

STUDENTS WITH INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs)**Q. What is an IEP diploma? Is it the same as an Advanced Regents, Regents, Local, or CTE diploma?**

A. IEP diplomas certify that a student has completed IEP goals. However, please note that IEP diplomas are not accepted for admission to college or enlistment in military service. Students expecting to receive an IEP diploma should discuss transition plans including post-graduation education and career training during their IEP meeting. Students who receive IEP diplomas are entitled to remain in school until the end of the school year in which they turn 21 and may pursue Advanced Regents, Regents, Local, CTE or GED diplomas.

Q. Can a student with an IEP receive a Local diploma without passing the Regents exams?

A. Students with IEPs who are unable to pass Regents exams are able to substitute the Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) for Regents exams. Ask the guidance counselor and special education staff about eligibility requirements.

GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**Q. What is the role of the guidance counselor?**

A. Guidance counselors help navigate students through high school by offering a wide variety of counseling and support systems for academic, social, and emotional needs. They are also usually responsible for scheduling courses on student program cards for day school, Extended Day and Summer School. Finally, they guide students through the college and career preparation process. Parents should visit guidance counselors during Parent-Teacher Conferences each term. Guidance counselors are usually identified on program cards and report cards. You can also find the names and contact information of guidance counselors by contacting the school and asking for the Guidance Department.

COLLEGE PREPARATION**Q. How can students find out about college opportunities?**

A. It's never too early to begin planning for college. Locate the College Office and college counselor(s) and/or advisor(s) in the school. Ask for a four year calendar of events and deadlines. Remember, the best predictor of future college acceptance is the maintenance of high academic and extracurricular standards throughout high school. Students should strive to take the most challenging courses, participate in extracurricular activities, and volunteer to perform community service.

Here are a few basic college preparation steps:

9th grade: Students are welcome to visit the College Office to ask questions and begin to gather information. Parents should speak to students about college options and create an expectation of college admission upon graduation. Discuss the benefits of attending college and begin to explore strengths and interests. College is a big step. Start taking small steps now.

10th grade: Every 10th grade student in a New York City public high school will have the opportunity to take the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) free of charge. The results of the PSAT indicate which subject areas need improvement in preparation for the SAT. Students attempting to graduate with an Advanced Regents diploma should begin taking a foreign language by 10th grade so they will receive the required three years of foreign language instruction. Students should also take progressive responsibility in extracurricular activities and community service.

11th grade: Most colleges use 11th grade academic and extracurricular performance as the primary admissions criteria. Strong academic scores in 11th grade may indicate readiness for AP courses in 12th grade. AP courses may result in college credits. Also crucial in the admissions decision, your child should prepare for and take the SAT and/or ACT. Speak to the college counselor about college fairs and financial aid workshops available at schools and in your community. Students should make a list of colleges they would like to attend and then contact them for additional information and to schedule campus visits.

12th grade: Seniors should check their program cards to ensure that they are scheduled for the courses necessary for graduation; take the SAT II when required; gather recommendations from school staff; write college essays; and document all community service and extracurricular progress. Finally, mail all financial aid applications, scholarship applications, and college applications prior to deadlines.

Meet with a guidance counselor for assistance with the college preparation process.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**Q. Where can students go for extra academic help in passing all courses and Regents exams?**

A. Guidance counselors, assistant principals, teachers, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and peers offer tutoring and a wide variety of student enrichment programs in every high school. Contact the guidance counselor for available study programs. For homework assistance contact Dial-A-Teacher at (212)777-3380 (Monday – Thursday, 4-7 PM).

