



Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Interim State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • msde.maryland.gov

TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Jack R. Smith, Ph.D. *JRS/cln*
DATE: April 26, 2016
SUBJECT: COMAR 13A.03.02.02, .06, and .09 Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland (Amend)
PERMISSION TO PUBLISH

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this agenda item is to request that the State Board grant permission to publish amended regulations that govern Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland to incorporate an incremental scoring implementation plan for PARCC Algebra I and English 10, and other accompanying adjustments to language as necessary.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The most recent assessment transition process began in 2014. For example, in December 2014, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff proposed amendments to the Graduation Requirements regulation that reflected the transition to the PARCC Assessments. Given the elimination of the HSA English and Algebra Assessments and the timing of the receipt of the PARCC results, the regulations phased-out the high stakes impact of the assessments for a limited time period. Simply put, the regulations allowed any student who had taken an HSA-aligned or PARCC-aligned test in English and/or Algebra prior to the 2016-2017 school year to meet graduation requirements by passing the course and taking the aligned assessment.

At the February 23, 2016 State Board Meeting, MSDE staff proposed to the Board the adoption of a PARCC scale score of 725, performance level 3, as the initial passing graduation requirement starting with the 2016-2017 school year. The State Board directed staff to continue exploring options, including the goal of aligning the graduation requirement to the College and Career Ready PARCC 750 scale score or performance level 4.

At the March 22, 2016 State Board Meeting, staff presented additional passing score options on Graduation Assessment Requirements. Two models were shared: (1) the point-in-time score increase plan requiring a score of 725 in 2016-2017 and a score of to 750 in 2019-2020; and (2) the phased-in incremental score increase plan adding approximately eight points per year to move from 725 to 750 over four years. At that meeting, the State Board by consensus directed MSDE staff to create regulations around the incremental model.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Leadership from all twenty four districts has participated in the discussion and creation of the incremental model set forth in the proposed regulations. Based on the State Board's consensus to move forward with an amended regulation incorporating this model, MSDE staff prepared the proposed regulations.

MSDE proposes amending COMAR 13A.03.02.09 Diplomas and Certificates to set the passing score for graduation to reflect an incremental increase in passing scores on the Maryland High School Assessments for Algebra I and English 10 from 725 to 750 over four years in the following way:

- (1) for SY 2016-2017, a score of 725;
- (2) for SY 2017-2018, a score of 733;
- (3) for SY 2018-2019, a score of 741;
- (4) for SY 2019-2020, and beyond, a score of 750; and
- (5) for any student who must take a re-test of the Maryland High School Assessment in English 10 and/or Algebra I, the passing score on the re-test shall be the passing score in the year in which the student first took the assessment.

The regulations do not change the requirement that students will also be required to achieve a passing score for biology and government.

The components listed in COMAR 13A.03.02.06 regarding the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation remain unchanged. The Bridge Plan will continue to play a supportive, remedial role in assisting students to meet the graduation requirements.

In addition, COMAR 13A.03.02.09 continues to include multiple equivalent pathways for meeting assessment graduation requirements. If a student has not achieved a passing score on the Maryland High School Assessment in English 10 and/or Algebra I, then they may achieve a score as established by the Department on Department-approved assessments for algebra and/or English, aligned with the Maryland High School Assessments such as Advanced Placement examinations, SAT, ACT, and International Baccalaureate examinations.

For a variety of reasons, there may be small numbers of students who will be first-time Algebra I and/or English 10 test takers in their graduation years of 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. In order not to place an insurmountable barrier in front of these seniors in their pursuit of graduation, we have created an exception to the graduation assessment requirement in Algebra I and/or English 10 for students who are first-time test takers graduating in school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. These students only need to take the Maryland High School Assessment in Algebra I and/or English 10; they will not need to achieve a passing score. However, these students must still pass the courses and also meet the assessment requirements in biology and government, whether by achieving a passing score on the Maryland High School Assessments, or meeting the requirements of the combined score option, or successfully completing a Bridge Plan in those assessment areas that the student did not pass.

