

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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Graduation shall be held each June for those pupils who have successfully fulfilled requirements established by the board of education and the State of New Jersey. Any pupil who desires to drop out of school prior to graduation, or seeks to transfer to another school, must follow the administration procedures for separation.

### Graduation Requirements

The following are the minimum graduation requirements necessary to receive a Kittatinny Regional High School diploma as deemed by the Kittatinny Board of Education and the State of New Jersey.

### Credit Requirements:

A student must complete a minimum of 140 credits.

- A full year course equals 5 credits and a half year course equals 2.5 credits

#### **Exceptions:**

- A full year science lab course equals 6 credits
- A full year Elective class or Physical Education class will have one 1 credit deducted if a science lab is taken during that period since the class will be missed 1 day per week
- A failed course equals zero credit and no credit given for study hall

### Testing Requirements:

A student must pass the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers test (PARCC) or equivalent state approved testing.

### Course Requirements:

A student must pass all required Academic Courses:

- 20 credits - 4 courses in English
- 4 full academic years of comprehensive Health and Physical Education
- 15 credits - 3 courses in Mathematics including Algebra I, Geometry & at least one additional year of rigorous Math
- 15 credits - 3 courses in Science including Biology/Lab, and/or Chemistry/Lab, Physics, Environmental Science and at least one additional year of a lab or inquiry based science
- 15 credits - 3 courses in Social Studies including 1 World History class and 2 American History classes
- 5 credits - 1 course in World Language

5. A student must pass the equivalent of 5 full year elective courses in addition to a course in Personal Financial Management. Elective courses must include the following:

- The equivalent of 1 full year elective course in the area of "Visual and Performing Arts" which includes courses in the following areas: Drama, Video Production, Digital Photography, Band, Chorus, Music Theory or Art. (5 Credits)
- The equivalent of 1 full year elective course in the area of "Practical Arts" which includes courses in the following areas: Business, Computer Science, Engineering, Robotics, Technology, Structured Learning Environment (SLE), Video, Woodshop, Clothing or Graphics. (5 Credits)
- 1 Elective course in the area of "Financial Literacy" which includes courses in the following area: Personal Financial Management. (2.5 Credits) (May be taken online as per policy #6179.)
- Additionally, the equivalent of 3 full year elective courses in the "Visual and Performing Arts" and/or "Practical Arts" areas. (17.5 Credits)
- By completing the required elective courses in these areas, a student also fulfills the state requirement of Vocational Education, Career Education and Consumer, Family, Life Skills Education.

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### 6. Additional Courses:

- Students are advised to take additional academic or elective classes if their schedule permits.
- Keep in mind any additional **academic courses** out of the English, Enrichment, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies or World Language Departments **do not count** as part of the “**required 6 elective classes**” other than Drama. Drama can count as an English class or a Visual and Performing Arts class, **but not both**. Classes such as Sociology, Creative Writing, Anthropology, Environmental Science, etc. are academic electives and **do not meet** the graduation requirement concerning “**required electives.**”

### 7. Additional Requirements:

- A student must register yearly for a minimum of **35 credits**.
- A student must have a minimum of four academic classes. This excludes senior SLE students who are required to take three academic classes.
- A student cannot have more than 9 unexcused absences in a ½ year course or 18 unexcused absences in a full year course per year. Loss of credit due to excessive absences can keep a student from graduating on-time.

Credits are assigned based upon administrative code and must correspond with the State Department of Education secondary school course offerings code list.

Elective credits may be reduced if a student is required to take parallel instruction in Math, Science or English based on state or local district assessment. This will be determined in a case-by-case basis.

Each pupil has the right to choose any course of study that is offered by the school. Pupils must follow sequential courses in proper order. Every effort will be made to direct the pupil into a course ensuring pupil optimal success.

The chief school administrator shall put into effect the procedures necessary to assess each pupil upon entry into the system, and, annually thereafter, to identify those pupils not meeting the state or district proficiency requirements. He/she shall develop the programs necessary to remedy these deficiencies at the lowest possible grade level.

Successful completion means that the pupil has demonstrated the degree of proficiency required by the district to indicate achievement of the district goals for the particular course, and has attended the required number of course sessions.

#### A. Proficiency Requirements (Basic Skills)

Pupils must pass the state approved graduation requirement assessment in reading, writing and computation to qualify for a high school diploma.

