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1 EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CABINET

2 Kentucky Board of Education

3 Department of Education

4 (Amendment)

5 704 KAR 3:305. Minimum requirements for high school graduation. RELATES TO: KRS

6 156.160(1)(a), (d), 158.142, 158.645, 158.6451 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 156.070,

7 156.160(1)(a), (d), 158.142 NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 156.160

8 requires the Kentucky Board of Education to promulgate administrative regulations relating to

9 the courses of study for the different grades and the minimum requirements for high school

10 graduation. KRS 158.142(3)(b) requires the board to promulgate administrative regulations

11 establishing requirements for early graduation from high school. The content standards for the

12 courses of study are set forth in the Kentucky ~~core~~ academic standards incorporated by reference

13 in 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704 KAR Chapter 8**. This administrative regulation establishes the

14 minimum requirements necessary for entitlement to a high school diploma. Section 1.

15 Definitions. (1) "Early graduation" means meeting the competency-based criteria outlined in this

16 administrative regulation and doing so in three (3) academic years or less.

17 (2) "Early Graduation Certificate" means a certificate, awarded by the district and signed by the

18 principal and superintendent, that shall make the recipient eligible for a scholarship award equal

19 to one-half (1/2) of the state portion of the average statewide per pupil guaranteed base funding

20 level, to be used at a Kentucky public two (2) year community and technical college or a

21 Kentucky four (4) year public or non-profit independent institution accredited by the Southern

22 Association of Colleges and Schools.

23 **(3) "Essential skills" shall have the same meaning as in KRS 158.1413.**

1 **(4) “Individual Learning Plan” as defined in 704 KAR 19:002.**

2 Section 2. **For students entering the first year of high school fall 2018 or before.** Each  
3 student in a public common schools shall have a total of at least twenty-two (22) credits for high  
4 school graduation. Those credits shall include the content standards as provided in the Kentucky  
5 ~~core~~-academic standards, **set forth at** ~~incorporated by reference in~~ 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704**  
6 **KAR Chapter 8.** Additional standards-based learning experiences shall align to the student’s  
7 individual learning plan and shall consist of standards-based content. The required credits and  
8 demonstrated competencies shall include the following minimum requirements:

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9 (1) Language arts - four (4) credits (English I, II, III, and IV) to include the content contained in  
10 the Kentucky ~~core~~ academic standards for English and language arts and comply with the  
11 following: (a) Language arts shall be taken each year of high school; and (b) If a student does not  
12 meet the college readiness benchmarks for English and language arts as established by the  
13 Council on Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020, the student shall take an English and  
14 language arts transitional course or intervention, which is monitored to address remediation  
15 needs, before exiting high school;

16 (2) Social studies - three (3) credits to include the content contained in the Kentucky ~~core~~  
17 academic standards for social studies;

18 (3) Mathematics - three (3) credits to include the content contained in the Kentucky ~~core~~  
19 academic standards for mathematics and include the following minimum requirements: (a)  
20 Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. An integrated, applied, interdisciplinary, occupational, or  
21 technical course that prepares a student for a career path based on the student's individual  
22 learning plan may be substituted for a traditional Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II course on  
23 an individual student basis if the course meets the content standards in the Kentucky ~~core~~

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1 academic standards, ~~set forth at incorporated by reference~~ in 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704 KAR**

2 **Chapter 8:** (b) A mathematics course or its equivalent as determined by the district shall be  
3 taken each year of high school to ensure readiness for postsecondary education or the workforce;

4 (c) Any mathematics course other than Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II shall be counted as an  
5 elective; and (d) If a student does not meet the college readiness benchmarks for mathematics as  
6 established by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020, the student shall take a  
7 mathematics transitional course or intervention, which is monitored to address remediation  
8 needs, before exiting high school;

9 (4) Science - three (3) credits that shall incorporate lab-based scientific investigation experiences  
10 and include the content contained in the Kentucky ~~core~~ academic standards for science;

