using a more

⁶⁷This function is found under the 'Master Schedule' sub-menu of the 'School Scheduling' drop-down on STARS Admin.

descriptive course code (ME for algebra, MG for geometry, etc.).

Expectations for coding required sequences in English, social studies, math, and science are outlined in the table that follows:

Required Sequence	Coding (First two characters)	Considerations
English (8 credits)	EE	<p>If a selective or specialized English course is part of the required English sequence, do not code it using a value other than 'E' in the second character (such as 'EJ' for journalism or 'EL' for literature). These values should be reserved for electives that do not fulfill the English requirement. Instead, use the seventh or eighth characters and/or course titles to distinguish courses as needed.</p> <p>The fourth and fifth characters should reflect a four-year sequence, corresponding to the four required years of English. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEN41–EEN44 for an annualized sequence • EES81–EES88 for a semester-based sequence • EETC1–EETCC for a trimester-based sequence • EEFG1–EEFGG for a cycle-based sequence <p>Integrated ELA and ENL courses should be coded as EE in order to indicate their alignment to the ELA standards. ES standalone courses should not be counted toward the eight ELA credits required for graduation.</p>
Social Studies (8 credits)	HG (Global) HU (U.S. history) HE (Economics) HV (Government) HF (Annualized Economics and government)	<p>Schools may not code required social studies courses using values other than those outlined here, such as 'HR' for "History of..." courses. These values must be reserved for electives that do not fulfill the social studies requirement. Instead, schools should use the seventh or eighth characters and/or course titles to distinguish courses as needed.</p> <p>The fourth and fifth characters should reflect a sequence, where applicable.</p>
Math (6 credits)	Choose the code that corresponds to the course content.	<p>If a student is participating in an extended three- or four-semester math course, the fourth and fifth characters should reflect this.</p> <p>If a student begins participating in a two-semester algebra course but transitions to a 4-semester algebra course, the following sequence can be used: MES21, MES22, MES43, MES44.</p>
Science (6 credits)	Choose the code that corresponds to the course content.	<p>If a student is participating in an extended three- or four-semester science course, the fourth and fifth characters should reflect this.</p> <p>If a student begins participating in a two-semester earth science course but transitions to a four-semester earth science course, the following sequence can be used: SES21, SES22, SES43, SES44.</p> <p>Science courses with 'L' in the seventh character should not be credit-bearing and should not count toward the science credit requirement.</p>

Schools should review their course codes for alignment to the recommendations above and adjust course codes for 2016-17 and beyond as needed. Schools should not modify historical course codes without consulting their [academic policy and systems lead](#) first, as this can result in the loss of important academic data. In the event of a discrepancy between school practice and the expectations above, course syllabi should be maintained on file to support graduation certifications. See the [High School Course Code Deck](#) for more information on properly coding courses in STARS. As described in the [Transcript](#)

[Update FAQ](#), schools may not complete transcript updates in order to “clean up” or delete and modify historical course codes to better align with the above policies and practices.

2. Term Models

Schools designate courses as following a term model, where “term” is defined as the length of time before a teacher awards a final grade and credits earned. Term models include:

- Year-long (~36 weeks of instruction, in which the students remain in a course the entire year)
- Semester-based (~18 weeks of instruction, in which the year is divided into two courses)
- Trimester-based (~12 weeks of instruction, in which the year is divided into three courses)
- Cycle-based (~9 weeks of instruction, in which the year is divided into four courses)

In STARS, schools must specify a [term model](#); however, term models may be designated at the course level as well. For example, a school that generally follows a year-long model might choose to offer semester-based arts and health courses. Schools may adjust the number of weeks of instruction per term in STARS, as long as they have designated enough instructional days to meet State school day and individual course instructional time requirements.

3. Push-in/Pull-out Instruction —Updated September 2016

Push-in and pull-out instruction occur when a teacher other than the primary teacher(s) delivers targeted instruction to a subgroup of students on a regular basis. Push-in and pull-out instruction can be used to meet a variety of instructional needs, including, but not limited to, intervention, enrichment, and services for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Push-in and pull-out instruction must always be programmed in STARS to reflect the content and subjects/codes delivered to students. It must be scheduled to reflect the frequency with which the push-in and pull-out instruction occur. Push-in/pull-out instruction records identify the teacher, the minutes and meet times, the subject of the instruction (using course codes), and any other important properties.

In push-in instruction, an additional teacher instructs a student or subgroup of students within the primary class. The subject indicated will always correspond to the content being delivered.

- Example: A second teacher assists an individual student within the classroom twice per week during ELA to provide additional support with literacy during the lesson.
 - The school creates a push-in record for the student, and indicates that the student is receiving ELA instruction from the second teacher.
- Example: An English as a New Language (ENL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher pushes into another subject area, i.e. math class, to assist one student or a small group of students with their language skills during math.
 - The school creates a push-in instruction record for the student, and indicates that the student is receiving math instruction. They link the ESL teacher, and choose ESL/ENL as a subject property. They also indicate the meet times and start and end date of the service.

In pull-out instruction, a subgroup of students leaves the primary class to receive instruction outside the classroom from a second teacher.

- Example: A second math teacher may pull a targeted group of advanced students out of math class twice per week to deliver more advanced content. The subject indicated will always correspond to the content being delivered.
 - The school creates a push-in record for the students, and indicates that they are receiving math from the second teacher. They also indicate the meet times and start and end date of the service.
- Example: A student’s IEP requires him to receive SETSS in a separate location in math. The student meets with the SETSS teacher during his regularly scheduled math class for 30 minutes in the library.
 - The school creates a pull-out record for the student, and indicates that he is receiving math from the second teacher. They choose the subject property of ‘Teacher Support Services’ and indicate another other appropriate properties, including the start and end date of the services and the meet times.

Integrated co-teaching (ICT) is not considered push-in or pull-out instruction. Instead, this is indicated as a section property, and applied to the full course, because the co-teachers are instructing the full classroom.

Push-in and pull-out instruction should indicate the subject of the instructional content delivered to students and should be scheduled to reflect the frequency with which push-in and pull-out instruction occur. For details and instructions, see the [STARS wiki page](#).

B. ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING OPTIONS —Updated September 2016

Schools may consider alternative options in designing academic programs and individual courses for students who need additional support, including:

- Designing a course that incorporates alternative mechanisms for delivering course content and skills, such as blended/online learning, internships/service-learning, or project-based learning; see [Course Credit Policies and Procedures](#).
- Using “selectives,” i.e. designing a suite of different course offerings that address similar standards, content, or skills, through different lenses (e.g. creating a thematic, chronological, and/or regional-based approach to global history, or an interdisciplinary approach, e.g. global economics). Such offerings enable schools to provide flexibility to students who may need to repeat a failed course, but for whom repeating the same course in the exact same way would not likely lead to success.
- Considering how frequently a course should meet and how long each period should be (e.g. a course could be scheduled for a total of 70 hours to give students more time to master content). Note that additional credit may not be awarded for additional instructional time with minimal additional learning standards; see the [Additional/Fractional Credit](#) section of this guide for more information.
- Designating a course’s duration of up to two years in STARS. Students who fail to master the learning standards by the end of a course’s pre-defined duration may be eligible for credit recovery options in accordance with NYSED and NYCDOE policies. See the sections of this guide on [Ways to Earn Credit After Previously Failing A Course](#) and the [Mastery-based learning](#) for more information. Note that additional credit may not be awarded for additional instructional time with minimal additional learning standards; see the [Additional/Fractional Credit](#) section of this guide for more information.
- Building in frequent ways for students to make-up missed assignments or instruction prior to the end of the marking period and prior to awarding the final course grade as part of the school’s grading policy.
- Considering all of the supplemental aides and services available in order to ensure access to the curriculum for students with disabilities. Schools should consider the quality of implementation of the IEP, including alignment of services to student needs. Students should always receive services in the “least restrictive environment” that is appropriate for them. Students may receive different services for different content areas depending on their needs and strengths.
 - When creating courses in STARS, schools may not indicate a special education model in the [course code](#) and/or course name. Schools must indicate the special education model at the section level using the [section properties screen](#) in STARS.

a. Scheduling Models

Schools typically program students using either an individual or block scheduling model.

- Individual scheduling: In this model, students are scheduled based on individual needs and requirements. As a result, each student’s schedule is unique. Courses may be scheduled as a daily uniform program or on a rotation cycle.
- Block scheduling: In this model, students are organized into groups and each group follows the same schedule. Block scheduling allows for longer periods and normally requires courses to meet on a rotation.

In addition to individual and block scheduling, schools may choose to adopt different instructional approaches to which student and teacher schedules align. Some of these approaches are described below. Refer to the [High School Programming FAQ](#) for additional information on designing school schedules and teacher programs.

b. Annualized Learning

An annualized instructional approach to grading is one where a course's syllabus, scope and sequence, lesson plans, assessments, and grading policy reflect a year-long (i.e. 36-week) learning cycle. The same teacher teaches the students the entire school year, even though the year is divided into terms. Schools that employ an annualized instructional approach typically have an annualized term model. However, schools that have semester, trimester, or cycle term models may choose annualized learning for select courses where instructionally appropriate, given the consistency of the teacher and content.

In these situations, course documentation (e.g. syllabi, scope and sequence) need to indicate that the course is annualized and the school's grading policy must specify how the course is graded; see the [Transcript Update FAQ](#) for details. A school that uses a semester, trimester, or cycle term model but offers select annualized courses may choose to update grades and credits documented earlier in the year based on a student's performance later in the school year, in accordance with the school's grading policy.

- **Example:** A semester-based high school has an annualized instructional approach to allow teachers to update grades and credits documented earlier in the year based on a student's performance later in the school year, in English language arts 9 (EES81, EES82), English language arts 10 (EES83, EES84), English language arts 11 (EES85, EES86), and English language arts 12 (EES87, EES88). The school outlines in its grading policy that students must meet all of the following requirements in order to be eligible for second semester grade changes:
 - Be in good academic standing, with at least a 75 average in the second term of the course, and demonstrate sufficient mastery of the content; and
 - Pass the final exam and/or the Regents exam, in the case of English 11.
 - Teachers must meet with students who meet the annualization requirements to inform them of this grade change procedure. After this time, eligible students' marks are changed to their second semester grade via transcript update at the end of the second semester.

One student earns a 55 in EES81 in the fall. By the end of June, she has earned an 80 in EES82, which is taught by the same teacher. The school performs a transcript update to reflect a grade of 80 for both EES81 and EES82.

- **Example:** Students in a semester-based high school are taking a course with the same teacher all year long. Although the school has a semester term model, the course has an annualized instructional approach where content is spiraled. Even though some students were passing the course as of January with grades in the low 70s, by June they are now failing it outright with grades in the low 50s. The teacher updates their grades in both semesters to failing.

Schools awarding credit for instructionally annualized programs using semester, trimester, or cycle term models may divide the credit value among each term accordingly. See the [Guide to Programming and Awarding Credit in Trimester and Cycle Models](#) for more information.

If students are in a semester-based course (e.g. a course that reflects an 18-week learning model in that the lesson plans and scope and sequence only reflect 18 weeks of content), schools may not update grades and credits documented earlier in the year based on a student's performance later in the school year. Final course grades for courses that are not annualized may not be changed unless it meets the criteria listed on the [Transcript update form](#) and in the [Transcript Update FAQ](#).

c. Mastery-Based Learning

Mastery-based learning is an approach based on the principle that students advance to the next course upon demonstrating mastery of course outcomes. Student progress and performance are measured based on specific pre-determined competencies and skills, and data are used to provide timely, differentiated support based on students' individual learning needs.

In a mastery-based model, schools:

- Identify specific learning targets, competencies, or outcomes that are aligned to or in support of New York State learning standards

- Design curriculum, scope and sequence, lesson plans, assessments, and grading policies that support student progress toward independent mastery of learning targets, competencies, or outcomes
- Define qualitative, descriptive criteria that indicate how a student can demonstrate proficiency or progress toward mastery on each standard and competency
- Provide students with regular, specific feedback on their progress toward meeting each identified target, competency, or outcome. Note that feedback is typically not averaged, but tracked individually.

Implementing mastery-based learning requires long-term planning and strong support from the school community, including teachers, administrators, students, and families. Schools considering adopting a mastery-based system should contact their [academic policy and systems lead](#) for support. For additional guidance on programming students in mastery-based learning models, see the [Overview of Mastery Based Learning](#).

There are many additional options schools may consider in designing their academic programs and individual courses, particularly to support students who may need more time to master course content. Schools should contact their [academic policy and systems leads](#) for direct support.

V. ATTENDANCE, DISCHARGE, AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

A. SCHOOL CALENDAR

Each year, the school year calendar is centrally designed to meet the NYSED requirement of a minimum number of 180 State aidable days in all schools.⁶⁸ The school year calendar, including Chancellor’s conference days for professional development and two parent teacher half-days, is pre-determined to ensure that schools do not fall below the minimum number of aidable days. According to NYSED:

- Aidable days must be between September and June.
- Classes or activities scheduled on Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays do not count towards the 180 aidable days.

