

CLASS OF 2017

# GRADUATION TOOLKIT

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Office of Superintendent  
of Public Instruction  
[www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us)

The information in this toolkit was updated in **September 2016**, but is subject to change based on legislative or agency action. When referencing this toolkit, please visit the OSPI website to confirm you have the most current version. Updates will be posted to [bit.ly/WAeduResources](http://bit.ly/WAeduResources).

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## Table of Contents

2016–17 Key Dates .....	2
State Graduation Requirements .....	3
Class of 2017 Testing Requirements .....	4
Washington State Minimum Credit Requirements.....	5
Graduation Alternatives .....	6
Appeals, Waivers, and Direct Access .....	8
Graduation Ceremonies .....	9
Options for Students Not Graduating After Four Years of High School .....	10
Resources, More Information, and Abbreviations.....	11

## 2016–17 Key Dates

Testing is scheduled within the windows listed below. Contact your local school district to find out which dates your child will be testing. Contact your local school district to find out when your child's scores will be available.

STATE TESTING WINDOWS		STATE-APPROVED ALTERNATIVES	
<b>Sept 12–Nov 18:</b>	Washington-Access to Instruction & Measurement (WA-AIM) <i>(retake for 12th graders with significant cognitive challenges who have not yet met standard)</i>	<b>Jan 25:</b>	Deadline to submit Collection of Evidence (COE)
<b>Oct 17–Apr 7:</b>	WA-AIM	<b>Nov 2–22</b>	International Baccalaureate (IB) testing:
<b>Oct 24–Nov 18:</b>	Smarter Balanced <i>(retake)</i> and Off-Grade Level <i>(Smarter Balanced &amp; Science)</i>	<b>Apr 28–May 19:</b>	Please contact your school counselor
<b>Jan 3–Feb 3:</b>	End-of-Course (EOC) exams <i>(retake for students who have not yet met standard)</i>	<b>May 1–5:</b>	Advanced Placement (AP) testing window 1
<b>Mar 6–June 9:</b>	Smarter Balanced and Off-Grade Level <i>(Smarter Balanced &amp; Science)</i>	<b>May 8–12:</b>	AP testing window 2
<b>May 8–June 9</b> <i>(Last 3 weeks of school):</i>	EOC exams	<b>June 7:</b>	Deadline to submit COE
		<b>Oct 22, Dec 10, Feb 11, Apr 8, Jun 10:</b>	ACT testing dates <i>(see <a href="http://www.actstudent.org/regist/dates.html">www.actstudent.org/regist/dates.html</a> for registration deadlines)</i>
		<b>Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3, Jan 21, Mar 11, May 6, June 3:</b>	SAT testing dates <i>(see <a href="http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/sat-reasoning/register/test-dates">professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/sat-reasoning/register/test-dates</a> for registration deadlines)</i>

# State Graduation Requirements

A high school diploma is more than a rite of passage. It signifies that a student worked hard, was challenged, and is prepared for the next steps in life.

The state's minimum graduation requirements, as established by the State Board of Education, represent a portfolio of a student's high school career.

Students must fulfill the graduation requirements that are in place when they *first enter ninth grade*, unless the state legislature votes to reduce those requirements. The requirements will not increase once a student has started ninth grade.

The requirements do not change even if the student's graduation year changes.

### State Requirements for the Class of 2017

Students who entered ninth grade in fall 2013 must fulfill the following three requirements, including the coursework outlined in [WAC 180-51-067](#).

#### 1. Earn 20 High School Credits

Students must *also* meet the course and credit requirements established by their local districts.

#### 2. Develop a High School and Beyond Plan

To graduate, students must develop a plan on how they will meet the high school graduation requirements and what they will do following high school. A student's plan, which ideally should be started in eighth or ninth grade and revised as he/she moves forward, should include the classes needed to prepare for a two- or four-year college, apprenticeship, career or technical school, certificate program, or the workforce. Each school district determines the guidelines

for the high school and beyond plan. Questions about the guidelines should be directed to the high school or school district office.

### State & Local Requirements

School districts may have additional credit and non-credit graduation requirements, such as community service. Students and their families should be aware of all state and local graduation requirements when they begin high school.

#### 3. Earn a CAA/CIA

Students must pass state exams, or state-approved alternatives, to be eligible to graduate and earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA).

Students receiving special education services may earn a CAA or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA).

The CAA and CIA tell families, schools, businesses, and colleges that a student has mastered a minimum set of skills by graduation. [RCW 28A.655.061](#) dictates the assessment graduation requirements that qualify a student for a CAA or CIA.