The regulations state that the Department will establish the combined score. As scales for PARCC and HSA are not equivalent, a combined score for all four assessments is not feasible. Therefore, we propose the combined score pathway for PARCC as follows:

School Year	Combined Algebra I/ English 10 Score
SY 2016-2017	1450
SY 2017-2018	1466
SY 2018-2019	1482
SY 2019-2020	1500

Biology Passing Score	Government Passing Score	Combined Score
400	394	794

Another addition to COMAR 13A.03.02.09 is to require that at least yearly, through the end of implementation, the State Board will review and assess updated information on the graduation assessment requirements and scores.

ACTION:

I request permission to publish the proposed amendments to COMAR 13A.03.02.02, .06, and .09 for public comment.

13A.03.02.09

.09 Diplomas and Certificates

A. The types of diplomas and certificates specified in §§B-D of this regulation shall be awarded to any student who meets the requirements for award.

B. Maryland High School Diploma. Except as provided in Regulation .12 of this chapter, and in §C of this regulation, to be awarded a Maryland high school diploma, a student shall:

(1) Complete the enrollment, credit, and service requirements as specified in this chapter;

(2) Complete local school system requirements; and

(3) [Satisfy one of the following] *Meet the graduation assessment requirements in the following ways:*

(a) Achieve a passing score [as established by the Department] on the Maryland High School Assessments for [a]Algebra I and [biology,] English 10, [and government,] *in the following way:*

(i) *for SY 2016-2017, a score of 725;*

(ii) *for SY 2017-2018, a score of 733;*

(iii) *for SY 2018-2019, a score of 741;*

(iv) *for SY 2019-2020, and beyond, a score of 750; and*

(v) *for any student who must take a re-test of the Maryland High School Assessment in English 10 and/or Algebra I, the passing score on the re-test shall be the passing score in the year in which the student first took the assessment.*

(b) *Achieve a passing score as established by the Department on the Maryland High School Assessments for biology and government; or*

[[b)] (c) *Achieve a combined score(s) as established by the Department on the Maryland High School Assessments; or*

[[c)] (d) *If a student has not achieved a passing score on the Maryland High School Assessment in English 10 and/or Algebra I, [A]achieve a score established by the Department on Department-approved [substitute] assessments for algebra, ~~biology~~, and/or English, [and] ~~or government~~, aligned with the Maryland High School Assessments, such as Advanced Placement examinations, SAT-I, SAT II, ACT, and International Baccalaureate examinations;*

[[d)] (e) [In school years 2016-2017 and beyond If] *Except for students described in .06G of this chapter, if a student is unable to meet requirements in §B(3)(a)-[(e)] (d) of this regulation, then satisfactorily complete the requirements of the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation as set forth in Regulation .06E of this chapter[; or].*

[(e) *Prior to the 2016-2017 school year, if a student has taken an HSA-aligned or PARCC-aligned Algebra I and/or English 10 course and has passed the course(s) but failed the assessment aligned with the course(s) that student is exempt from completing a Bridge Plan for Academic Validation.*]

C. [Any student who has taken an HSA-aligned or PARCC-aligned Algebra I and/or English 10 course prior to the 2016-2017 school year may meet the graduation requirement for Algebra I and/or English 10 in the following ways:

(1) Passing the course(s) and passing the assessments aligned with Algebra I and/or English 10 course; or

(2) Passing the course(s) and taking the assessment aligned with the Algebra I and/or English 10 course at least one time.]

For students who are graduating in school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 and who are first-time test takers during those school years of the Maryland High School Assessment in Algebra I and/or English 10, the requirements set forth in §B(3)(a) do not apply. For those students only, taking the Algebra I and/or English 10 Maryland High School Assessment for the first-time will meet the graduation assessment requirement for Algebra I and English 10. Those students must meet the graduation requirements in biology and government by achieving a passing score, combined score, or completing a Bridge Plan.

D. Maryland High School Diploma by Examination.

(1) General Education Development Testing Program. A Maryland High School Diploma by Examination may be awarded for satisfactory performance on approved general education development tests if the student meets those requirements as defined in Labor and Employment Article, §§11-808, Annotated Code of Maryland, and COMAR 09.37.01.04.

(2) Maryland Adult External High School Diploma Program. A Maryland High School Diploma by Examination may be awarded for demonstrating competencies in general life skills and individual skills on applied performance tests if the student meets those requirements as defined in COMAR 09.37.01.20.

E. Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion.