11 (5) Health - one-half (1/2) credit to include the content contained in the Kentucky ~~core~~ academic  
12 standards for health;

13 (6) Physical education - one-half (1/2) credit to include the content contained in the Kentucky  
14 ~~core~~ academic standards for physical education;

15 (7) History and appreciation of visual and performing arts (or another arts course which  
16 incorporates this content) - one (1) credit to include the content contained in the Kentucky ~~core~~  
17 academic standards for arts and humanities or a standards-based specialized arts course based on  
18 the student's individual learning plan;

19 (8) Academic and career interest standards-based learning experiences - seven (7) credits  
20 including four (4) standards-based learning experiences in an academic or career interest based  
21 on the student's individual learning plan; and

22 (9) Demonstrated performance-based competency in technology.

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1 Section 3. (1) A local board of education may substitute an integrated, applied, interdisciplinary,  
2 occupational, technical, or higher level course for a required course if the alternative course  
3 provides rigorous content and addresses the same applicable components of 703 KAR 4:060. (2)  
4 For students with disabilities, a local board of education may substitute a functional, integrated,  
5 applied, interdisciplinary, occupational, technical, or higher level course for a required course if  
6 the alternative course provides rigorous content and addresses the same applicable components  
7 of 703 KAR 4:060. These shall be based on grade-level content standards and may be modified  
8 to allow for a narrower breadth, depth, or complexity of the general grade-level content  
9 standards.

10 Section 4. (1) A district shall implement an advising and guidance process throughout the middle  
11 and high schools to provide support for the development and implementation of an individual  
12 learning plan for each student. The plan shall include career development and awareness and  
13 specifically address Vocational Studies Academic Expectations 2.36-2.38 as established in  
14 Academic expectations, 703 KAR 4:060. (2) A district shall develop a method to evaluate the  
15 effectiveness and results of the individual learning plan process. The evaluation method shall  
16 include input from students, parents, and school staff. As part of the evaluation criteria, the  
17 district shall include indicators related to the status of the student in the twelve (12) months  
18 following the date of graduation. (3) A feeder middle school and a high school shall work  
19 cooperatively to ensure that each student and parent receives information and advising regarding  
20 the relationship between education and career opportunities. Advising and guidance shall include  
21 information about financial planning for postsecondary education. (4) A school shall maintain  
22 each student's individual learning plan. The individual learning plan shall be readily available to  
23 the student and parent and reviewed and approved at least annually by the student, parents, and

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1 school officials. (5) Beginning with a student's eighth grade year, the individual learning plan  
2 shall set learning goals for the student based on academic and career interests and shall identify  
3 required academic courses, electives, and extracurricular opportunities aligned to the student's  
4 postsecondary goals. The school shall use information from the individual learning plans about  
5 student needs for academic and elective courses to plan academic and elective offerings. (6)  
6 ~~Beginning with the graduating class of 2013,~~ The development of the individual learning plan  
7 for each student shall begin by the end of the sixth grade year and shall be focused on career  
8 exploration, ~~and~~ related postsecondary education and training needs, **essential skills, and career**  
9 **studies content**.

10 Section 5. (1) A **local** board of education may award credit toward high school graduation for  
11 satisfactory demonstration of learning based on content standards described in the Kentucky ~~core~~  
12 academic standards, **set forth at** ~~incorporated by reference in~~ 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704 KAR**  
13 **Chapter 8**, and a rigorous performance standards policy established by the **local** board of  
14 education. A school shall establish performance descriptors and evaluation procedures to  
15 determine if the content and performance standards have been met. (2) A **local** board of  
16 education shall award credit toward high school graduation based on: (a) A standards-based  
17 Carnegie unit credit that shall consist of at least 120 hours of instructional time in one (1)  
18 subject; or (b) A standards-based performance-based credit, regardless of the number of  
19 instructional hours in one (1) subject. (3) A local board of education which has chosen to award  
20 standards-based **performance-based** credit shall award a standards-based credit earned by a  
21 student enrolled in grade 5, 6, 7, or 8 if: (a) The content of the course is the same that is  
22 established in the Kentucky ~~core~~ academic standards, **set forth at** ~~incorporated by reference in~~  
23 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704 KAR Chapter 8**; and (b) The district has criteria in place to make a