Students in the Class of 2017 earn a CAA or CIA by passing state exams in English Language Arts, Science, and Math.

# Class of 2017 State Testing Requirements

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	SCIENCE	MATH
<b>English language arts (ELA) requirement has been met by (choose one):</b>	<b>Science requirement has been met by (choose one):</b>	<b>Math requirement has been met by (choose one):</b>
Scoring at least 2548 on Smarter Balanced ELA test.	Passing Biology End-of-Course (EOC) exam.*	Passing one Math End-of-Course (EOC) exam or EOC exit exam.*
Scoring a CIA cut score (Level 2) on the Smarter Balanced ELA test (limited to students in special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Scoring CIA cut score (Level 2) on the Biology EOC (limited to students in special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Scoring CIA cut score (Level 2) on one Math EOC exam* or Smarter Balanced Math test (limited to students in special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>
Passing ELA Washington-Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) (limited to students with significant cognitive challenges, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Passing Science Washington-Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) (limited to students with significant cognitive challenges, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Passing Math Washington-Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) (limited to students with significant cognitive challenges, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>
Using GPA Comparison option. <sup>**</sup>	Using GPA Comparison option. <sup>**</sup>	Using GPA Comparison option. <sup>**</sup>
Scoring 3 or higher on one of the AP exams or 4 or higher on one of the IB exams approved for ELA. <sup>**</sup>	Scoring 3 or higher on one of the AP exams or 4 or higher on one of the IB exams approved for Science. <sup>**</sup>	Scoring 3 or higher on one of the AP exams or 4 or higher on one of the IB exams approved for Math. <sup>**</sup>
Earning a high enough score on the SAT or ACT Plus Writing. <sup>**</sup>	Earning a high enough score on the ACT. <sup>**</sup>	Earning a high enough score on the SAT or ACT. <sup>**</sup>
Passing ELA Collection of Evidence (COE). <sup>**</sup>	Passing Biology Collection of Evidence (COE). <sup>**</sup>	Passing Math Collection of Evidence (COE). <sup>**</sup>
Passing Off-Grade Level assessment in ELA (limited to 11th and 12th graders receiving special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Passing Off-Grade Level assessment in Science (limited to 11th and 12th graders receiving special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Passing Off-Grade Level assessment in Math (limited to 11th and 12th graders receiving special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>
Passing a Locally Determined Assessment (LDA) in ELA (limited to 12th graders receiving special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Passing a Locally Determined Assessment (LDA) in Science (limited to 12th graders receiving special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>	Passing a Locally Determined Assessment (LDA) in Math (limited to 12th graders receiving special education, per IEP team). <sup>+</sup>
<b>For students pursuing a diploma without passing a Washington state ELA test, the requirement has been waived by (choose one):</b>	<b>For students pursuing a diploma without passing a Washington state Science test, the requirement has been waived by (choose one):</b>	<b>For students pursuing a diploma without passing a Washington state Math test, the requirement has been waived by (choose one):</b>
Passing an OSPI-approved high school ELA test in another state. <sup>#</sup>	Passing an OSPI-approved high school Science test in another state. <sup>#</sup>	Passing an OSPI-approved high school Math test in another state. <sup>#</sup>
Appealing ELA assessment requirement to the state because of a special circumstance. <sup>###</sup>	Appealing Science assessment requirement to the state because of a special circumstance. <sup>###</sup>	Appealing Math assessment requirement to the state because of a special circumstance. <sup>###</sup>

\* Math EOC exit exams are based on the Mathematics K-12 Learning Standards (Common Core State Standards for Mathematics). The Biology EOC exit exam is based on the 2009 K-12 Science Standards.

<sup>+</sup> The decision about how an eligible student participates in statewide assessment is an [Individualized Education Program \(IEP\) team decision](#), not an administrative decision.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Unless a student transferred into Washington public schools in 11th or 12th grade he or she must attempt state assessments once before qualifying for alternatives in each content area ([www.k12.wa.us/assessment/GraduationAlternatives](http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/GraduationAlternatives)).

<sup>#</sup> Must have transferred into Washington public schools from another state or a private school.

<sup>###</sup> Must be a 12th grader and meet the **very** limited criteria outlined in [Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\) 392-501-601](#) to apply.

