



Cumberland School Department Policy Manual

STUDENTS

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HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY BASED GRADUATION

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The requirements for a Cumberland High School Diploma will be set by the School Committee and published annually in the High School’s Program of Studies and/or Student Handbook. Such requirements will be consistent with Rhode Island Board of Regents (BoR) Regulations. Only students who demonstrate fulfillment of these graduation requirements and proficiencies shall participate in the graduation ceremony and receive a diploma.

REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for a Cumberland High School Diploma will include:

1. Successful completion of the minimum required coursework credits, both in total and for specific subjects. Fourteen of the required credits will be represented by four academic credits of English Language Arts, four academic credits of mathematics, three academic credits of science and three academic credits of history/social studies. Specific courses required for graduation in each content area will be listed in the Program of Studies.

Coursework Credits Requirements for the class of 2013, 2014, 2015

A minimum of 21 credits is required to graduate.

English	4.0
Mathematics	4.0
Science	3.0
Social Studies	3.0
Physical Education/Health	2.0
Fine Arts	0.5
Technology	0.5
Electives	4.0

Coursework Credits Requirements for the class of 2016 and beyond

A minimum of 24 credits is required to graduate.

English	4.0
Mathematics	4.0
Science	3.0
Social Studies	3.5
Physical Education/Health	2.0
World Language	2.0
Fine Arts	0.5
Technology	0.5
Electives	4.5



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2. Successful completions of Comprehensive Course Assessments designed to measure student skill and ability within a content area.
3. Achieve proficiency or better on a Graduation Portfolio presentation including a collection of performance assessments that documents a student's academic performance over time and demonstrates deep content knowledge and applied learning skills.
4. Achieve proficiency or better on a minimum fifteen (15) hour community service activity demonstrating one or more of the school's identified expectations for learning.
5. Successful completion of state assessments according to a timetable determined by the Board of Regents. Students will be required to reach a minimum achievement level of proficiency on the state assessments or assessments in content areas designated by the Board of Regents.
6. Successful participation in the PSAT in both the sophomore and junior year.
7. Successful completion of an application to at least one post-secondary degree program, career certificate program, apprentice program, and/or military program; completion of the common application and the application for federal student aid. Parents may opt out of completing the application for federal student aid only.
8. Successful completion of all interim assessments required by CHS including but not limited to: RIDE Interim Assessments, Star Assessments, Stanford Reading Diagnostic, and the District Technology Assessment.
9. All requirements for graduation with regard to subparagraphs A through H above shall be set by the School Committee and published in the Program of Studies and/or Student Handbook.
10. Each student, beginning no later than entry into sixth grade, will create an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) with assistance from the Guidance Department, parents and community contacts. The ILP will be actively used by educators, students, and families to guide and monitor student progress along individual pathways toward proficiency for graduation and postsecondary plans.

DEFINITION OF PROFICIENCY

Proficiency is assessed through multiple measures at Cumberland High School. Proficiency is a measure of a student's knowledge and skill demonstrated in a consistent manner across multiple disciplines in various settings over time. Beginning with the Class of 2014, students must demonstrate proficiency on each of the following three measures of student performance: (a) individual student results on state assessments in content areas designated by the Board of Regents, (b) successful course completion; and (c) Cumberland's



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performance-based diploma assessments set forth in Section I above. These three areas are non-compensatory - meaning that low performance in one of the three areas cannot be offset automatically by high performance in one or both of the other areas

ROLE OF STATE ASSESSMENTS

State assessments are given to high school students according to a timetable determined by the BoR. If a student does not meet the minimum achievement level necessary designated by the BoR, the student shall be required to retake the state assessment. If after retaking the state assessment, the student does not meet the required level of achievement or make progress toward proficiency, the student may demonstrate graduation readiness through successful completion of a Regents-approved alternative assessment. If a student is unable to demonstrate graduation readiness through the state assessment or testing alternative, the student, in rare cases, may apply for a waiver of the state assessment portion of the graduation requirements. (See Section *Waiver for the State Assessment Graduation Requirement*)

Students may substitute scores from approved tests once they have taken the NECAP two times. The intent of the testing alternatives is to allow students the opportunity to provide evidence from an external, standardized assessment that they have met or exceeded the assessment expectation required to earn a high school diploma. RIDE will publish the list of alternative tests annually.