Regents testing and the rating day in June are considered aidable days by NYSED although attendance is not required to be taken. The following describes the process for removing these days from the calendar (or “releasing” impacted grade levels) if class schedules are disrupted by the Regents examination schedule and if staff is needed to properly administer examinations. When possible, schools have the option of continuing regular instruction on all or any of the Regents testing days.

- For all non-D75 schools comprised only of students in grades 9-12, Regents days can be removed from the school calendar using the ATS function [ERES](#). Attendance scan sheets will not be generated. High school grade students in other non-D75 schools may be released using ATS function [CCLA](#) (release code 43). Grades released are considered neither absent nor present.
- This process of releasing grades may also be applied in schools administering their own final assessments in place of or in addition to Regents exams (e.g. portfolio reviews or final exams for courses not culminating in Regents exams) in the following circumstances:
 - The final assessments administered during these days must be required assessments that count toward students’ final course grades for the term. Schools may not implement non- attendance days for practice exams, course makeup or review sessions, or assessments that could be readily incorporated into classroom instructional time.
 - The assessment(s) must be administered during the Regents exam administration periods.
 - The assessment(s) must be scheduled for morning and/or the afternoon.
 - The assessment(s) must require significant school space and/or staff as to impede administration on a traditional instructional day.
- Secondary schools, with students below grade 9, may request the release of the lower level grades through a calendar change request, if the Regents exam administration will disrupt normal instruction. Upon approval, the requested days will be removed from the school calendar. Similarly, secondary schools may request the release

⁶⁸ See NYSED’s [Attendance Memo](#).

of grades 6-8 during the Regents exam period if middle school students take local final examinations, as described above.

- For students with disabilities who participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) and therefore do not take standard assessments, instruction must be provided during the days that other children are being assessed. Instruction must be provided regardless of which special education services the student receives or the setting in which the student's special education program is provided. The instruction may be provided by such individuals as a general education teacher, special education teacher or teacher assistant. Students in these grade codes are not to be released during the exam period.

To avoid the risk of a reduction in State aid, and to limit the impact on bus scheduling and other services, schools may not open late, dismiss early, or close, without prior approval through a school-based option, by the superintendent, and subsequently submitting a [calendar change request](#).⁶⁹ See the [Instructional Time and Calendar Change Requests FAQ](#) or more information about the calendar change request process, eligibility requirements, and dates that schools are not permitted to change.

Note that days of special events, such as PSATs, field trips, promotion ceremonies, etc. are days of attendance; impacted grades should not be released. State assessments for grades 4–8 are considered regular instructional days and schools must record attendance.

B. DAILY SESSION TIME AND STUDENT SCHEDULES

Per [Title IV, Article 65, Part I](#) and [Part 175.5](#), the minimum length of the school day for grades 7–12 is 5.5 hours per day (27.5 hours per week), exclusive of lunch, and inclusive of time spent by students in actual instructional or supervised study activities. This time may include off-site educational experiences overseen by the school (e.g. courses taken at a college, internships, etc.). For more information on alternative course delivery mechanisms, see [Course Credit Policies and Procedures](#).⁷⁰

Students on track for graduation often reach their senior year needing only a few required courses or already having met minimum diploma requirements. Regardless, schools should schedule all students in their first four years of high school for 5.5 hours of instructional or supervised study activities. Schools may use a variety of options to support students in pursuing more rigorous diploma options and strengthening their college and career readiness, including:

- Extended core courses (e.g. a fourth year of math or science), [Advanced Placement\(AP\)](#)[®] courses, International Baccalaureate courses, college-preparatory courses, or elective courses;
- Off-site internships, overseen by a teacher or administrator in the school, which align with [learning standards](#);
- Courses at a college in partnership with the high school;
- Seminars or independent studies where students can research a topic of interest to them; and
- Advisory activities to support students in planning for college and careers.

For guidance on awarding credit for these learning experiences, see [Course Credit Policies and Procedures](#).

Students above compulsory age (i.e. those who have completed the school year in which they turn 17) have the right to attend a full-time high school or high school program through the end of the school year in which they turn 21. For students who are above compulsory age and have completed four years of high school (i.e. are in their fifth year of high school or beyond), schools have the following options:

- Schools are encouraged to program students with a full schedule to complete their academic program and earn a diploma, recognizing the options above for supporting college and career readiness.
- Based on their academic and personal needs, schools may program individual students for shortened schedules to complete their academic program and earn a diploma. In this case, schools should ensure that students are scheduled, at a minimum, for courses and exams needed to put them on track to graduate. All

⁶⁹ Calendar changes can be submitted after a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) vote and SBO vote have been conducted. An SBO is the process whereby a Principal and his/her UFT chapter leaders agree to propose to the UFT represented school staff deviations from certain requirements of the UFT teachers' contract. First, the principal and UFT chapter leader must reach agreement on the SBO proposal. Next, the UFT chapter leader must arrange for a vote and notify all UFT staff members. The proposal must be approved by 55% of the staff who vote, and the SBO must specify which provisions of the contract will be altered.

⁷⁰ See also question 11 of [NYSED's Attendance Memo](#).

students should be provided opportunities to complete an academic program that adequately prepares them for their college and career goals.

- Currently, students may not be given part-time schedules (with a schedule of courses meeting fewer than five days) without marking such students absent on the days they do not attend courses.

Schools may refer students to the [graduation requirements cards](#) for recommendations on the courses and exams they should take to prepare for college and careers.

A school's schedule is determined by the principal in alignment with contractual obligations. Changes to the schedule that deviate from the traditional eight-period day require a vote via the school-based option (SBO) process.⁷¹ See the [Programming FAQ](#) for additional guidance.

To ensure that daily instructional time is accurately reflected in STARS, schools should address the following:

- The bell schedule defined in STARS should accurately reflect the school's schedule.
- All empty periods in students' schedules should accurately reflect the student's program.
 - All students attending school full-time should be scheduled for instruction, lunch, or supervised study activities for all periods within the school day.
 - For students eligible for a shortened schedule (see policies outlined above), blank periods indicate periods where the student is not programmed for instruction and therefore not expected to attend school.
- Students' lunch periods should be accurately reflected in STARS. All students should be provided the opportunity for a daily lunch period; schools should not use lunch periods to deliver instruction or conduct required academic activities or services.⁷²

See also [Scheduling in STARS](#).

