

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

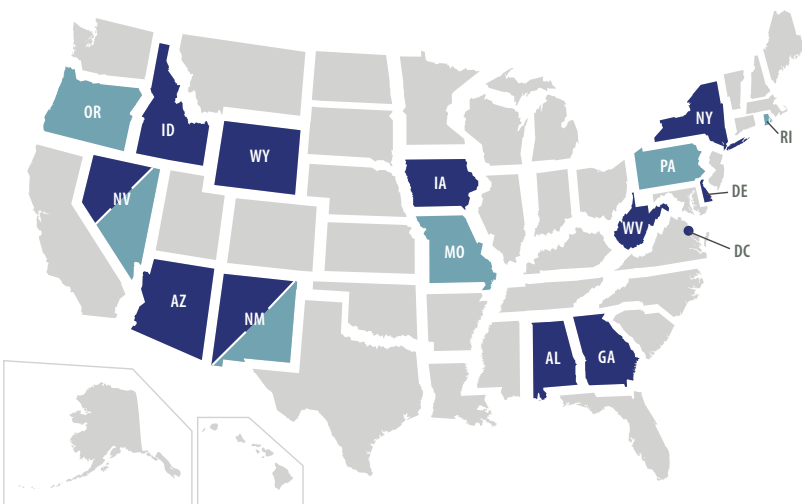


GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Graduation Requirements tab of the State of the States tool, available through the Center for Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (CSAA) website, provides information on the policy and implementation of high school graduation requirements. The State of the States content was reviewed and revised in September 2022 through review of publicly available state documents and direct outreach to state education agency staff. This CSAA update provides results from the most recent scan of states' graduation requirements.

[Visit State of the States for state profiles](#)

The September 2022 scan found that most states (36) made no changes to their high school graduation requirements between 2019 and 2022. Of states that revised their graduation requirements, three states updated their state's definition of College and Career Readiness, five states changed the number of credits required for graduation, 11 states made updates to graduation course or credit requirements, and six states added assessments required for graduation. This brief provides an overview of states' graduation requirement changes. ■



Changes to State High School Graduation Requirements

12 Graduation Credit/
Course Requirements

6 Assessment Requirements

STATE CHANGES TO GRADUATION CREDIT/COURSE REQUIREMENTS]

Alabama made changes to expand the courses that would fulfill the credit requirements to include **Advanced Placement** courses, **International Baccalaureate** courses, and postsecondary courses in addition to **State Department of Education-approved courses**. In mathematics and science, courses in **career and technical education** were included also. Physical education credit may be earned in **Beginning Kinesiology or Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)**. Students are required to complete one **online/technology enhanced course** or experience prior to graduation. Exceptions through individualized education plans (IEPs) will be allowed. Beginning in 2022 students are required to submit to the United States Department of Education a **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** or certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit a FAFSA.

Arizona has specified the performance level for courses meeting graduation requirements in **mathematics** as course content in preparation for proficiency at the high school level on the statewide assessment and aligned to the Arizona Mathematics Standards for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. The requirement for the third credit covering Algebra II, may be met by, but is not limited to, the following: a math course comparable to Algebra II course content; computer science, career and technical education and vocational education, economics, science, and arts courses as determined by the local school district governing board or charter school, and allows for the mathematics requirements to be modified for students using a [Personal Curriculum](#). **Science** courses have similar requirements for course content in preparation for proficiency at the high school level on the statewide assessment. **History** and **social science** will minimally consist of one credit of American history, including Arizona history, one credit world history/geography, a half credit of government, and a half credit of economics. NOTE: Specific course requirements are outlined in [R7-2-302](#).

Delaware changed the title of the credit requirement from Language Other Than English to **World Languages**.

District of Columbia changed the title of the credit requirement from Language Other Than English to **World Languages**.

Georgia added a requirement to choose courses for two credits in **English Language Arts (ELA)** from the state-funded list of courses. **New Mexico** clarified the content of **ELA** courses must contain a major emphasis on grammar, nonfiction writing, and literature. The state also added a single or half credit in **health**.

Idaho reduced the number of laboratories required in **science** from four to two and clarified that mathematics requirements include two credits each in **Algebra I** and **geometry** (one credit is equivalent to one semester/trimester of coursework). The requirement to take mathematics in the last year of school was eliminated. Idaho also allows Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to offer a [STEM Diploma and a Workforce Readiness Diploma](#).

Iowa has updated the definition of **college and career readiness** to include indicators that address content knowledge, transition skills, learning skills and cognitive strategies, and self-understanding and engagement strategies. In addition, a half credit in financial literacy was added to the course requirements which may be completed as part of a mathematics, social studies, or Career and Technical Education (CTE) course. All other course requirements are locally determined.

Nevada increased the number of credits for **social studies** to three credits including a half credit in American government and two units of American history, world history, or geography and a half unit of economics. The permissible elective courses are defined as World Languages, Great Basin Native Languages, Employability Skills, and Career and Technical Education.

CHANGES TO GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS CONTINUED]

New York changed the title of the credit requirement from Language Other Than English to **World Languages**. Students with a disability may be excused from the requirement for one credit in World Languages if indicated on their IEP, but they must still earn 22 credits to graduate. Such students are also exempt from the sequence requirement for earning a Regents diploma with advanced designation.

West Virginia updated the definition of **college and career readiness** to include, “The completion of coursework will prepare all students for education, employment, and/or enlistment.” In addition, the total number of credits for graduation was reduced to

22 credits. The number of credits required for the **Personalized Education Plan** was reduced from six to four credits.