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1 reasonable determination that the middle level student is capable of success in the high school  
2 course. (4) A **local** board of education which has chosen to award standards-based performance-  
3 based credit shall establish a policy for a performance-based credit system that includes: (a) The  
4 procedures for developing performance-based credit systems and for amending the system; (b)  
5 The conditions under which each high school may grant performance-based credits and the  
6 related performance descriptors and assessments; (c) Objective grading and reporting  
7 procedures; (d) Content standards ~~set forth at as addressed in~~ 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704 KAR**  
8 **Chapter 8 Required core academic standards**, and 703 KAR 4:060, Academic expectations; (e)  
9 The extent to which state-provided assessments will be used in the local **performance-based**  
10 credit system; (f) The ability for students to demonstrate proficiency and earn credit for learning  
11 acquired outside of school or in prior learning; and (g) Criteria to ensure that internships,  
12 cooperative learning experiences, and other learning experiences in the school and community  
13 are: 1. Designed to further student progress towards the individual learning plan; 2. Supervised  
14 by qualified instructors; and 3. Aligned with state and local content and performance standards.  
15 (5) A board of education may award standards-based, performance-based credit toward high  
16 school graduation for: (a) Standards-based course work that constitutes satisfactory  
17 demonstration of learning in any high school course, consistent with Section ~~2~~ of this  
18 administrative regulation; (b) Standards-based course work that constitutes satisfactory  
19 demonstration of learning in a course for which the student failed to earn credit when the course  
20 was taken previously; (c) Standards-based portfolios, senior year, or capstone projects; (d)  
21 Standards-based online or other technology mediated courses; (e) Standards-based dual credit or  
22 other equivalency courses; or (f) Standards-based internship, cooperative learning experience, or  
23 other supervised experience in the school or the community. (6) Each local board of education

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1 shall maintain a copy of its policy on high school graduation requirements. This policy shall  
2 include a description of how the requirements address KRS 158.6451(1)(b) and 703 KAR 4:060.

3 Section 6. (1) A student who satisfactorily completes the requirements of this administrative  
4 regulation and additional requirements as may be imposed by a local board of education or meets  
5 the requirements for early graduation as outlined in Section 9 of this administrative regulation  
6 shall be awarded a graduation diploma. (2) The local board of education shall award the diploma.

7 Section 7. This administrative regulation shall not be interpreted as prohibiting a local governing  
8 board, superintendent, principal, or teacher from awarding special recognition to a student.

9 Section 8. ~~Beginning with the graduating class of 2013, if~~ If the severity of an exceptional  
10 student's disability precludes a course of study that meets the high school graduation  
11 requirements established in Section ~~21~~ of this administrative regulation leading to receipt of a  
12 high school diploma, an alternative course of study shall be offered. (1) This course of study  
13 shall be based upon student needs and the provisions specified in 704 KAR 3:303 **and 704 KAR**

14 **Chapter 8. Required** ~~Required~~ **required** core-academic standards, and shall be reviewed at least annually.

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15 (2) A student who completes this course of study shall receive an alternative high school diploma  
16 to be awarded by the local board of education consistent with the graduation practices for all  
17 students. (3) A local board of education may establish policies to award an alternative high  
18 school diploma to a former student who has received a certificate or certificate of attainment.