(1) This certificate shall be awarded only to students with disabilities who cannot meet the requirements for a diploma but who meet the following standards:

(a) The student enrolled in an education program for a least 4 years beyond grade 8 or its age equivalent, and is determined by an IEP team, with the agreement of the student and the parents of the student, to have developed appropriate skills for the individual to enter the world of work, act responsibly as a citizen, and enjoy a fulfilling life, with the world of work including but not limited to:

(i) Gainful employment;

(ii) Post-secondary education and training;

(iii) Supported employment; and

(iv) Other services that are integrated in the community; or

(b) The student has been enrolled in an education program for 4 years beyond grade 8 or its equivalent and will have reached age 21 by the end of the student's current school year.

(2) An Exit Document that describes the student's skills shall accompany the Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion.

(3) The final decision to award a student with disabilities a Maryland High School Certificate Program Completion will not be made until after the beginning of the student's last year in high school.

(4) A student with significant cognitive disability may not meet high school graduation requirements, in accordance with §B of this regulation, if a student:

(a) Participates in an Alternative Assessment based on Alternative Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS);

(b) Continues to receive instruction based on Alternative Academic Achievement Standards through high school.

(5) If a student participate in a graduation ceremony prior to the completion of the student's education program, at the ceremony the school system shall issue to the student a Certificate of Achievement or other similarly titled certificate in place of a diploma.

F. Local Endorsements. Consistent with procedures established by the Department, each local school system may add endorsements to the diploma as incentives for students to meet locally established requirements and outcomes in instruction beyond the minimums specified by the State.

G. At least yearly, through the end of implementation, the State Board will review and assess updated information on the graduation assessment requirements and scores.

Graduation Assessment Requirements

Maryland State Board of Education
April 26, 2016

Dr. Henry R. Johnson, Interim Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Douglas Strader, Director of Assessment

Review of recent discussions

- Performance Level 3 (725) as graduation requirement
- Point in time increase
 - Score requirement would change from 725 to 750 in 2019-2020
- Gradual, incremental score increase
 - For SY 2016-2017, a score of 725
 - For SY 2017-2018, a score of 733
 - For SY 2018-2019, a score of 741
 - For SY 2019-2020 and beyond, a score of 750

Graduation Assessment Requirement Overview

- The four year incremental model
- Timeline for roll out
- Pathways to meeting graduation requirements
- Next steps

College and Career Readiness

“Readiness means being prepared to successfully complete credit-bearing college coursework or industry certification without remediation, having the academic skills and self-motivation necessary to persist and progress in postsecondary education, and having identified career goals and the necessary steps to achieve them.”

Success at Every Step: How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond. (2009) American Youth Policy Forum.

PARCC Performance Levels

PARCC Scale Scores (SSs)	PARCC Performance Levels (PLs)	PL Descriptors (<u>PLDs</u>)
800	Level 5 [^]	Exceeded expectations
750	Level 4 [^]	Met expectations
725	Level 3	Approached expectations

Level 3, Approached Expectations- students who achieve this level are on the path to College and Career Readiness and have surpassed prior minimum score expectations.

^Levels 4 and 5 denote College and Career Readiness (CCR); students who achieve these levels will be able to enter directly into entry-level, credit-bearing college courses upon graduation in Mathematics and English without having to take placement tests or remedial coursework.

PARCC Tests Implementation

- Students are currently required to participate in the first 2 operational years (the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years) in PARCC Algebra I and English 10.
- Under the current plan, the passing score requirement will go into effect for the 2016-2017 school year

Incremental Increase

Four Years, 725-750

COMAR 13A.03.02.09

Achieve a passing score **[as established by the Department]** on the Maryland High School Assessments for algebra and English in the following way;

(1) For SY 2016-2017, a score of 725

(2) For SY 2017-2018, a score of 733

(3) For SY 2018-2019, a score of 741

(4) For SY 2019-2020 and beyond, a score of 750, and

(5) For any student who must take a re-test of the Maryland High School Assessment in English 10 and/or Algebra I the passing score on the re-test for that student shall be the passing score in the year in which the student first took the assessment.

The State Board will review the graduation assessment requirements and scores at least yearly through the end of the implementation.

What role does the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation play in this process?