PROGRESS PLANS

Students failing to reach the minimum level of achievement on state assessments on the initial administration as established by the BoR shall be provided a Progress Plan. Progress Plans will include the types and durations of academic and educational supports and academic performance targets necessary for graduation

PROGRESS TOWARD PROFICIENCY

Progress Toward Proficiency is defined as meaningful, quantifiable improvement of academic skills in those areas in which a student has academic gaps, as evidenced by state assessments (i.e., content areas in which a student has not met the minimum level of required achievement). The Board of Regents has established that meaningful, quantifiable progress is demonstrated by improvement that is statistically significant between the first and subsequent administrations of the state assessment. Therefore, a student who earns a scaled score on subsequent administrations of the state assessment that reaches or exceeds the threshold for statistical significance based on his or her score on the initial administration will meet the state-assessment requirement for graduation. The Board of Regents will publish the scores needed to meet the Progress toward Proficiency standard on the State Assessments required for graduation.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) LIMITED EXEMPTION

According to RI Secondary Regulations (L-6-3-3.8e), ELLs who are not classified as having Limited Formal Schooling (LFS) or as Students with Interrupted Formal Schooling (SIFE) and who have been attending RI Public Schools for less than 4 years and who have low levels of English proficiency as demonstrated on the WAPT or ACCESS will not be held to using the state assessment as a graduation requirement. The Commissioner shall identify an alternative assessment or assessments appropriate to determine the academic proficiency for graduation purposes of English Language Learners that meet the above conditions.

WAIVER FOR THE STATE ASSESSMENT GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

As set forth in the 2011 K-12 Literacy, Restructuring of the Learning environment at the middle and high school levels, and proficiency based graduation Requirements (PBGR) at High Schools Regulation (Secondary Regulations), all students must complete each of the following graduation requirements in order to earn a diploma:

1. Successful completion of a minimum of course credits;
2. Demonstration of proficiency through performance-based assessments;
3. Attainment of the level of “partially proficient” on the state grade 11 assessment or measureable improvement of the student’s initial score on the grade 11 state assessment.
4. Other requirements as defined by the Cumberland School Committee in this policy.

Students have the opportunity to meet the state initial assessment requirement through the use of other approved assessments only after completion of two administrations of the state assessment in the required content areas. In relatively few cases, students who do not meet the required level of proficiency on the state assessment or other approved assessments may apply for a waiver. For such students, Cumberland will develop and implement a waiver process, which ensures a fair, efficient, and accurate review of waiver applications.

The 2011 Secondary Regulations describe the conditions under which Local Education Agency (LEAs) may grant waivers for the state assessment requirement for high school graduation for students who have attained and can demonstrate the required level of proficiency, as set forth below:

L-6-3.3. If a student is unable to demonstrate graduation readiness through the state assessment or a Regents-approved testing alternative, the student may apply to his or her LEA for a waiver of the state assessment portion of the graduation requirements. LEAs are authorized to grant waivers from the state assessment requirement set forth in this section only in those rare cases in which the state assessment is not a valid means of determining the proficiency of individual students. Waiver eligibility will be considered only for those students for whom: (1) there is a preponderance of



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evidence of academic content mastery consistent with 6-3.0 of these regulations and (2) the student has completed the sequence of testing requirements set forth in this section.

The Cumberland School Department is the decision-making body for waivers exempting Cumberland High School students from the state assessment diploma requirement.

The Cumberland School Department is authorized to grant waivers in appropriate cases, and through the adoption of this policy hereby establishes a local process that ensures a fair, efficient, and accurate review of waiver applications. The Superintendent is hereby charged with decision-making authority for granting waivers. The Cumberland High School commits to be proactive in monitoring a student's eligibility for a waiver and, when appropriate, support the compilation of evidence needed for a waiver.

Waivers apply to only the state assessment component of the student graduation requirements. A student must meet the eligibility criteria, outlined in the Waiver Protocol, in order to be considered for a waiver. At a minimum, the conditions by which students can be considered for a waiver are:

1. Demonstration of academic content mastery consistent with the 9-10 grade level standards;
2. Completion of the sequence of state testing requirements including participation and demonstrated effort in their Progress Plan; and
3. Completion of all of the other graduation requirements (course work, performance assessments and other local graduation requirements).

