

March 31, 2017

Workgroup Recommends Graduation Alternatives for Class of 2018

The current high school class of 2018 (this year's juniors) is subject to new graduation requirements. Left unchanged, these new requirements could very well lead to a dramatic decrease in the high school graduation rate, especially in high poverty areas of the state. That's because, in addition to successfully completing required coursework, students are now required to meet one of the following three graduation "pathways": 1) accumulate at least 18 points on seven end-of-course exams; 2) achieve a "remediation free" score on the ACT or SAT; or 3) earn an industry-recognized credential and pass the WorkKeys workforce readiness exam.

A workgroup established by the State Board of Education to recommend alternative graduation requirements has concluded its work. The workgroup recommended two changes for the class of 2018. The recommendations will go to state Superintendent of Public Instruction Paulo DeMaria for consideration by the State Board of Education in April and would also need legislative approval to go into effect.

One recommendation would allow students who do not meet the requirements of the current pathways to graduate provided they take all required end-of-course exams and meet any two of the following six conditions:

- A senior-year attendance rate of 93 percent
- A 2.5 GPA in senior year courses, based on taking a minimum of four courses.
- Completing a capstone senior project, as defined by the local school district.
- Completing 120 hours of work experience or community service.
- Successfully completing and earning the credit for a College Credit Plus (CCP) course worth three or more credits.
- Successfully completing an International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced Placement (AP) course and earning a score on the respective exam that qualifies for college credit.

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The second recommendation is aimed at career-technical education students. It would require students to complete a career-technical training program approved by the Ohio Department of Education and accomplish one of the following:

- Achieve an average score of proficient across all WebXams required for the program.
- Earn a recognized industrial credential or set of credentials.
- Demonstrate successful workplace participation experience of 250 hours, documented by written evaluations by workplace and school officials.

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