C. ATTENDANCE

Attendance refers to attendance data collection reporting of how many students are in school each day and the practices to increase the number of students in school each day. The following are important elements of a school's attendance program:

- A protocol, standard routine and timeline for when and who manages and scans attendance rosters, checks and files them and updates attendance, as necessary.
- Clear school attendance policies shared with students, families and staff, including attendance goals, how absences or lateness impact course grades, what constitutes and excused absence, and what students do if they must miss school.
- Plan to connect attendance and academic achievement: school-wide grading policies, teacher professional development on absenteeism, attendance topics for grade-level or content-area teams, and transition plans and lesson planning for absentees that supports continuity of instruction when student miss school.
- Systems to contact families for every absence and determine causes, including means to keep family contact information current and ways to log or track reasons for absences.
 - Investigations whenever the cause of absence is unknown or when absences continue; connections with community services when barriers to regular school attendance cannot be overcome with school-site interventions.

Schools are required to communicate the standard of attendance that students are expected to maintain, and attendance is essential to full participation in all learning experiences. The following rules apply:

- A student who has attended at least one instructional period cannot be marked absent.

⁷¹ An SBO is the process whereby a Principal and his/her UFT chapter leaders agree to propose to the UFT represented school staff deviations from certain requirements of the UFT teachers' contract. First, the principal and UFT chapter leader must reach agreement on the SBO proposal. Next, the UFT chapter leader must arrange for a vote and notify all UFT staff members. The proposal must be approved by 55% of the staff who vote, and the SBO must specify which provisions of the contract will be altered.

⁷² For students who elect to take additional elective courses or extracurricular activities in place of a lunch period, schools should obtain consent from the student's parent or guardian.

- No number of tardies equals an absence.
- A student cannot be excluded from school because he/she arrived late.
- Students who miss 20 or more days the previous year are identified in ATS with a chronic absence indicator in ATS ([CHRONIC ABS](#)). These students can be targeted for specific interventions to help prevent further patterns of absence.
- For PSAL, students must maintain 90% attendance, counting only unexcused absences within each marking period (for a typical marking period of 30 days, this means no more than 3 unexcused absences).
- Family vacations and travel are not discharges. Students are marked absent during these events.

Every school must define its own specific policies on attendance and lateness. Schools must publish these policies in the staff and student/parent handbooks, web site, or other ways the school communicates: the definitions of lateness; the process for leaving school early; the reasons and documentation required for excused lateness or absences; and how the school is notified of absences or reasons for absences. School attendance policies must be clear on what parents must do to notify the school before and/or after all absences, including extended absences for vacations or family emergencies.

The [Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation Guidelines](#) describe the correct discharge codes and evidence before a student is removed from a school's register. Each principal is responsible for following the Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation guidelines, which may be updated each school year.

Refer to Chancellor's Regulation [A-210](#) and the [Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation](#) guidelines and the [Attendance page](#) on the Principal's Portal for full details. Schools may contact their [academic policy and systems lead](#) for more details.

D. STUDENT RECORDS RETENTION AND TRANSFER —Updated September 2016

Maintaining up-to-date, accurate student records is an important part of ensuring that students are programmed for the correct courses and exams, and receive the services they need. High schools are responsible for obtaining and maintaining relevant records electronically and in students' cumulative files. See the guidance provided in the [Student Records Maintenance and Requests FAQ](#) and [Chancellor's Regulation A-820](#). To ensure that school records requests are directed appropriately, school principals should identify staff members responsible for managing student records requests. This individual may be identified in the [USIN](#) ATS screen.

Students' cumulative files should be transferred to high schools as follows:

- For students transitioning from NYCDOE middle schools to NYCDOE high schools, middle schools are responsible for transferring students' cumulative files to students' receiving high schools each spring once high school placement decisions have been finalized. Middle schools use the [PLNT](#) (general education) and [PSPE](#) (special education) reports in ATS to access students' high school DBNs, and distribute students' cumulative files accordingly. The PLNT and PSPE reports should be included with the records as a cover sheet. High schools can use the [RQSA](#) screen in ATS to request missing records as needed.
- For students enrolling from non-NYCDOE schools, high schools are responsible for confirming students' prior schools and contacting the schools to request copies of students' cumulative files in a timely manner in order to provide students with appropriate academic programs. See [Transfer Credit](#) for more information on supporting transfer students.

NYCDOE's data systems automatically transfer the following information to high schools:

- **ATS:** biographical information, attendance data, health/immunization records, promotion data, disciplinary history, exam scores, and transportation eligibility
- **STARS:** permanent records/transcripts
- **SEIS:** Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)⁷³

The [Student Records Maintenance and Requests FAQ](#) details what kinds of student records schools are responsible for providing to parents and students. Former students who wish to obtain copies of their academic records should submit a [written request](#) to the school they last attended, accompanied by valid proof of ID. If the student's school is no longer open, the student should request his/her records from the designated [transcript maintenance school](#). Students are advised

⁷³ It is not necessary to transfer a paper copy of the IEP.

to contact their borough high school superintendent’s office for assistance locating their transcript maintenance school or obtaining their records. See the [DOE website](#) for additional information.

Reasonable methods must be used to identify and authenticate the identity of parents, students, school officials, and any other parties to whom personally identifiable information from education records is disclosed. When a request comes from a former student who resides out of the New York area, schools must still attempt to authenticate the identity of the requestor.

A federal immigration initiative known as [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#) allows undocumented young people who were brought to the United States as children and who meet certain criteria to be considered for work authorization and relief from deportation. Candidates must provide documentation that they meet [eligibility criteria](#); school records are a possible form of documentation, among [other documents](#) the City may be able to provide. Former students seeking records to document eligibility for consideration of deferred action should follow the procedures for transcript and records requests outlined above.

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)), confidential student information is not available to everyone. This law protects the privacy of student information. Please see the [Student Records Maintenance and Requests FAQ](#) for more information.

A student’s permanent pupil record must be changed to reflect a change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation that such legal name and/or gender have been changed pursuant to applicable law; for guidance on name changes without legal documentation, and for information on other records procedures affecting these students, see the public NYCDOE [Transgender Student Guidelines](#).

VI. GRADING POLICIES —Updated September 2016

All schools must document grading policies that set clear expectations for learning and make them transparent to staff, students, and families. The goal of a documented grading policy is to provide students, families, and teachers a shared understanding of what is required in order to achieve a specific grade. Schools must share their grading policy with parents and students at the beginning of the school year.⁷⁴ As part of the process, schools are encouraged to create time for teacher teams to review and discuss policies before they share them. While grading policies should be tailored to a school’s community, mission, and goals, all grading policies must explain, at a minimum, how courses are graded, the scale of marks awarded, and the timeline of when students receive grades.