19 Section 9. (1) **Until the 2020-2021 academic year,** only students who meet the criteria outlined  
20 in this section shall be eligible for early graduation. Those students who meet the criteria for  
21 early graduation shall receive from the school district a diploma and an Early Graduation  
22 Certificate. Students wishing to graduate early shall indicate that intent to the school principal at  
23 the beginning of grade 9 or as soon as the intent is known, but within the first thirty (30) school

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1 days of the academic year in which they wish to graduate. (a) A student's intent to graduate early  
2 shall be entered into the student information system by the school district by October 1 of the  
3 year in which the student makes the declaration. (b) Students working toward early graduation  
4 and receipt of a corresponding Early Graduation Certificate shall be supported by development  
5 and monitoring of an individual learning plan to support their efforts. (2) To graduate early and  
6 earn an Early Graduation Certificate, a student shall: (a) Score proficient on **available high**  
7 **school assessments** ~~the end-of-course exams~~ required by the Kentucky Board of Education in  
8 703 KAR 5:200; and (b) Meet the college readiness exam benchmarks as set by the Council on  
9 Postsecondary Education in 13 KAR 2:020 for placement in credit-bearing courses without the  
10 need for remediation. (3) A student who has indicated an intent to graduate early may participate  
11 in the student's state administration of the college readiness exam prior to the junior year, if  
12 needed.

13 **Section 10. Beginning with students whose first year of high school is the 2019-2020**  
14 **academic year, each student in a public school shall have a total of at least twenty-two (22)**  
15 **credits for high school graduation, pass foundational tests in reading and mathematics and**  
16 **be transition-ready as defined in 703 KAR 5:270 in order to receive a Kentucky high school**  
17 **diploma. Those credits shall include the content standards as provided in the Kentucky**  
18 **academic standards, set forth at 704 KAR 3:303 and 704 KAR Chapter 8. Additional**  
19 **standards-based learning experiences shall align to the student's individual learning plan**  
20 **and shall consist of standards-based content.**

21 **Section 11. Districts shall implement the Individual Learning Plan requirements outlined**  
22 **in Section 4 of this administrative regulation.**



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1 **Section 12. Each student shall be required to complete the following foundational credits**  
2 **and demonstrated competencies, consisting of ten (10) credits:**

3 **(1) English/language arts – two (2) credits (English I and II) to include the content**  
4 **contained in the Kentucky academic standards for reading and writing;**

5 **(2) Social studies – two (2) credits to include the content contained in the Kentucky**  
6 **academic standards for social studies;**

7 **(3) Mathematics - two (2) credits (Algebra I and Geometry) to include the content**  
8 **contained in the Kentucky academic standards for mathematics;**

9 **(4) Science - two (2) credits that shall incorporate lab-based scientific investigation**  
10 **experiences and include the content contained in the Kentucky academic standards for**  
11 **science;**

12 **(5) Health - one-half (1/2) credit to include the content contained in the Kentucky academic**  
13 **standards for health;**

14 **(6) Physical education - one-half (1/2) credit to include the content contained in the**  
15 **Kentucky academic standards for physical education;**

16 **(7) History and appreciation of visual and performing arts (or another arts course which**  
17 **incorporates this content) - one (1) credit to include the content contained in the Kentucky**  
18 **academic standards for visual and performing arts or a standards-based specialized arts**  
19 **course based on the student's individual learning plan.**