ONLINE RESOURCES AND WEBSITES

New York City Department of Education: <http://schools.nyc.gov>

New York State Education Department: www.nysed.gov

City University of New York (CUNY): www.cuny.edu

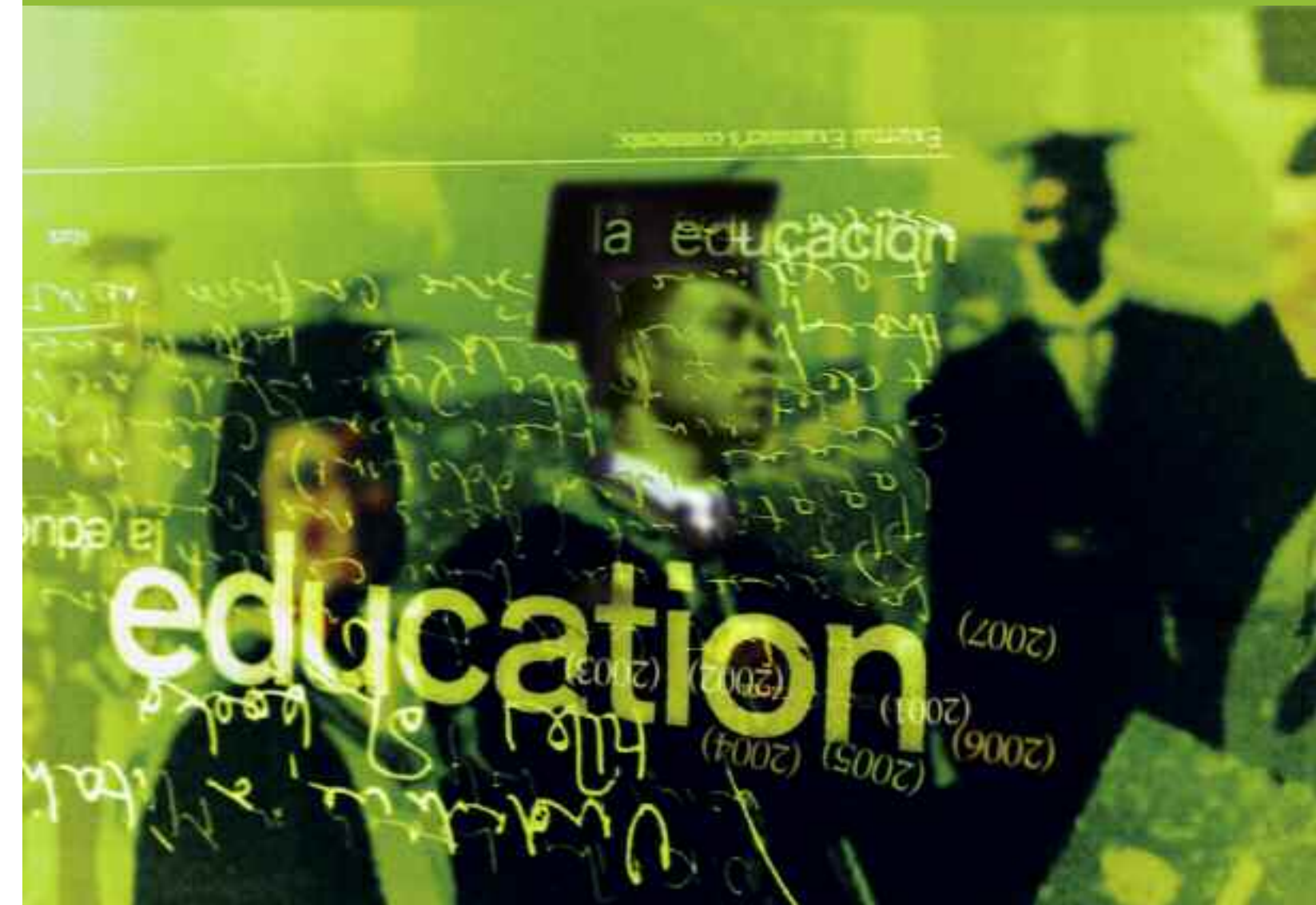
State University of New York (SUNY): www.suny.edu

College Board: www.collegeboard.com

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): www.fafsa.ed.gov

New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC): www.hesc.org

Dial-A-Teacher: www.uft.org/parent/dial-a-teacher



HIGH SCHOOL TERMS EVERY PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW

Welcome to the New York City Department of Education's Parents' Guide to Graduation Requirements. This guide is designed to help parents of New York City public school students understand what each child must do to prepare for high school graduation.

New York City State Graduation Requirements are different for each year a student enters 9th grade. Students can obtain a Graduation Requirements card from his or her Guidance Counselor. The cards outline the credits, Regents exam, and scores required for high school graduation. Graduation Requirement cards are titled, color-coded, and dated. Each year these cards are distributed to high school students and they are also available online at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/rulespolicies/graduationrequirements/default.htm>.

This guide includes:

- High School Terms Every Parent Needs to Know
- Questions Parents Frequently Ask About Graduation Requirements and helpful information about:
 - Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
 - Guidance Counselors
 - College Preparation
 - Online Resources and Websites

If you need more information about your child's high school graduation requirements, please ask your child's guidance counselor.