Grades provide feedback to students on their individual understanding of and progression through a course. Schools have discretion in deciding which specific measures are factored into students’ grades. However, determinations of passing or failing must be based primarily on how well students master the [learning standards](#), subject matter, concepts, content, and skills addressed in a class or course. This means that students may not pass or fail based solely on non-mastery measures (e.g. behavior, compliance, participation, conduct) but rather based on how well they demonstrate their understanding of the content and skills required in the course. Schools may not maintain quotas of students passing or failing courses. Student performance may result in passing grades for all students in a course, if all students demonstrate mastery of the learning standards addressed. However, a grading policy may not state that, by definition, all students must pass.

Schools may establish grading policies at the school, department, grade, or course level. Schools should have clearly defined procedures to ensure that students’ final course grades are entered in STARS in a timely manner, no more than four weeks after the end of the marking period.

In general, report cards are designed to assess student mastery of the Common Core standards. Grading policies must apply to all students in the school, including students with disabilities and ELLs. All students should be working toward grade level standards, as follows:

⁷⁴ The NYCDOE [Student Bill of Rights](#) and the [Parent Bill of Rights](#) include the rights to know and be provided with written documentation of grading policies and to receive grades based on those policies.

- For students with disabilities, schools document annual goals, plans for progress monitoring, and promotion criteria in the IEP, while the report card documents progress made in the general education curriculum. All students, including students with disabilities, receive grades based on how well they master the subject matter, concepts, content, and skills addressed in a class or course. The IEP describes specially designed instruction and accommodations for an individual student that used to create access to grade-level standards and enable progress toward annual goals. All students, including students with disabilities, should be working toward grade-level standards.²² Students' receipt of accommodations does not impact the grade that can be earned. Students with disabilities have the same opportunity to earn grades as all other students.
- Students with disabilities receive progress reports on their annual goals. Progress reports are usually distributed at the same time as report cards and reflect the likelihood that a student will meet their annual goals or has already met their annual goals. Progress reports do not replace report cards for students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities who participate in alternate assessments receive grades that reflect their mastery of the courses, skills and modified content of the general education curriculum presented. Due to the severity of the students' disabilities, the content of the general education curriculum and instruction needs to be modified to provide the students with access and allow for participation and progress. Modification results in a change in the expectation of what skills the students need to demonstrate that they have mastered. To accommodate for the difference in expectation, a school's grading policy should address how students with disabilities who participate in alternate assessment are graded.
- For ELLs, the grading policy should consider the student's English as a Native Language (ENL) proficiency level, and should include opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the NYSED learning standards in their native language.

A. INCORPORATING REGENTS EXAMS INTO FINAL COURSE GRADES

For students who complete a course of study culminating in a Regents exam, the Regents exam may not be the only reason a student passes or fails a course, per the [NYSED School Administrator's Manual](#). As a part of a grading policy, Regents scores may be included in the calculation of a final course grade only if the score is:

- Weighted no more than 33 percent of the terminal course leading to the exam; and
- Calculated into the course grade as a component of the weighted average.⁷⁵

Schools may not add points to the total grade because the student passed the Regents exam. For examples of acceptable ways to incorporate the Regents exam into a grading policy and calculate the weighted average, see [Weighting Regents Exams in Grading Policies](#).

B. COURSE MARKS AND REPORT CARDS

Schools determine the number of marking periods to include within a year, semester, trimester, or cycle, depending on the model they use. Schools must give at least two grades (marks) in each course per term. The last marking period in the term (e.g. year, semester, trimester, or quarter, depending on the school's model) is where final course grades for that term are recorded.⁷⁶ Schools determine these calculations according to their grading policies.

Schools should have clearly defined procedures to ensure that students' final course grades are entered in STARS in a timely manner, no later than four weeks after the end of the marking period.⁷⁷ [Report cards](#) can be generated in STARS for each marking period, and must be distributed to students and families at least twice per term—one student progress report and one report indicating the student's final grades for the term. Schools may use the standard NYCDOE report card and/or school-developed materials to provide students and families with more information about their progress and performance. See the intranet page on [Report Cards](#) for information about translations.

²² See the U.S. Department of Education's [Dear Colleague Letter](#).

⁷⁵ Schools using grading systems not based on weighted averages should ensure that the Regents exam mathematically accounts for no more than 33% of the final grade. For example, in a grading system where the final grade is based on a total of 300 points, no more than 100 points should be derived from the Regents exam outcome.

⁷⁶ For additional information on generating final grades in STARS, see the STARS wiki page on [Grades and Exams](#).

⁷⁷ See the [STARS wiki](#) for more information on how to define terms and enter marking period grades.

Schools may choose to use one or more grading scales based on their grading policies.⁷⁸ The principal, in consultation with the School Leadership Team (SLT), may determine whether grading policies are set at the school, department, grade, or course level. Each [course mark](#) has a citywide pass/fail equivalent (and, for alpha grades, a default numeric equivalent which is used in the [calculation of GPA](#)), whereby a passing grade equates to earning credit in the course. In some cases, a school may choose to change the numeric equivalent in accordance with its grading policy.⁷⁹ For a list of grading scales and available marks for each, see [appendix D](#).

The following policies apply to specific course marks:

- **Incompletes:** Schools may award a grade of Incomplete ('NX') if a student has a documented, extreme extenuating circumstance that prevents him/her from completing the course in its established timeframe (e.g. surgery, death in the family). A student who receives an incomplete must successfully complete remaining course requirements by the end of the semester following the termination of the course in order to receive a final grade and credit, as applicable. 'NX' does not have a pass/fail or a numeric equivalent.
- **New or Recently Admitted Students:** Students who enroll in a course after it has started may have missed assignments or assessments needed to generate a complete course grade for a given marking period. These students may be given a grade of 'NL' in STARS to indicate this circumstance. 'NL' does not have a pass/fail or numeric equivalent. Students who receive a grade of 'NL' must successfully complete remaining course requirements by the end of the semester following the termination of the course in order to receive a final grade and credit, as applicable.
- **No Show:** A grade of 'NS' is given to a student who fails to attend a course and does not participate in any of the work from which a grade can be derived. 'NS' has a pass/fail equivalent of fail and a default numeric equivalent of 45.⁸⁰ This mark should be used in egregious situations, when students have been given reasonable chances to make up missed work and their absences are so chronic that only a failing mark is appropriate. Typically, a long-term absentee (LTA) should be discharged from the school and dropped from the schedule, rather than be given a failing grade. Similarly, students who are on home and hospital instruction should not receive 'NS' marks. See [this document](#) for more information on how schools should collaborate to ensure continuity for these students.

