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**Lawrence County Early Graduation Process**

**Introduction**

The Early Graduation statute and regulation are a result of Senate Bill 61 (2013) and are a companion regulation to Senate Bill 97 (2013). To summarize the regulation; beginning in 2014-2015, Early Graduation is possible for students who intend to move on an accelerated timeline through high school and graduate college ready in three academic years or less. Early Graduation is a deliberate pathway for students that wish to complete high school early, receive a diploma from the district, and be eligible for acceptance into a two-or four- year Kentucky SACS accredited, public or non-profit institution without remediation. The regulation provides a financial incentive, known as the *Early Graduation Certificate*, for the student to support this action.

**Requirements**

* **Meet proficiency benchmarks on Kentucky required End-of-Course (EOC) exams**

Students must successfully complete courses before taking the corresponding (EOC) exams. Currently those classes are ENGLISH II, ALGEBRA II, BIOLOGY, and US HISTORY.

* **Meet Council of Post-Secondary Education (CPE) defined college readiness benchmarks on a college readiness exam**
  + Current benchmarks for the ACT (English = 18, Reading = 20, Mathematics = 19) as set by CPE in 13 KAR 2:020.

**Financial Incentives**

A student who meets the Early Graduation requirements in 704 KAR 3:305 shall earn an *Early Graduation Certificate* and be eligible for a one-time scholarship award to be used at a SACS accredited Kentucky college or university the academic year immediately following early high school graduation.

* The award shall be equal to one-half (1/2) of the state portion of the average statewide per pupil guarantee for one year. This award amount is determined in the biennial budget for each fiscal year. For the academic year 2013-2014, the statewide per pupil guarantee was $3827 (half of that would be approximately $1913).
* The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) will administer the scholarship; funds will be forwarded directly to the institute of higher education.
* *Early Graduation Certificate* funds shall be available only during the academic year following graduation.

Effective with the Class of 2015, students who are eligible for the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) program and graduate from a Kentucky high school in three years may be eligible for a KEES award that is the equivalent of four years of high school.

* The KEES award amount is based on the average of GPA awards.
* The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) should be contacted for additional information regarding the KEES program.

**REASONS FOR EXITING EARLY GRADUATION**

* **Voluntary academic** 
  + Student is meeting blueprint for success, but voluntarily chooses to remain in high school longer than three years to complete a career track, certification or accelerated/advanced courses such as AP, ~~IB~~ or dual credit.
* **Voluntary Financial/Scholarships**
  + Student is meeting blueprint for success, but voluntarily chooses to remain in high school longer than three years to be eligible for college scholarships and financial benefit.
* **Involuntary academic** 
  + Student is not meeting academic benchmarks on End-of-Course exams or proficiency benchmarks on the ACT. Student and family are counseled and advised against continuing on an Early Graduation pathway.
* **Health** 
  + Student health issues that prevent student from accomplishing Early Graduation criteria.
* **Athletics**
  + Students choose to stay the full four years in high school to take advantage of programs in sports in high school.

For more information regarding the Early Graduation Process, contact your school counselor or check out the information at <http://education.ky.gov/educational/AL/earlygrad/Pages/default.aspx>