A | **Course** | is a high school class that lasts for one term. Your child will need to pass required courses to graduate.

| **First Term** | begins on the first day of school in September and ends on January 31. | **Second Term** | begins on February 1 and ends on the last day of school in June. | **Summer Term** | runs during July and August.

A | **Program Card** | is given to students at the beginning of every term. It lists assigned courses, times, and names of teachers for the term. It also includes the name of the guidance counselor.

| **Credit** | is awarded to courses passed with a final grade of 65% or above. Most passed courses will be awarded one credit per term. The Graduation Requirements card explains how many credits are needed in each subject.

| **Report Cards** | provide grades, attendance, and teachers' comments for each course. Most high schools issue six report cards each year (3/term). The final grades on the third and sixth report cards determine whether credit will be granted for the course. Ask the school for a calendar of report card distribution dates.

A | **Transcript** | is a record of all courses and Regents exams taken, and credits earned, in high school. College applications require a transcript and colleges use them as one of the main admissions criteria. Updated transcripts are available at the end of each term.

| **Regents Exams** | are New York State Regents Examinations required by the New York State Education Department. Students must pass a minimum of five Regents exams to earn a diploma (except IEP diplomas). The Graduation Requirements cards explain which exams students must pass and the required minimum scores for each type of diploma.

| **Cohort** | is the school year when a student first enters 9th grade. There are different Graduation Requirements cards for each cohort. Students should check to see if they have the correct Graduation Requirements card for their cohort and category of diploma.

A | **Diploma** | is the certificate issued to a student upon high school graduation. It certifies that the student has completed all graduation requirements.

THERE ARE 5 TYPES OF DIPLOMAS (see Graduation Requirements cards for details):

1. **Local diploma**
2. **Regents diploma**
3. **Advanced Regents diploma**
4. **CTE diploma** (one of the above with Career and Technical Education endorsement)
5. **IEP diploma** (see next page for Individualized Education Program diploma information)

QUESTIONS PARENTS FREQUENTLY ASK ABOUT GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Q. How is high school different from elementary and middle school?

A. High school courses are different from elementary and junior high school classes because students earn credit for each passed course.

Q. How many credits are earned for each course?

A. A student typically receives one credit per term per passed course.

Q. What is the minimum passing grade for a course?

A. 65%. Remember, higher grades can lead to more options for college admissions, scholarships, and future employment. Students should attempt to achieve the highest grades possible.

Q. How many credits do students need to be promoted to the next grade level?

A. Students need the following number of credits to be promoted to:

- 10th grade:** 8 credits (completion of 11 credits is highly recommended to ensure timely graduation)
- 11th grade:** 20 credits (including 4 in English and/or ESL and 4 in Social Studies)
- 12th grade:** 28 credits (30 for students who entered grade 9 in or after school year 2004-2005)

Q. How many credits do students need to graduate?

A. Most students will need 44 credits (CTE and IEP diplomas differ). Graduation Requirements cards outline the number of credits required for Local, Regents, Advanced Regents, CTE, and IEP diplomas. Be sure to refer to the card with the correct cohort and diploma category for each student. If you still have questions, ask the guidance counselor for more information.

Q. Are there specific courses high school students need to take each year?

A. Yes. The Graduation Requirements cards explain which courses are needed for graduation. However, each high school has slightly different course offerings at different times. If you have not received a Graduation Requirements card, ask the guidance counselor for one, and then ask which courses are currently available.

Q. Is Physical Education (PE) a required course?

A. Yes. Students must accumulate 4 credits by passing PE during 7 terms. A passing grade in PE is awarded approximately .58 credits (7 PE courses X .58 credits = 4.06 credits).

Q. Does attendance affect course grades?

A. Students with good attendance usually have better grades. When students are absent they must make up all missed homework and classroom assignments; and provide medical or personal documentation for missed days.

Q. When students do fail courses, how can they make up the courses and receive credit so they will graduate on time?

A. There are two common programs for students to retake courses and receive make-up credit: Summer School and Extended Day.

- Summer School offers credit-bearing courses during July and August.
- Extended Day programs may offer credit-bearing courses before school, after school, on weekends, and holidays. Check with the guidance counselor for schedules, locations, and details.

Q. If students do fail courses, can they still take the Regents exam in those subject areas?

A. Yes. Students often take the Regents exam before learning final grades for the term. However, passing the Regents exam does not guarantee that the student will pass the course.