C. TRANSCRIPT UPDATES —Updated September 2016

Schools procedures to keep [student transcripts](#) up to date is important for ensuring that students are progressing toward meeting promotion and diploma requirements. Schools must complete all transcript updates in accordance with the policies listed below by completing the [Transcript update form](#) and providing any necessary back-up documentation. Reasons for making transcript updates are as follows:

- Adding a new course:
 - Transfer credits, in accordance with the policies outlined in the section on [Transfer Credit](#)
 - LOTE credits, for documented residence and school attendance in an “other-than-English-speaking” environment, in accordance with the policies outlined in the section on [LOTE](#)
 - Credit-by-examination, in accordance with the policies outlined in the section on [Credit by Examination](#)
 - Participation in PSAL or other school-based or out-of-school team or club for PE course credit, in accordance with the policies outlined in [PE](#)
 - Service hours, documenting students’ progress toward the [service seal](#)
- Changing an existing grade
 - Annualization update, in accordance with the policies outlined in the section on [Annualization](#) and the school’s grading policy

⁷⁸ While schools are not restricted to using specific grading scales for certain types of courses, schools should consider students’ academic needs and postsecondary goals in selecting grading scales. Schools are encouraged to adopt a consistent mark form across courses. See the [Grading Policy FAQ and Checklist](#) for more information.

⁷⁹ Schools may contact their academic policy and systems leads to pursue this option.

⁸⁰ Schools that use numeric grading scales that extend below 45 should consider altering the NS numeric equivalent to align with the numeric scale they use.

- Grade calculation/entry error, in accordance with the course’s grading policy
- Updating a grade of Incomplete (NX) or Recent Admit (NL) to a final grade, per the policies outlined in [Course Marks and Report Cards](#)
- Principal override, in accordance with CSA and UFT contracts. A teacher must be notified in writing of any principal override of his/her final course grades.
- Adding or changing an examination outcome:
 - Regents exam waiver, in accordance with the policies on [Regents Exam Waivers](#)
 - Regents exam score a student completed at a non-NYCDOE school in New York State
 - Department-approved alternatives as outlined in the section on [Department-approved alternatives](#)
 - Performance-based assessment tasks for [schools with State approval to administer PBATs](#)
 - Successful appeal to graduate with a low score on a Regents exam as outlined in the [Appeals](#) section
- Removing an exam or course:
 - Removing an exam due to duplication or error
 - Removing a course due to duplication or error

Each transcript update requires a [Transcript update form](#) that must be completed with all required fields filled in as well as necessary documentation provided. For more information on reasons to submit a transcript update form and how to submit the form, please see the [Transcript Update FAQ](#).

D. CALCULATION OF GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) AND RANK

Schools may determine which courses taken at their school to include in the calculation of student GPA. In addition, schools may use [STARS to assign additional weight](#) to honors, [Advanced Placement\(AP\)[®]](#), International Baccalaureate, and college courses.

Schools may determine whether to establish school-based policies for class rankings and determinations of a valedictorian and salutatorian. Schools should have clear, documented policies in these areas that take into consideration which students are eligible to be ranked, which courses count in the ranking, how courses are weighted, and how the final rank will be calculated. In STARS, when calculating the rank, schools can determine which students are included in the denominator by creating a [custom group](#) and excluding or including students based on their ranking policy.

APPENDICES

A. CREDIT AWARDED FOR SEQUENCES REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION

Subject Area	Traditional Timeframe ⁸¹	Credits Awarded	Minimum Time	Required Regents Exam ⁸²
English (EE)	8 semesters	8 credits	432 hrs.	English and Language Arts (Common Core) or Comprehensive English
Social Studies	8 credits distributed as follows:			
Global History [HG]	4 semesters	4 credits	216 hrs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global History and Geography or • Unites States History
U.S. History [HU]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	
Participation in Government [HF or HV]	1 semester	1 credit	54 hrs.	
Economics [HF or HE]	1 semester	1 credit	54 hrs.	
Mathematics⁸³	6 credits distributed as follows (traditional sequence):			
Algebra I [ME]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	One of the following Regents: ⁸⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra I (Common Core) or Algebra I/Integrated Algebra • Geometry (Common Core) or Geometry • Algebra II (Common Core) or Algebra 2/Trigonometry
Geometry [MG]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	
Algebra II [MR]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	
Science⁸⁵	6 credits distributed as follows:			
Life Science (Living Environment or other life science) [SL, SB, SW, or other]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	One of the following Regents: ⁸⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living environment • Chemistry • Earth science • Physics
Physical Science (Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics, or other physical science) [SC, SE, SP, SD, SR, or other]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	
Any additional science (from those listed above or other science course)[S*]	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	
Language Other than English (LOTE)	2 semesters	2 credits ⁸⁴	108 hrs.	None required for graduation ⁸⁵
The Arts	2 semesters	2 credits	108 hrs.	N/A
Physical Education⁸⁶	8 semesters (0.5 credit each) OR	OR	3:2 “flip” or comparable time each semester (27 hours) OR	N/A
	7 semesters (0.58 credit each)		4.06 credits	
Health	1 semester	1 credit	54 hrs.	N/A
Electives	7 semesters	7 credits	378 hrs.	N/A

⁸¹ Schools may accelerate or extend the timeframe for completing a sequence (except for physical education) depending on the school’s schedule and student needs. Acceleration and extension do not affect the credits earned or the instructional time required for a sequence, except as described below.

⁸² Students at [schools administering PBATs](#) must pass the English Regents exam and Performance Based Assessment Tasks (PBATs) in English, social studies, math, and science.

⁸³ NYSSED allows math courses designed to culminate in a Regents to extend to up to four credits. No more than a total of four credits may be awarded for high school level coursework in any of the following subjects: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II (i.e. students must earn at least two commencement-level credits other than Algebra).

⁸⁴ Additional exams and/or credits are required for an advanced Regents diploma.

⁸⁵ NYSSED allows science courses that end in a Regents exam to extend to up to four credits. No more than a total of four credits may be awarded for high school level coursework in any of the following subjects: Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry, and Physics. There is no specific required sequence for science courses.

⁸⁶ All students must take Physical Education (PE) every year they are in high school. Taking more than one PE course in a term is allowed, but may not be used to complete core requirements early. See the [PE FAQ](#).

B. CREDENTIAL, DIPLOMA, AND ENDORSEMENT CODES IN ATS

The following is excerpted from the [Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation Guidelines](#).