- After a student does not meet the passing score of an assessment **once**, he/she can begin working on the Bridge Project for that content.
- Working on the project is helpful remediation and can prepare students for the next administration of the assessment
- Students must take the assessment a second time; if they fail again, they continue or begin working on the Bridge Plan which, if they “pass”, it will satisfy the graduation requirement for that assessment

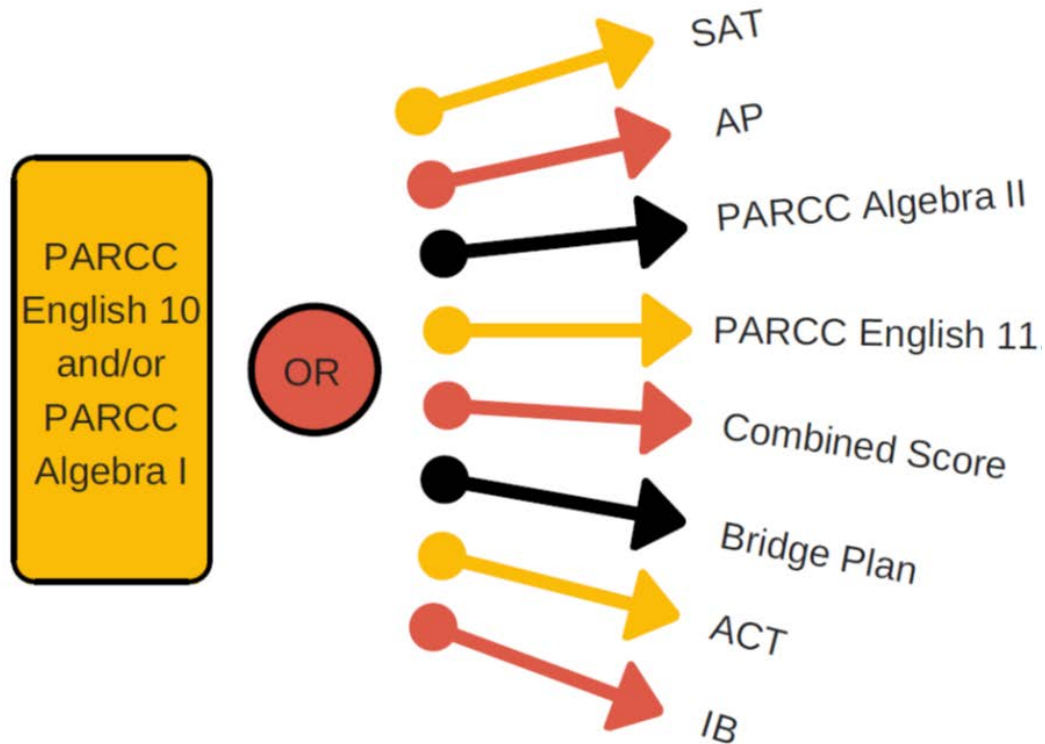
Bridge Plan for Academic Validation

COMAR 13A.03.02.06

A student shall participate in the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation if the student has:

- (a) Failed one or more Maryland High School Assessments at least twice;
- (b) Received a passing grade and earned credit in the course or courses related to the assessment or assessments;
- (c) Demonstrated overall satisfactory attendance in the most recent school year completed; and
- (d) Demonstrated satisfactory progress toward achieving the high school diploma requirements specified in COMAR 13A.03.02.09B(1) and (2); and
- (e) Participated successfully in appropriate assistance as defined in §C of this regulation after having failed one or more of the Maryland High School Assessments.

Equivalent pathways for meeting assessment graduation requirements



(MD CCR/CCA 2013)

COMAR 13A.03.02.09 -

If a student has not achieved a passing score on the Maryland High School Assessment in English 10 and/or Algebra I, then they may achieve a score as established by the Department on Department-approved assessments for algebra and/or English, aligned with the Maryland High School Assessments such as Advanced Placement examinations, SAT, ACT, and International Baccalaureate examinations.

Combined Score Pathway for PARCC

School Year	Combined Eng10/Alg 1 Passing Score
SY 2016-2017	1450
SY 2017-2018	1466
SY 2018-2019	1482
SY 2019-2020 and beyond	1500

Next Steps...

MSDE BOE Meetings	Actions
April or May 2016	Review/approve language for COMAR 13A.03.02.02, .06 and .09 with permission to publish
Summer 2016	Approve COMAR changes Minimum score requirements for grades 3-8