Wyoming also reduced the number of credits required for graduation from four years to three years in **mathematics**. In addition, specific course requirements were removed for all subjects except **social studies**, which includes history, American government, and economic systems and institutions. In addition, students need to pass an examination on the principles of the constitution of the United States and the state of Wyoming. ■

STATE CHANGES TO GRADUATION ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS]

Arizona implemented legislation in 2022 that requires students graduating high school starting in 2026 to have a passing score of 70/100 on the state’s **civics test**.

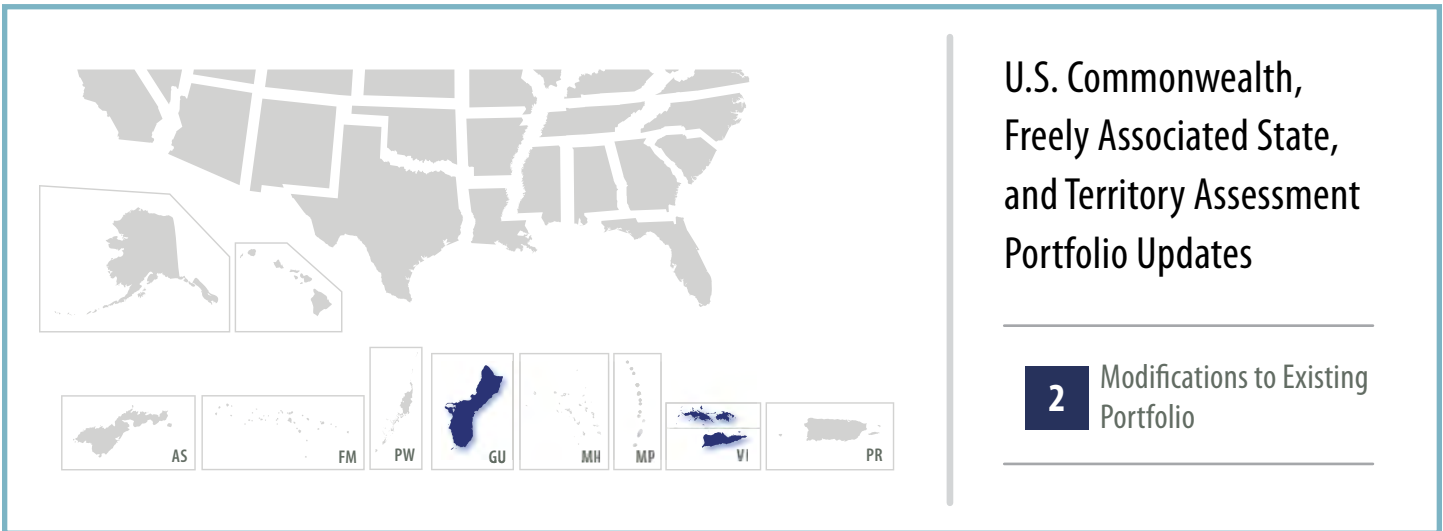
Missouri added assessments in **U.S. and Missouri Constitutions** and **American civics** to state high school graduation requirements.

Nevada added a **civics assessment** to its graduation requirements.

Oregon suspended the evidence of proficiency in Essential Skills assessment requirement through 2024. Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is required to submit a **comprehensive report on its graduation requirements** pursuant to [Senate Bill 744](#) by September 1, 2022. ODE is charged with engaging with the community and reviewing Oregon’s and other state’s graduation requirements to generate recommendations to make the graduation requirements more equitable, inclusive, and accessible.

Pennsylvania approved alternatives to **Keystone exams** for graduation. Effective with the graduating class of 2023, students have the option to demonstrate postsecondary preparedness through one of four additional pathways that more fully illustrate college, career, and community readiness. This includes taking Keystone assessments, obtaining a CTE certification, completing a state-identified alternative assessment (ACT, SAT, Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate, or the Armed Forces Qualifying Test), and evidence-based portfolios.

Rhode Island requires that students **demonstrate proficiency in six core areas** (English language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology). Student proficiency will be measured by local education agencies. In addition, students must complete one **performance-based diploma assessment** (Graduation Portfolio, Student Exhibitions, Senior Project, and/or a Capstone Product). ■



U.S. Commonwealth, Freely Associated State, and Territory Assessment Portfolio Updates

2 Modifications to Existing
Portfolio

U.S. COMMONWEALTH, FREELY ASSOCIATED STATE, AND TERRITORY | CHANGES TO GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The September 2022 scan also reviewed documents from U.S. commonwealths, freely associated states, and territories and identified the following changes to high school graduation requirements.

Guam has shared updated information on high school graduation requirements. Students need to take 24 credits for graduation including four credits each in **ELA** and **mathematics**, three credits each in **science** and **social studies**, and single credits in **physical education**, **health**, **fine arts**, and **Chamorro**. The remaining six credits are in **college**, **career**, and **life (CCL)** courses. Upon entering high school, the student and counselor develop and follow a **Personal Course of Study (COS)** to determine the set of **CCL** courses that will be taken during their high school tenure. Guam's definition of college and career readiness is to "prepare every student for a higher education and a broad career field. In conjunction

with academic assistance and guidance, students will be able to effectively identify, select, plan, and prepare for a career of choice and/or the pursuance of a postsecondary education."

U.S. Virgin Islands has shared updated information on high school graduation requirements. Students are required to earn **26 credits** for graduation. There are four credits required in both **ELA** and **mathematics**. In **science** students earn two credits, one credit in **general science**, and one credit in **biology**. In **social studies** students earn three credits including Virgin Islands History, Caribbean History, U.S. history/civics, and world history). All social studies courses must have **geography** embedded in the course delivery and **civics** must be stressed. ■



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