## Washington State **Minimum\*** Credit Requirements

CLASSES	CREDITS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ENGLISH	4	Some districts received a two-year waiver from requiring 4 credits and will continue to require 3 credits through the Class of 2018: <a href="http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/GradRequirements/TwoYearExtensionDistricts.pdf">www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/GradRequirements/TwoYearExtensionDistricts.pdf</a>
MATHEMATICS	3	<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra 1 or Integrated 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Geometry or Integrated 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Algebra 2 or Integrated 3; or a student may elect to pursue a third credit of math other than Algebra 2 or Integrated 3 if the elective choice is based on a career-oriented high school and beyond plan and the student, parent/guardian and school representative meet and sign a form: WAC 180-51-067(2)(b)
SCIENCE	2	<input type="checkbox"/> Must include 1 lab
SOCIAL STUDIES**	3	Some districts received a two-year waiver from requiring 3 credits and will continue to require 2.5 credits through the Class of 2018: <a href="http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/GradRequirements/TwoYearExtensionDistricts.pdf">www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/GradRequirements/TwoYearExtensionDistricts.pdf</a> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 credit in U.S. history and government <input type="checkbox"/> 1 credit in contemporary world history, geography and problems, or an equivalent course <input type="checkbox"/> 0.5 credit in civics <input type="checkbox"/> 0.5 credit in social studies elective
ARTS	1	
HEALTH AND FITNESS	2	<input type="checkbox"/> 0.5 credit in health <input type="checkbox"/> 1.5 credits in fitness
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION	1	Or 1 Occupational Education credit, as defined in <a href="http://WAC 180-51-067">WAC 180-51-067</a>
ELECTIVES	4	
<b>TOTAL REQUIRED CREDITS</b>	<b>20</b>	

\* Many districts require **more than the minimum** credits to graduate. Please see your local district requirements to find out how many are required to earn a diploma from your high school.

\*\* State History is also required for graduation, but students usually fulfill this non-credit requirement before they enter high school.

## Graduation Alternatives

### Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) Options

Students who have not passed state tests can use the CAA Options, or “graduation alternatives,” to meet assessment graduation requirements. Students must attempt a state test at least once or fulfill other eligibility criteria before accessing CAA options.

Learn more: [bit.ly/CAAOPTIONS](http://bit.ly/CAAOPTIONS).

**Transfer students:** See page 8 if you transferred into a Washington public school in 11th or 12th grade.

### Collection of Evidence (COE)

The COE is an evaluation of a set of work samples based on classroom work prepared by the student with instructional support from a teacher. Students must meet eligibility criteria.

### GPA Comparison

A student’s grades in English, math, and/or science and/or math courses are compared with the grades of students who took the same courses and passed the state test. This option is available only to students in their 12th-grade year who have an overall grade-point average of 3.2.

### College Admission/AP/IB Tests

Students may use their scores on the SAT with Essay, ACT with Writing, or specified Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations to show they have key skills expected of high school graduates.

Minimum acceptable scores on college-entrance exams:

Graduation Assessment Requirement	SAT with Essay	ACT with Writing
Mathematics	430	16
English Language Arts	410	14
Science (biology)	—	16

Students must earn a 3 or better on one of the following AP exams:

AP	
Mathematics	Calculus or Statistics
English Language Arts	English Language and Composition AND one of: English Literature and Composition, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Psychology, U.S. History, World History, U.S. Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics
Science	Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or Environmental Science

Students must earn a 4 or better on one of the following higher-level (HL) IB exams:

IB	
Mathematics	Mathematics or Further Mathematics
English Language Arts	Language A: Literature, Language A: Language and Literature, Business and Management, Economics, Geography, History, Information Technology in a Global Society, Philosophy, Psychology or Social and Cultural Anthropology
Science	Biology, Chemistry, or Physics

### *Graduation Alternatives, continued*

#### **Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) Options**

All students, including students who receive special education services, must participate in state testing. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams make decisions about which tests students in special education take. They may determine that a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) is more appropriate for some students.

Diplomas are the same whether a student earns a CAA or CIA.

Students who have not passed state tests can use the CIA Options, or “state-approved alternatives,” to meet assessment graduation requirements. Students must attempt a state test at least once or fulfill other eligibility criteria before accessing CIA options.

Learn more: [bit.ly/CIAOptions](http://bit.ly/CIAOptions).

**NOTE:** *Students with a Section 504 Plan are not eligible to use any of the graduation alternatives developed for students with IEPs.*

**Transfer students:** *See page 8 if you transferred into a Washington public school in 11th or 12th grade.*

#### **State Tests with the “CIA Cut Score” Option**

The CIA cut score option allows students to pass a state test or a Collection of Evidence (COE) at a Level 2 score instead of the Level 3 score.