CREDENTIAL CODES		
CODE	DESCRIPTION	
30	Received High School Equivalency Diploma (GED)	
64	Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential <i>For students who participate in standard assessments only</i>	
65	Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential <i>For students with IEPs who participate in New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) only</i>	
DIPLOMA GRANTING CODES		
CODE	DESCRIPTION	
26	Local Diploma	
27	High School Regents Diploma	
28	Received High School Regents Endorsed Diploma with Honors	
47	Received High School Advanced Regents Diploma	
62	Received High School Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors	
DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENT CODES		
Upon entering a graduation code in the GRDT (or DISC) screen in ATS, schools may indicate a “diploma type” for students who have earned endorsements.		
CODE	ENDORSEMENT	ELIGIBLE DIPLOMA CODES
01	Arts	26, 27, 28, 47, 62
02	CTE	
03	CTE and arts	
05	Math	47 and 62 only
06	Science	
07	Math and science	
08	Arts and science	
09	Arts and math	
10	Arts, science, and math	
11	CTE and science	
12	CTE and math	
13	CTE, science, and math	
14	CTE, arts, and science	
15	CTE, arts, and math	
16	CTE, arts, math and science	
20	CDOS credential as an endorsement to a diploma	26, 27, 28, 47, 62

C. CALENDAR CHANGE REQUESTS

Each year, the school year calendar is designed centrally to meet the NYSED requirement of a minimum number of 180 State aidable days in all schools, per [NYSED's Attendance Memo](#). The school year calendar, including Chancellor's conference days for professional development, is pre-determined centrally to ensure that schools do not fall below the minimum number of aidable days. To avoid the risk of a reduction in State aid, and to limit the impact on bus scheduling and other services, schools may not open late, dismiss early, or close without prior approval through a calendar change request. Schools must obtain staff and PTA approval through SBO and PTA votes, respectively, and by the Superintendent, prior to submitting a request. Schools [submit requests](#) at least six weeks prior to the first requested date change,⁸⁷ and must provide a minimum of four weeks' notice of the calendar change to parents, once approval has been granted.

The [Student Attendance Calendar](#) published each year provides instructions for schools on reporting student attendance consistent with the central school year calendar. It sets the designated parent-teacher conference days, instructions for coding shortened days already scheduled in the calendar, and describes the process for coding Regents exam days. Schools should consult the [Student Attendance Calendar](#) if they are considering a [calendar change request](#). Calendar change requests must be made in the circumstances below, and must be approved annually. Schools that have approval to implement any of the alternative schedules below from prior years must resubmit a calendar change request each school year. [See this FAQ](#) for more information about the calendar change process, eligibility requirements, and dates that are not permitted to change.

- **Professional development** (e.g. any day(s) when school is in session for fewer than 5.5 hours, for grades 7–12, exclusive of lunch, to enable additional professional development on that day)
 - Schools may request *up to three* shortened sessions per semester for staff development (e.g. days that fall below the State minimum of a 5.5 hour school day), provided all of the following conditions are met:
 - The weekly minimum instructional time requirement of 27.5 hours per week, exclusive of lunch, must still be fulfilled.
 - The school must have SBO approval.
 - When a shortened session is scheduled during a 4 day week (for instance, when the week includes a holiday), grades 7-12 must still be in session for 22 hours of instruction over that week, exclusive of lunch.
 - Requests that exceed three shortened sessions per semester (e.g. weekly, biweekly or monthly shortened sessions) must adhere to the components outlined above for shortened sessions, and must be submitted in the spring for implementation in the next school year. These requests must also be approved by NYSED; the NYCDOE central office submits such requests to NYSED for review.
- **Full Professional Development Days** (e.g. switching an instructional day with a professional development day): Requests for non-instructional days are reviewed based on the number of available aidable days, which vary each school year, and is subject to Chancellor approval.
- **Changing afternoon parent teacher conference dates:** A calendar change request (CCR) is required to reschedule the citywide afternoon conference date. Please note:
 - Single-session schools may not re-schedule afternoon conference dates without a CCR.
 - Multi-session schools with more than one grade level should select one of the set citywide dates.
 - Central approval is not required for the following: with SBO approval, schools may change evening conference dates and schedule an evening conferences on the citywide afternoon day. Multi-level schools (e.g. K–8, 6–12) may select one of the citywide afternoon conference dates.

⁸⁷ In an emergency situation (e.g. severe flooding, power outage), if a principal believes there is a need to make a change to the regularly scheduled school day and had not previously requested a calendar change, he/she must make this request of the Superintendent, who will get authorization from the Chancellor or his designee.

D. COURSE AND EXAM MARKS TABLES —Updated September 2016

The table below outlines all available grade scales, and their associated marks, [in STARS](#), along with their pass/fail equivalents and default numeric equivalents.

Course Mark	Description	Default Numeric Equivalent	Pass/Fail Equivalent
IB1	International Baccalaureate scale	N/A	F
IB2-IB7	International Baccalaureate scale	N/A	P
1 (+/-)	Performance level: well below standards	N/A	F
2 (+/-)	Performance level: below standards	N/A	F
3 (+/-)	Performance level: proficient	N/A	P
4 (+/-)	Performance level: excels in standards	N/A	P
F	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	55	F
D-	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	60	F
D	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	65	P
D+	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	68	P
C-	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	73	P
C	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	75	P
C+	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	78	P
B-	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	83	P
B	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	85	P
B+	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	88	P
A-	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	93	P
A	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	95	P
A+	Alpha course grades (A-F scale)	98	P
E-	Excellent -	93	P
E	Excellent	95	P
E+	Excellent+	98	P
G-	Good-	83	P
G	Good	85	P
G+	Good+	88	P
S-	Satisfactory -	73	P
S	Satisfactory	75	P
S+	Satisfactory+	78	P
N-	Needs Improvement-	60	F
N	Needs Improvement	65	P
N+	Needs Improvement+	68	P
U	Unsatisfactory	55	F
ME	Mastery – Exceeds standards	95	P
MA	Mastery – Above standards	85	P
MT	Mastery – Meets standards	75	P
MP	Mastery – Approaching standards	65	P
MB	Mastery – Below standards	55	F
CR	Credit	N/A	P
NC	No Credit	N/A	F
NS	No credit – No show	45	F
ND	No credit –Fulfilled distribution requirement (for interdisciplinary courses, as applicable)	N/A	NULL
NU	No credit –Audit	N/A	NULL
NX	No credit –Incomplete	N/A	NULL
NL	New/Recent Admit	N/A	NULL
NW	No credit – Course Waived (used only for PE for early graduates)	N/A	P

Note: Schools have the option of displaying only the highest Regents exam score on the [transcripts](#) of students who have taken Regents exams multiple times.