1 **3. All students shall complete all state required high school assessments. To receive a high**  
2 **school diploma, students shall meet minimum criteria on the reading and mathematics**  
3 **assessments as approved by the Kentucky Board of Education. Minimum criteria shall**  
4 **include reaching a performance level of proficient or higher, or earning a scale score**  
5 **designated as passing adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education. Students who do not**  
6 **meet the minimum criteria on one or both assessments. Students may retake the**  
7 **foundational tests in reading and mathematics twice annually in the third and fourth years**  
8 **of high school enrollment. Students who do not meet the minimum criteria on both the**  
9 **reading and mathematics assessments shall not qualify for early graduation. The student's**  
10 **first completion of the assessments in grade ten (10) shall contribute to the school's**  
11 **accountability rating. Section 14. In addition to the foundational requirements outlined in**  
12 **Section 12 of this administrative regulation, every student shall earn a minimum of twelve**  
13 **(12) personalized credits in order to receive a high school diploma. These twelve**  
14 **personalized credits shall include:**  
15 **(1) Two (2) additional English/Language Arts credits that include the content contained in**  
16 **the Kentucky academic standards for reading and writing and are aligned to the student's**  
17 **individual learning plan;**  
18 **(2) Two (2) additional mathematics credits that include the content contained in the**  
19 **Kentucky academic standards for mathematics and are aligned to the student's individual**  
20 **learning plan;**  
21 **(3) One (1) additional science credit that includes the content contained in the Kentucky**  
22 **academic standards for science and is aligned to the student's individual learning plan;**

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- 1 **(4) One (1) additional social studies credit that includes the content contained in the**  
2 **Kentucky academic standards for social studies and is aligned to the student's individual**  
3 **learning plan;**
- 4 **(5)Academic and career interest standards-based learning experiences - six (6) credits**  
5 **including four (4) standards-based learning experiences based on the student's individual**  
6 **learning plan;**
- 7 **(6) Demonstrated performance-based competency in technology using the process for**  
8 **awarding performance-based credit outlined in Section 16 (2) of this administrative**  
9 **regulation; (b);**
- 10 **(7) Pass a civics test as required by KRS 158.141; and**
- 11 **(8) Successful completion of one (1) or more courses or programs that meet the financial**  
12 **literacy standards as established by the Kentucky Board of Education.**
- 13 **Section 15. (1) A local board of education may substitute an integrated, applied,**  
14 **interdisciplinary, occupational, technical, or higher level course for a required course if the**  
15 **alternative course provides rigorous content and addresses the same applicable**  
16 **components of 703 KAR 4:060.**
- 17 **Section 16. (1) A board of education may award credit toward high school graduation for**  
18 **satisfactory demonstration of learning based on content standards described in the**  
19 **Kentucky academic standards, set forth at 704 KAR 3:303 and 704 KAR Chapter 8; and a**  
20 **rigorous performance standards policy established by the local board of education. A**  
21 **school shall establish performance descriptors and evaluation procedures to determine if**  
22 **the content and performance standards have been met. (2) A board of education shall**  
23 **award credit toward high school graduation based on: (a) A standards-based Carnegie unit**

1 credit that shall consist of at least 120 hours of instructional time in one (1) subject; or (b)  
2 A standards-based performance-based credit, regardless of the number of instructional  
3 hours in one (1) subject. (3) A local board of education which has chosen to award  
4 standards-based performance-based credit shall award a standards-based credit earned by  
5 a student enrolled in grade 5, 6, 7, or 8 if: (a) The content is the same that is established in  
6 the Kentucky academic standards, set forth at in 704 KAR 3:303 and 704 KAR Chapter 8;  
7 and (b) The district has criteria in place to make a reasonable determination that the  
8 middle level student is capable of success in the high school content. (4) A local board of  
9 education which has chosen to award standards-based performance-based credit shall  
10 establish a policy for a performance-based credit system that includes: (a) The procedures  
11 for developing performance-based credit systems and for amending the system; (b) The  
12 conditions under which each high school may grant performance-based credits and the  
13 related performance descriptors and assessments; (c) Objective grading and reporting  
14 procedures; (d) Content standards as addressed in 704 KAR 3:303, 704 KAR Chapter 8,  
15 and 703 KAR 4:060, Academic expectations; (e) The extent to which state-provided  
16 assessments will be used in the local performance-based credit system; (f) The ability for  
17 students to demonstrate proficiency and earn credit for learning acquired outside of school  
18 or in prior learning; and (g) Criteria to ensure that internships, cooperative learning  
19 experiences, and other learning experiences in the school and community are: 1. Designed  
20 to further student progress towards the individual learning plan; 2. Supervised by qualified  
21 instructors; and 3. Aligned with state and local content and performance standards. (5) A  
22 local board of education may award standards-based, performance-based credit toward  
23 high school graduation for: (a) Standards-based course work that constitutes satisfactory