#### **Off-Grade Level Tests**

Students take a state test in one or more content areas, with or without accommodations, at either an elementary or middle school level. They must meet the established threshold score for proficiency for the grade level accessed.

#### **Locally Determined Assessments**

Twelfth graders who have not met English language arts, math, and/or science assessment requirements may be able to use a Locally Determined Assessment (LDA). An LDA provides another alternative for students to read and comprehend adapted or below-grade-level text, master a limited number of grade-level or below-grade-level concepts and skills, and communicate orally and/or in writing.

Meeting standard is scoring at or above the established minimum grade equivalency (G.E.) for the prescribed test or the established passing score.



## Appeals, Waivers, and Direct Access

### Special, Unavoidable Circumstances

Students in their senior year (or junior year if circumstances apply) who have been unable to demonstrate their skills and knowledge on a state assessment or graduation alternative because of special, unavoidable circumstances may appeal to the Special, Unavoidable Circumstance Appeal Review Board. The board reviews and decides on appeals in May.

This appeals process is for students who *have the skills*, but who have not had an opportunity to show those skills. Those who have had access to testing are not eligible to apply for this appeal.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/SpecialAppeal](http://bit.ly/SpecialAppeal).

### WA-AIM Engagement Rubric

Districts may make local decisions about the appropriateness of course credits and high school and beyond plans for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. State laws and rules ([RCW 28A.155.045](#) and [WAC 180-51-115](#)) acknowledge the critical role of the IEP team in determining the most appropriate high school credit and assessment options for students eligible for special education. But at this time, districts may not waive the assessment requirements for high school graduation.

Students whose level of cognitive development would be considered awareness, and who are unable to participate even minimally in the Performance Tasks at the lower complexity level for any standard within a content area, may use an Engagement Rubric. The rubric measures the student's engagement and attention to academic activities.

Some or all of the following criteria must be met for the IEP team to consider using the rubric for a content area of the alternate assessment:

- The student communicates primarily through cries, facial expressions, or change in muscle tone but has no clear use of objects/textures, regularized gestures, picture signs, etc.
- The student alerts to sensory input from another person (auditory, visual, touch, movement, etc.) but requires physical assistance to follow simple directions; or the student's response to sensory stimuli (e.g., sound/voice, sight/gesture, touch, movement, smell) is unclear.
- Parents and teachers must interpret child's state from behaviors such as sounds, body movements, and facial expressions.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/WAAIMGuide](http://bit.ly/WAAIMGuide).

### 11th- and 12th-Grade Transfer Students

Students who transfer into a Washington public school from another state or from an in-state non-public school setting (private or home school) in their 11th- or 12th-grade year may be eligible to access graduation alternatives without first attempting a state test.

Depending on the transfer student's situation, there are two possible alternatives:

1. **Waiver:** A student may apply to receive a waiver of the assessment graduation requirement if the student has previously passed an approved exit or accountability exam from another state. The waiver *does not* grant the student a CAA.
2. **Direct access:** A student may apply for access to the graduation alternatives without first attempting a state test. Meeting standard with a graduation alternative *does* grant the student a CAA.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/Transfer11th12th](http://bit.ly/Transfer11th12th).



## Graduation Ceremonies

School districts, directed by their own school board policies, determine who participates in graduation ceremonies.

***The state has no authority over graduation ceremonies.***

Most school districts allow students to participate only if they have fulfilled *all* graduation requirements. However, some districts do make exceptions. Families should consult with their specific school district about their graduation ceremony policy.

### Kevin's Law and Graduation

Kevin's law ([RCW 28A.155.170](#)) allows certain students receiving special education

services, and who may still have graduation requirements to complete, to participate in high school graduation ceremonies with their peers. The law requires each school district that operates a high school to adopt a policy and develop procedures to determine which students receiving special education services can participate in graduation ceremonies after four years, even if they will remain in school beyond four years.

Students who participate in the graduation ceremony will receive a certificate of attendance, which is not a high school diploma. Students will receive a diploma when they complete their graduation requirements.

## Options for Students Not Graduating After Four Years of High School

Students who have not met their high school graduation requirements AND have not earned a regular high school diploma are eligible for a free public education through the school year in which they turn 21 years old. This includes students under 21 who have earned a high school equivalency certificate or are enrolled in:

- Career and technical education programs including skill centers;
- Transitional bilingual instruction programs;
- Special education programs; **OR**
- Migrant education programs.