The Cumberland School Department hereby establishes a local process for the review of waivers that includes district-level involvement in the final decision process. This process shall include:

1. The establishment, adoption and communication of policy and procedures for the waiver process.
2. Publication and communication of the timeline for requesting waivers, the length of time for reviewing evidence and for making waiver decisions.
3. The establishment of a waiver review team (High School Appeals Review Board).
4. Identification of roles and responsibilities for reviewing evidence.
5. Identification of the types and amount of evidence used in making waiver decisions.
6. Development and maintenance of a system for managing the evidence used to make waiver determinations.



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7. Establishment of a process for documenting and making available waiver decisions.

The Superintendent is hereby directed to ensure the Cumberland School District waiver process grants waivers only in those specific conditions described in this policy and the attached waiver protocol. It is explicitly acknowledged that the Rhode Island Department of Education will monitor the Cumberland School Department waiver process and the granting of waivers during the diploma system review process.

DIPLOMA COMMENDATIONS AND CERTIFICATES

Cumberland will recognize students who achieve at or above the minimum achievement level through state assessments, course work and performance-based assessments.

Cumberland shall establish the minimum criteria necessary to earn a Regent's commendation (i.e. Latin System). These requirements will be published annually in the Program of Studies and/or Student/Parent Handbook.

Cumberland may award industry recognized certificates of academic and technical skill achievement and work readiness and life skills to any student who has satisfactorily completed specific course work or other standards-based activities that indicate a recognized level of knowledge and/or skills. Certificates may be included as part of a student's transition plan to post-secondary academic or work training programs.

RHODE ISLAND ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (RIAA)

RIAA eligible students will be measured based on alternate academic achievement standards. Beginning with the 2014 graduating class, the RIAA cannot be used to meet the state assessment requirement for receiving a diploma since the RIAA is based on alternate grade level and grade span expectations. (Guidance for 2011 Secondary Regulations, L-6-3.3)

RIAA CERTIFICATES

A parent or guardian of a student with an IEP may request that the student participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a Certificate of Individual Achievement. The Certificate of Individual Achievement can only be granted if the following requirements are met:

1. The student has an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is eligible for the RI Alternative Assessment, and;
2. The student will have completed four (4) years of high school and wishes to participate in a graduation ceremony.



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The receipt of a Certificate of Individual Achievement will not affect a student's right to receive Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) until the age of 21.

SUPPORTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS TO STUDENTS

Students with disabilities and students who are English language learners are expected to present evidence of successful completion of proficiency-based graduation requirements in order to be eligible for a diploma. Students with disabilities have the right under federal law to continue working toward successful completion of the proficiency-based graduation requirements until the age of 21.

Cumberland will provide all students access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum, monitoring each student's progress toward literacy and numeracy, and providing sufficient supports including a Scaffolded Literacy System for all students. A state aligned computerized testing system will be utilized to screen and diagnose learning achievement and readiness issues. Results of these assessments may result in changes to student course requests and program placement. Students reading one to two years below grade level must receive targeted intervention that includes the development, implementation, and progress monitoring of a Personal Literacy Plan (PLP). Students who have substantial reading difficulties (reading more than two years below grade level) must receive intensive literacy instruction from a reading specialist.

Identified English language learners (who have been served by Rhode Island public schools for less than three full years) may participate in an age-appropriate commencement ceremony, whether or not they are receiving a diploma at that time.

Students will be provided with the requisite supports designed to offer meaningful opportunities, including alternate pathways, to complete the proficiency requirements for their diploma.

The Middle School and High School shall implement strategies for creating more personalized learning environments, including the provision of a structure by which every student is assigned a responsible adult, in addition to a school counselor.

COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Adequate notice of graduation requirements will be provided to each member of each class and their family upon their entry to middle school and again upon their entry to high school. Students will be screened and diagnostically assessed to determine their literacy and numeracy needs. Appropriate instructional interventions will be provided, and students with identified literacy and/or numeracy needs will continue to have their progress monitored.