Twelfth-grade pupils who have satisfied all other graduation requirements but have repeatedly failed the statewide examination shall receive a special review assessment as provided by law.

#### B. Pupil Attendance Requirements

Unexcused absences from school can adversely affect the total number of credits a pupil accumulates toward graduation. In accordance with the guidelines established under Board policy, absences are divided into two categories – cumulative and non-cumulative. Non-cumulative include:

1. Illness (Doctor’s note required);
2. Death in the immediate family;
3. Religious holidays as prescribed by the state department of education;
4. Administrative reasons (other reasons deemed appropriate by the administration).

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### Graduation Guidelines and Procedures

Non-cumulative absences are excluded from the cumulative total. Credits will be deducted from each course if the cumulative absences are excessive according to the following schedule:

16 days of absence:	1 credit loss per full year course equivalent
21 days of absence:	2 credit loss per full year course equivalent
26 days of absence:	3 credit loss per full year course equivalent

Deduction of credits will be reflected on the pupil's permanent record.

- A. Copies of graduation requirements are to be distributed to each incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupil and to any pupil who transfer into district after 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Copies will also be included in the school calendar and curriculum guide.
- B. The Superintendent of Schools shall report, no later than the date set by law, to the Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education on the status of each graduating class, including:
  1. The number of state-endorsed diplomas granted;
    - a. Under regular provisions;
    - b. Under special education provisions;
    - c. Under basic skills alternate procedures.
  2. The number of diplomas denied:
    - a. Under basic skills procedures;
    - b. Due to failure to attain locally established proficiencies and standards.
  3. The number of dropouts by grade level.
- C. Individual Student Improvement (ISIP)  
 An ISIP is to be developed for each pupil who has not met basic skill proficiency requirements by the end of the sixth grade and must continue throughout the secondary grades until all identified deficiencies are remedied and exit criteria met. The ISIP will include:
  1. An analysis of the basic skill performance;
  2. Exit criteria which specify performance standards;
  3. Listing of skill deficiencies;
  4. Description of remedial program;
  5. Description of evaluation procedures;
  6. Identification of ISIP monitor;
  7. Minimum yearly review of ISIP.

Pupils will be assessed annually to determine their progress. Efforts will be made to develop the ISIP in cooperation with staff, parents/guardians and the pupil. If a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the program, a request for a change can be made to the principal. These requests will be reviewed; however, a final determination of the appropriate instructional program rests with the administration and Board of Education.

D. Twelfth Grade Special Review Assessment

If the high school principal determines that a pupil is not making satisfactory progress in the ISIP after completion of 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the pupil and/or parents/guardians are to be informed of the pupil's status and the available instructional opportunities.

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A review panel will be scheduled by January of the senior year to examine evidence and make any recommendations concerning demonstrated proficiency regarding basic skills. A positive recommendation by the panel with endorsements from the principal, district superintendent and county superintendent are necessary prior to the Board of Education awarding state-endorsed high school diploma.

E. Out-of-School Youth

Any out-of-school youth or adult age 18 or over who has otherwise met all state and local graduation requirements, but failed to pass state assessment test(s), has the opportunity to take the test again when scheduled by the district in order to complete requirements for a diploma.

F. Special Education Pupils

A disabled pupil must meet all state and local high school graduation requirements in order to receive a state-endorsed high school diploma unless exempted in his/her IEP with the written approval of the chief school administrator.

A pupil who qualifies may take the Alternate Proficiency Assessment, if alternate requirements for graduation have been specified in his/her IEP.

By June 30 of a disabled pupil's last year in the elementary program, the pupil's case manager, parent/guardian and teacher(s) shall meet to review the instructional guide and basic plan of the pupil's IEP in view of the transition to the secondary program. Input from appropriate staff from the secondary school shall be part of the review.

The basic plan of the IEP for the pupil exiting the elementary program will address all the elements required in the administrative code. The description of the educational program will include exemptions, if any, from regular education program options or state and local graduation requirements including HSPA, along with the rationale for the exemptions. The exemptions must be approved in writing by the chief school administrator.

Required reviews of the IEP shall continue to address graduation requirements and shall explain why the proficiencies required for graduation are not part of the IEP.

Because graduation with a state-endorsed diploma is a change of placement that requires written notice, all procedures described in the administrative code shall be followed scrupulously. Procedures shall include written notice to parents/guardians that includes a copy of procedural safeguards published by the State Department of Education and opportunity for mediation or a due process hearing.