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| Criteria for Successful Entrance: *All candidates will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Early Graduation Committee. The criteria below are indicators of successful completion of the program.* |
| GPA – Student has demonstrated high academic potential in rigorous courses.  Attendance – 95% average attendance rate  Leadership – Student has submitted letter of recommendation from a club sponsor or community member  Discipline – students should not have excessive behavior issues.  Benchmarks – Met or exceeded state benchmarks on district college-ready predictive assessments. Currently, the MAP assessment serves as the district college-ready predictive assessment.   * 8th grade: Reading RIT score: 230; Mathematics RIT score: 245; English RIT Score: 219 * 10th grade: Reading RIT score: 234; Mathematics RIT score: 251; English RIT Score: 225   Student Disposition:   1. *Students intend to begin and stay on this pathway, beginning in middle school or ninth grade.* 2. *Students have a clear academic or career goal in mind and therefore a reason to demonstrate proficiency in high school and move on.* 3. *Student is persistent, self-motivated and can set and achieve goals independently.* 4. *Student is emotionally and academically mature, can deal with their schedule and classes being “out of step” with same-age peers.* 5. *Student shows indications of being on or surpassing benchmarks for College and Career Readiness goals through standardized test scores. High grades alone do not determine a successful early graduate.* 6. *Student may be identified as Gifted/Talented; this is not a sole indicator of readiness.* 7. *Students have a desire to succeed and “move on when ready.”* 8. *Students do not have excessive absences, tardiness or truancies.* 9. *Students do not have excessive or serious behavior issues.* |
| Entrance Process: |
| 1. Students wishing to follow an early graduation pathway shall notify the Principal of their intent prior to the beginning of grade nine (9) or as soon thereafter as the intent is known, but within the first thirty (30) school days of the academic year in which they wish to graduate (LCBOE Policy 8.113) 2. Students may notify of their intent by completing and submitting a *Letter of Intent to Apply for Early Graduation*. 3. Upon submission of the *Letter of Intent* middle and/or high school counselors will meet with potential applicants to explain the Early Graduation Option. |
| 1. A screening committee consisting of middle and/or high school counselors, will review the *Letter of Intent* and criteria for successful completion of potential applicants for the Early Graduation Option. |
| 1. An Early Graduation Committee (EGC) will be established for each student prepared for entry in to the program. The EGC will consist of the student, parent, principal/designee, district representative, and counselor. The EGC will conduct an initial meeting to discuss readiness into the program. The committee will review the Issues to Consider Surrounding the Early Graduation Option. The EGC will decide upon acceptance to the program. All required committee members must sign the *Letter of Intent*. Upon acceptance to the program, students will review pathway options.   The superintendent will sign the *Letter of Intent* upon recommendation of the committee. |
| 1. The EGC will encourage the student to be in frequent communication with the college/university of choice to ensure acceptance in to the selected program. |
| 1. Schools must enter status as an Early Graduate into Infinite Campus no later than October 1st of the year in which the student makes the declaration as stated in Section 9 of 704 KAR 3:305. |
| 1. Students meeting the criteria will follow the Early Graduation Track upon entering 9th grade. |
| 1. Students who submit a *Letter of Intent*, but do not exhibit readiness for the program, may re-apply the following year as initiated by the student by submitting another letter of intent. |
| Communicating the Initiatives and Criteria: |
| Middle and High School Counselors will distribute the district ~~letter~~ process explaining the criteria, guidelines, requirements, and benefits of the Early Graduation Option. |
| The district process and Letter of Intent will be posted to the school and district website. |
| School one-calls will be made to prepare parents for the receipt of the district informational parent letter. |
| Announcements will be made through local media including radio and newspapers. |
| Progress Monitoring and Support for Early Graduate Students: |
| * The EGC will meet with students enrolled in the Early Graduation Option at least three times a year to review current data and determine student status in the program. The EGC will identify areas of concerns and provide the necessary interventions for students. |
| Blueprint for Intervention: |
| 1. Students who are at risk of not meeting the program criteria will be provided additional counseling from school counselors. 2. Students needing additional academic support will be placed in College and Career Readiness Interventions that are appropriate in meeting individual needs. 3. Parents will be notified as concerns are identified. |
| ACT: |
| The Building Assessment Coordinator will ensure that Early Graduate Candidates have the opportunity to take the ACT. |
| Transition Plan for Early Graduates /Students Exiting the Program Before Graduating: |
| 1. Early Graduation Committee meeting will be scheduled for those students who are not meeting the program criteria or who decide to discontinue participation in the Early Graduation Pathway. 2. The Early Graduation Committee will review transcripts and determine a pathway to meet high school requirements. 3. The Early Graduation Committee will seek to place the student in an appropriate pathway that will ensure readiness for college and/or a career. |
| Graduation Ceremony Options: |
| 1. Early Graduation students will participate in the graduation ceremony during the year program requirements are complete. |
| Diploma Options: |
| 1. Students will receive a general diploma from the Lawrence County School system. |

**Sample Pathways for Students for Early Graduation—2 Year Program**

**Honors or Regular Classes**

**9th Grade**

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| **Year One** |
| Algebra I |
| English I |
| US History |
| Integrated Science |
| Fitness and Wellness |
| Humanities |
| Biology |

**10th Grade**

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| **Year Two** |
| Algebra II |
| Geometry |
| English II |
| English III |
| World Civilization |
| Elective |
| Elective |

**ASSESSMENTS**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **9th Grade** | | | **10th Grade** | | |
| MAP\* | | | MAP\* & ACT | | |
| Biology EOC | | | English 2 EOC | | |
| US History EOC | | | Algebra 2 EOC | | |
| AP Exams (Students who take AP classes) | | | On-Demand Writing | | |
|  | | | AP Exams (Students who take AP classes) | | |
|  | | | KOSSA (Career Pathway-depends on electives taken) | | |
| **College Course** | **ACT Subject Test Area** | **MAP\* College Readiness Predictive Benchmark 8th Grade** | | **MAP\* College Readiness Predictive Benchmark 10th Grade** | **ACT Benchmark** |
| English Composition | English | 219 | | 225 | 18 |
| College Algebra | Math | 245 | | 251 | 22 (19) |
| Social Sciences | Reading | 230 | | 234 | 22 (20) |
| Biology | Science | N/A | | N/A | 23 |

**\*Elective Classes—students may either select a career pathway in ROTC, Agriculture, Business, or Family & Consumer Science. They can also choose to take extra core or elective classes in the areas of Math, English, Social Studies or Science. They can take classes in Art, Band, or Choir.**

**\*Subject to change based on state assessment requirements. MAP is a district assessment which only serves as predictor of benchmark aligned score.**

**Sample Pathways for Students for Early Graduation—3 Year Program**

**Honors or Regular Classes**

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| **9th Grade** |
| Algebra I |
| English I |
| Integrated Social Studies |
| Integrated Science |
| Fitness/Wellness |
| Elective |
| Elective |

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| **10th Grade** |
| Geometry |
| English II |
| Biology |
| World Civilization |
| Elective |
| Elective |
| Elective |

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| **11th Grade** |
| Algebra II |
| English III |
| English IV |
| US History |
| Humanities |
| Introduction to Chemistry and Physics |
| Elective |

**ASSESSMENTS**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **9th Grade** | **10th Grade** | **11th Grade** |
| MAP\* | MAP\* | ACT |
|  | English 2 EOC | US History EOC |
|  | Biology EOC | Algebra 2 EOC |
|  | On-Demand Writing | On-Demand Writing |
|  | AP Exams (Students who take AP classes) | KOSSA (Career Pathway) |
|  |  | AP Exams (Students who take AP classes) |

**\*Elective Classes—students may either select a career pathway in ROTC, Agriculture, Business, or Family & Consumer Science. They can also choose to take extra core or elective classes in the areas of Math, English, Social Studies or Science. They can take classes in Art, Band, or Choir.**

**\*Subject to change based on state assessment requirements. MAP is a district assessment which only serves as predictor of benchmark aligned score.**