1 demonstration of learning in any high school content; (b) Standards-based course work  
2 that constitutes satisfactory demonstration of learning in a course for which the student  
3 failed to earn credit when the course was taken previously; (c) Standards-based portfolios,  
4 senior year, or capstone projects; (d) Standards-based online or other technology mediated  
5 courses; (e) Standards-based dual credit or other equivalency courses; or (f) Standards-  
6 based internship, cooperative learning experience, or other supervised experience in the  
7 school or the community. (6) Each local board of education shall maintain a copy of its  
8 policy on high school graduation requirements. This policy shall include a description of  
9 how the requirements address KRS 158.6451(1)(b) and 703 KAR 4:060.  
10 Section 17. (1) A student who satisfactorily completes the requirements of this  
11 administrative regulation and additional requirements as may be imposed by a local board  
12 of education or meets the requirements for early graduation as outlined in Section 20 of  
13 this administrative regulation shall be awarded a high school diploma. (2) The local board  
14 of education shall award the diploma.  
15 Section 18. This administrative regulation shall not be interpreted as prohibiting a local  
16 governing board, superintendent, principal, or teacher from awarding special recognition  
17 to a student.  
18 Section 19. If the severity of an exceptional student's disability precludes a course of study  
19 that meets the high school graduation requirements established in this administrative  
20 regulation leading to receipt of a high school diploma, an alternative course of study shall  
21 be offered. (1) This course of study shall be based upon student needs and the provisions  
22 specified in 704 KAR 3:303 and 704 KAR Chapter 8, required core-academic standards,  
23 and shall be reviewed at least annually. (2) A student who completes this course of study

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1 shall receive an alternative high school diploma to be awarded by the local board of  
2 education consistent with the graduation practices for all students. (3) A local board of  
3 education may establish policies to award an alternative high school diploma to a former  
4 student who has received a certificate or certificate of attainment.

5 Section 20. (1) Beginning with students entering high school for the first time in the 2019-  
6 2020 academic year, only students who meet the criteria outlined in this section shall be  
7 eligible for early graduation. Those students who meet the criteria for early graduation  
8 shall receive from the school district a diploma and an Early Graduation Certificate.

9 Students wishing to graduate early shall indicate that intent to the school principal at the  
10 beginning of grade 9 or as soon as the intent is known, but within the first thirty (30) school

11 days of the academic year in which they wish to graduate. (a) A student's intent to  
12 graduate early shall be entered into the student information system by the school district  
13 by October 1 of the year in which the student makes the declaration. (b) Students working  
14 toward early graduation and receipt of a corresponding Early Graduation Certificate shall

15 be supported by development and monitoring of an individual learning plan to support  
16 their efforts. (2) To graduate early and earn an Early Graduation Certificate, a student  
17 shall: (a) Score proficient or higher on all high school assessments required for high school  
18 accountability; and (b) Meet benchmarks for placement in credit-bearing courses, without

19 need for remediation, as set by the Council on Postsecondary Education on the college  
20 readiness exam required in 703 KAR 5:270. (3) Students who do not meet the minimum  
21 criteria on both the reading and mathematics assessments shall not qualify for early  
22 graduation.

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1 **Section 21. Appeals process. Districts who have students on track to meet all graduation**  
2 **requirements except their assessment requirements, can file a portfolio appeal that consists**  
3 **of: (a) the student's individual learning plan that includes student transcripts; performance**  
4 **on the required state assessments; interventions provided to the student to ensure support**  
5 **was provided to meeting the requirements outlined in this administrative regulation; and**  
6 **artifacts demonstrating the students' competency in reading and mathematics.**

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