G. Proficiency

In consultation with appropriate professional staff, the chief school administrator shall develop and present to the Board for adoption indicators of achievement and standards of proficiency and attendance demonstrating successful completion of each course offered at every level of the high school.

The subject matter and standards of proficiency shall be articulated with the district's elementary schools and with sending elementary districts.

In accordance with law, the Board of Education shall have copies of this policy distributed to all 7<sup>th</sup> grade or otherwise entering pupils and their parents/guardians.

They shall also be informed as to the examinations, demonstrated proficiencies, course and credit hour requirements, attendance policies, and any other state and local requirements.

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Proficiency requirements for each individual course shall be given to pupils upon registering for the course.

The yearly program of studies for each pupil in the high school must be approved and signed by the parent/guardian, except in the case of 18 year old pupils.

### Early Graduation

- A. To qualify for early graduation by January of the senior year, the pupil must:
1. Apply in writing by May of the junior year;
  2. Have parental permission if under 18;
  3. Maintain a cumulative average of C (2.0);
  4. Have no failures in their freshman or sophomore year;
  5. Have no loss of credit due to excessive absences.
- B. Pupils are eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies in June of the year they complete their requirements.
- C. External Credit  
Students who have completed their junior year may be eligible to attend college in lieu of their senior year and earn credit towards graduation provided they have met ALL requirements:
1. Student is in the top 10% of their class;
  2. Student has been selected to participate in a full-time, 4-year honors college or university program;
  3. Student has applied in junior year and received approval of the Principal;
  4. Students must meet Kittatinny Regional High School's diploma requirement. Kittatinny Director of Student Personnel Services will verify college course equivalency;
  5. Students approved for this program must attain college matriculation status prior to Kittatinny graduation. They must also submit an official transcript to Kittatinny in order to be considered eligible for graduation.

Students who have met all above criteria 1, 2 and 3 must file a request with the guidance counselor with supporting college documents, and parental approval by May 1<sup>st</sup> of their junior year.

### Students Returning for a Fifth Year at Kittatinny

- A. Students who are interested in a Kittatinny diploma but have not earned 140 credits at the end of four years;
- B. Students who do not want to pursue a GED diploma;
- C. Students, in the absence of a county-wide adult school program and/or a summer school program.

### Requirements

- A. Students must have accumulated a minimum of 120 credits prior to September of the fifth year.
- B. Students may only take the number of credits they need to graduate. Additional "elective" courses will not be allowed.
- C. The full or partial day schedule must be approved by the Principal or the Principal's designee.
- D. All new course work must be done by the end of the second marking period (end of the first semester).
- E. Courses must be scheduled during their regular periods. No independent Study/Teacher Aide type courses will be accepted.
- F. Students must take Physical Education as per New Jersey law.
- G. Athletic eligibility as per NJSIAA regulars.

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- H. Even though the 140 credits will have been earned by the end of the first semester, the diploma may not be issued until the regular graduation date of the fifth year. Students may, or may not, participate in the ceremony.
- I. The same school rules and regulations as outlined in the Student Handbook are in effect during the fifth year.
- J. The school excuses itself from any type of responsibility regarding the diploma if the student does not pass the course(s) scheduled.
- K. The attendance policy regarding the removal of credits due to excessive absences will be in effect.

### Transfer Students

Upon residency verification and official transfer into the Kittatinny Regional School District from another school, it will be the responsibility of the guidance counselor and the Director of Student Personnel Services to review the students' transcript as it pertains to the graduation requirements of Kittatinny Regional High School.

Normally, student who transfer into Kittatinny Regional High School after their freshman year have little difficulty in meeting the 140-credit requirement for graduation. It is the student who enrolls following two years in attendance at another school that their ability to satisfy the 140-credit requirement is compromised.

In order to ensure that the student is given a fair and equivalent opportunity to meet the intent of the 140-credit requirement of the Kittatinny Regional School District, the counselor needs to ascertain the credit and elective requirements of the previous district. Once this information has been obtained, the student's transcripts must be reviewed and interpolated into the requirements necessary to earn a diploma at Kittatinny Regional High School.