High schools and school districts continue to receive Basic Education Allocation (BEA) and any other funding that these students generate.

### Free Options

Free options are available for students who are NOT graduating after four years of high school and want to meet their high school graduation requirements. The options are:

1. **Stay Enrolled in High School:** All students are eligible to attend their resident high school through the school year in which they turn 21.
2. **Enroll in a School District High School Completion Program:** School districts may contract with community colleges to offer tuition-free high school completion programs to students still enrolled in their resident school district. Upon completion of program, students would receive a high school diploma from that district.

### *Options for Students Not Graduating After Four Years of High School, continued*

- 3. Continue Running Start:** Students who participated in Running Start during their 11th- and 12th-grade years but didn't complete the classes required for high school graduation may continue their Running Start participation, but only to take those classes through Running Start that they failed or did not complete and are needed to earn a high school diploma. (The Running Start program allows eligible 11th- and 12th-grade students to take college classes tuition free and accrue both high school and college credit for those classes.)
- 2. Pursue a High School Equivalency Certificate:** Students 16 and older may earn a high school equivalency certificate by passing required tests through a high school completion program. In order to take the tests, students must have dropped out or withdrawn from their resident high school. State community and technical colleges are the official testing centers for the high school equivalency certificates. Students pay fees for the assessment(s) and may have to pay tuition and fees for preparation courses offered through community and technical colleges. The certificate is not identical to a high school diploma, and students who earn a high school equivalency certificate are considered dropouts for high school accountability purposes. However, students who are under 21 years of age and who have a high school equivalency certificate can still fulfill their high school graduation requirements and get their diploma. (See Free Options No. 1 and 2 above.)

### **Paid Options**

Paid options are available for students who are NOT graduating after four years of high school and want to meet their high school graduation requirements. The options are:

- 1. Enroll in a Community and Technical College High School Completion Program:** A number of community colleges in the state offer high school completion programs, providing students with a high school diploma *from the college*. Students must drop out of their resident high school to enroll in these programs. In most cases, students are charged tuition and fees for enrollment, although the colleges have the authority to waive tuition and fees for students 19 and older. Students 16 to 18 years of age must have a signed release from their resident school district in order to enroll in a community college high school completion program.
- 3. Enroll in a Public Two- or Four-Year College or University:** Washington's public colleges and universities do not require students to have a high school diploma in order to be admitted, although a high school diploma significantly increases the chances of admission to the state's four-year institutions. Students without high school diplomas who enroll in colleges and universities pay full tuition and fees like all other students. Students who do not have a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate may not be eligible for certain federal, state and private financial aid.

### Resources

#### Learning by Choice

[bit.ly/EnrollmentOptions](http://bit.ly/EnrollmentOptions)

Answers to commonly asked questions about the state Learning by Choice law, federal education laws, and enrollment options.

#### Your Child's Progress

[bit.ly/YourChildsProgress](http://bit.ly/YourChildsProgress)

A brochure that covers learning standards and state tests by grade.

#### Class of 2017 Graduation Requirements Checklist

[bit.ly/GradChecklists](http://bit.ly/GradChecklists)

Worksheets, by graduating class, to ensure state and local credit and testing requirements have been met.

#### State Test Score Appeals and Family Access to Testing Materials

[bit.ly/ScoreAppeal](http://bit.ly/ScoreAppeal)

Three-step process to appeal a score on any high school assessment required for graduation.

#### Special Education and State Testing

[bit.ly/CIAOptions](http://bit.ly/CIAOptions)

State testing options available to students with an IEP.

### More Information

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#### State Testing

- [www.WAtesting.com](http://www.WAtesting.com)
- [statetesting@k12.wa.us](mailto:statetesting@k12.wa.us)

#### State Graduation Requirements

- [www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements](http://www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements)
- [www.sbe.wa.gov](http://www.sbe.wa.gov)
- [gradreq@k12.wa.us](mailto:gradreq@k12.wa.us)

### Abbreviations

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- **AP:** Advanced Placement
- **BEA:** Basic Education Allocation
- **CAA:** Certificate of Academic Achievement
- **CIA:** Certificate of Individual Achievement
- **COE:** Collection of Evidence
- **ELA:** English Language Arts
- **EOC:** End-of-Course Exam
- **IB:** International Baccalaureate
- **IEP:** Individualized Education Program
- **LDA:** Locally Determined Assessments
- **WA-AIM:** Washington Access to Instruction & Measurement