Exam Mark	Applicable Exams	Description	Default Numeric Equivalent	Pass/Fail Equivalent
0-54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents • LOTE comprehensive exam • LOTE SLP 	The numeric exam score the student received on the exam	1–54	F
55-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents • LOTE comprehensive exam • LOTE SLP 	The numeric exam score the student received on the exam	55–100	F or P, depending on student eligibility and diploma type
ABS ⁸⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents • LOTE comprehensive exam • LOTE SLP 	Student was scheduled to take the exam but did not show up on test day	N/A	F
INV ⁸⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents • LOTE comprehensive exam • LOTE SLP 	Student cheated on the exam or became ill during the exam and was therefore unable to complete it	N/A	F
MIS ⁸⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents • LOTE comprehensive exam • LOTE SLP 	School/teacher mis-administered the exam	N/A	N/A
WA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents 	Student entered a NYCDOE school in grade 11 or 12, as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 11 or 12: waive Global History & Geography • Grade 12: waive Global History & Geography and/or Science 	N/A	P
P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCT 	Student passed RCT ⁸⁹	N/A	P
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCT 	Student failed RCT ⁹⁰	N/A	F
WX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-approved Regents Alternative 	Student passed State-approved Regents Alternative	N/A	P
WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regents 	Regents Appeal	N/A	P
P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBAT 	For Consortium Schools only. Corresponds to Consortium Rubric grades of Outstanding, Good, and Competent.	N/A	P
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBAT 	For Consortium Schools only. Corresponds to Consortium Rubric grade of Needs Revision.	N/A	F

⁸⁸ Beginning in the 2012–13 school year, marks of ABS, INV, and MIS will not appear on transcripts. All Regents exam marks are maintained in students' STARS [permanent records](#).

⁸⁹ RCTs are available only to students with disabilities who entered grade 9 prior to September 2011; see the section of this guide on [RCTs](#).

E. SUMMARY OF GRADUATION OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs —Updated September 2016

As described in the guidance on the [Superintendent's Graduation Review for Students with IEPs](#) and in the [Safety Net](#) section of this guide, students are only eligible for a superintendent's review if they do not meet graduation requirements already through any of the existing Safety Net options. The following opportunities should be considered during review of students' exam scores; these are available to students who currently have IEPs and have met all the [course credit requirements](#) for a diploma:

Scores of 65+ on five required assessments (all students)

- Has the student scored 65s or higher on five assessments in ELA, math, social studies, and science? No appeals or additional reviews from the superintendent are required. The student may earn a Regents diploma.

Scores of 65+ plus up to two appealable scores of 60–64 (all students)

- Has the student scored 65s or higher on three of the Regents exams and earned scores of 60–64 on up to two others? The school may submit the appeals to the superintendent. If approved and reflected on the student's transcript, the student may earn a Regents diploma (one appeal) or local diploma (two appeals).

Scores of 55+ on five required assessments (Safety Net-eligible students)

- Has the student scored 55s or higher on five assessments in ELA, math, social studies, or science? No appeals or additional reviews from the superintendent are required. The student may earn a local diploma.

Scores of 55+ and up to two appealable scores of 52–54 (Safety Net-eligible students)

- Has the student scored 55 or higher on three of the Regents exams and earned scores of 52–54 on up to two others? The school may submit the appeals to the superintendent. If approved and reflected on the student's transcript, the student may earn a local diploma.

Compensatory score option (all Safety Net eligible students)

- Does the student meet the requirements for the compensatory score option? Students who have a score of 45–54 can pair these low scores with higher scores of 65 or above and use that match to graduate. No appeals or additional reviews from the superintendent are required (although students may also appeal some scores in combination). These students may earn a local diploma.

RCTs (Safety Net eligible students who meet cohort requirement)

- Is the student eligible to take the RCTs because he/she entered high school prior to 2011? If the student has passed the required RCTs and attempted the associated Regents at least once, no appeals or additional reviews from the superintendent are required (although students may also appeal some scores in combination). These students may earn a local diploma.

Final superintendent review (only students with IEPs)

- Has the student earned 55 or higher on assessments in ELA and math, but still has not met graduation requirements through any of the above options? Has the student successfully appealed a 52–54 on an ELA or math exam, but still has not met the requirements through any of the above options? Upon review and approval by the superintendent using the process described in the [Superintendent's Graduation Review for Students with IEPs](#) guide, the student may be eligible to earn a local diploma.

F. FORMS —Updated September 2016

The following is a list of forms for school use, in fillable format. The second column indicates that the form is required for all high schools to use, and that schools may not use their own, school-created versions of the form. All of the forms below are available on the [academic policy and systems intranet page](#) to print and reference as needed. For assistance using these forms, schools may contact their [academic policy and systems leads](#).

Form	Required	Principal Must Review and Sign	Optional	Description
Accreditation Committee Course Proposal Review Form			✓	Complete this form to determine if a proposed course suits a school’s programming needs and meets the requirements to bear credit.
Appeals to Graduate with Low Scores on Regents Exams	✓			A school designee must complete this form and submit the required supporting documentation in order to request a low score appeal on a Regents exam. This accompanies an appeal submitted via RQSA.
Credit Recovery Approval Form	✓	✓		The school-based panel must complete this form for every student who is approved to participate in credit recovery. This documents that the student is eligible and the policies for credit recovery are being met.
Diploma Requirements Worksheet			✓	Complete this form to assess a student’s progress towards fulfilling credit and exam graduation requirements.
JG Checklist			✓	Complete this form to assist students transitioning back into high school after returning from a court-ordered setting.
Offsite Coursework Agreement Form	✓			A school designee and a student must complete this form for each instance of off-site coursework. Parent signature required.
Override Code Review Form	✓	✓		A school designee must complete this form so that the principal may approve credit and exam override codes entered into GRDT when students are certified for graduation.
Transfer Credit Equivalency Form	✓			A school designee must complete this form and submit the required supporting documentation in order to document transfer credits awarded from a non-DOE school.
Transfer Student Entry Checklist			✓	Complete this form to assist students transferring into a DOE school from a non-DOE school.
Transcript Update Form	✓	✓		A school designee must complete this form and submit any required supporting documentation before updating student transcripts with additions or corrections. The form must be retained with supporting documentation.
Unit of Study Evaluation Form		✓	✓	Complete this form to evaluate course components and attest that the course provides students with the opportunity for at least 180 minutes of instruction per week.