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TRANSFER STUDENTS

It is recognized that students entering the school system close to graduation may have difficulty completing graduation requirements, particularly if they transfer from a school with substantially different requirements. Consequently, the following process will be used for transferring students.

1. Students entering Cumberland High School requiring two or more years of work necessary prior to graduation (typically before the start of the junior year) will meet all requirements in order to receive a Cumberland High School diploma.
2. Students entering Cumberland High School with less than two years of work necessary prior to graduation (typically after the start of the junior year) from a Rhode Island high school with a graduation system approved by the Rhode Island Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education may use the requirements of their prior school. In addition, other independent activities or assessments may be included with the requirements of Cumberland High School to meet proficiency standards, subject to the supervision and standards of the High School Appeal Review Board. The student shall meet all other graduation requirements as determined by the High School Appeal Review Board.
3. Students entering Cumberland High School with less than two years of work necessary prior to graduation (typically after the start of the junior year) from any high school not covered in letter (B.) shall meet all requirements in order to receive a Cumberland High School diploma.
4. Individual cases not addressed by this policy may be addressed based on the recommendation of the High School Appeal Review Board and subject to the approval of the High School Principal.

PROCESS OF APPEAL

Any student who believes that he/she has been improperly denied a diploma may utilize the school system's appeal procedure through administrative steps as outlined in the student handbook to the High School Appeal Review Board then to the Principal, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, School Committee, and Commissioner of Education. This process shall be communicated annually to students and families.

When a student reaches the age of 18, that adult student is presumed under RI law to be capable of making his or her own educational decisions including students with disabilities. This means that the student has full access to the school record and makes the final decision in all matters related to their education including the contents of the Individualized Education Plan.



World Language Waiver

Protocol for Use

Students at Cumberland High School are required to complete two years of World Language study to improve their chances for admittance to colleges of their choice. Students are asked to complete 24 credits of study within 28 possible units of time. Many students Individualized Learning Plans (ILP) require enrollment in intervention classes that could be used for completing the high school's rigorous course-work requirements. Under extraordinary circumstances and to meet the needs of our students, a waiver process will be utilized to review a student's needs versus the Cumberland School Departments High School Proficiency Based Graduation course-work requirements.

In order to implement the waiver procedure, a school-based team must be assembled and present at a meeting to discuss the following:

- Student needs (ILP) versus Cumberland School Departments High School Proficiency Based Graduation course-work requirements
- Current and future scheduling that may impact completion of the world language requirement
- Possible learning disabilities that may impact the acquisition of a second language
- Impact on post-secondary enrollment
- Other factors, i.e. late enrollment from another institution that may impact completion of the world language requirement

The school-based team must consist of the student, their parent/guardian, an administrator, a school counselor and case manager when applicable.

The school-based team meeting to review the waiver process may include:

- A scheduled Individual Education Program (IEP)
- Section 504 of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) meeting
- A separate meeting convened for the sole purpose to review a world language waiver request

The school-based team will complete the waiver and offer their recommendation. The school principal will sign the waiver, copies will be given to the parent, school counselor, and kept in the main office. Additionally, a notation will be made in ASPEN for efficient accessibility by the student's educational team.



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Cumberland High School - World Language Waiver

A. Student Information

Student Name		Date	
School Counselor		YOG	

Services Currently Receiving: IEP* 504 ELL NONE

Has student been enrolled in intervention courses: ____ Yes or ____ No

If yes, please list them below.

B. Rationale for waiver: Briefly explain the basis for requesting WL requirement be waived

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C. Signatures of Attendees

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Student			
Parent			
School Counselor			
Case Manager*			
Administrator			



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Items to be reviewed by the team:

- Review all graduation requirements that must be achieved at point of waiver
- Review possible academic gaps that may exist as a result of the waiver
- Review academic courses to meet minimal graduation requirements

D. Recommendation of the team - basis for recommendation

Many colleges require 2 or more years of language study. By opting out I understand that my son/daughter may not meet this requirement for some college admissions.

(Parent's Signature)

(Date)

TO BE FILLED OUT BY PRINCIPAL

The two years of a language requirement for graduation has been waived	YES	NO
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(Parent's Signature)

(Date)



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Amendments Approved by Cumberland School Committee: _____

DRAFT