The following formula would be applied:

- A. Ascertain previous school's graduation requirement (Example: H.S. X = 120 credits).
- B. Divide the total credits by 4 = 30 credits per year to graduate at school X.
- C. Kittatinny total credit requirement is 140 divided by 4 = 35 credits per year.
- D. Take the number of years that the student was enrolled at school X and add it to the number of years at Kittatinny to determine the total credits required for graduation.
- E. Example for a student who was at school X for two years:  
 $9^{\text{th}} \text{ grade (30 credits) + } 10^{\text{th}} \text{ grade (30 credits) + } 11^{\text{th}} \text{ grade at Kittatinny (35 credits) + } 12^{\text{th}} \text{ grade at Kittatinny (35 credits) = } 30 + 30 + 35 + 35 = 130$
- F. This would be the minimum credits required for graduation.
- G. The six 5-credit course elective requirement should be attainable but will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any waiver in this requirement must be submitted, in writing, by the student's guidance counselor, to the Director of Student Personnel Services. The final decision will rest with the Principal or his/her designee.
- H. Students eligible for Valedictorian/Salutatorian must adhere to Kittatinny Board of Education Policy #5127 Graduation Procedures and Ceremonies.

### Pupil Enrollment in College Courses – Option 2

The Board shall make reasonable efforts to develop articulation agreements with New Jersey colleges and universities to facilitate the delivery of college credit courses to qualified pupils.

The Board shall establish a process to approve post-secondary learning opportunities that may consist of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), or concurrent/dual enrollment at accredited higher education institutions. Students shall receive credit for successful completion of an

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approved, accredited college course that assures achievement of knowledge and skills that meets or exceeds the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

The Board shall determine eligibility requirements for these pupils and monitor the quality of the courses offered and college faculty who teach the courses.

**Reporting and Monitoring**

The chief school administrator shall report annually at a public meeting, not later than September 30, to the Board and to the commissioner:

- A. The total number of students graduated in the aggregate and disaggregated according to subgroups described in federal law;
- B. The number of students graduated under the Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA) process;
- C. The number of students receiving state-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternate requirements for graduation as specified in their IEP's;
- D. The total number of students denied graduation from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class;
- E. The number of students denied graduation from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade class solely because of failure to pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) or Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA), based on the provisions of administrative code.

The information shall be reported to the Board at a public meeting prior to the date prescribed by law.

The Board shall review this policy annually and shall adopt all regulations required by law.

<b><u>Legal References:</u></b>	<p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:4-25</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-1</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-2</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-4.1</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7C-5.1</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:7F-46</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:33-1</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35-1 <u>et seq.</u></p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:36-17</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6:30-3.7</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:8-1.1 <u>et seq.</u></p> <p><u>See particularly:</u></p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:8-1.2,-2.1,-3.1,-3.3,-4.1,-4.2,-4.3,-5.1,-5.2</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:14-3.7</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:14-4.11</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:15-1.11</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:23A-9.5</p>	<p>Prescribing minimum courses of study for public schools; approval of courses of study</p> <p>Commissioner of education to develop a program of standards and guidelines</p> <p>Boards of education; establishment of standards</p> <p>Operation recognition; purpose; eligibility; application procedure</p> <p>Boards of education prohibited from excluding students from graduation ceremony or from obtaining yearbook for inability to pay fees</p> <p>Review, update of core curriculum content standards; Educational Adequacy Report</p> <p>District to furnish suitable facilities; adoption of courses of study</p> <p>Curriculum and courses</p> <p>Credit of seniors in active military and naval service, etc.</p> <p>Graduation</p> <p>Standards and assessment</p> <p>Individualized education program</p> <p>Graduation</p> <p>Graduation requirements for limited English proficient Students</p> <p>Commissioner to ensure achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards</p>
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- N.J.A.C. 6A:30-1.1 et seq. Evaluation of the performance of school districts
- N.J.A.C. 6A:32-2.1 Definitions
- N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.1 et seq. Annual reporting and planning requirement
- N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1 et seq. Programs and practices to support student achievement
- N.J.A.C. 6A:32-14.1 et seq. State and federally mandated programs and services

The Department of Education Website, <http://www.nj.gov/njded/assessment/>  
(Lists the state assessment components)

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, PL. 107-110, 20 U.S.C.A. 6301 et seq.

**Possible**

**Cross References:**

- \*1120 Board of education meetings
- \*5113 Absences and excuses
- \*5120 Assessment of individual needs
- \*5127 Commencement activities
- 6000 Concepts and roles in instruction
- \*6010 Goals and objectives
- \*6122 Articulation
- \*6140 Curriculum adoption
- 6141.4 Independent study
- \*6142 Subject fields
- \*6142.2 English as a second language; bilingual/bicultural
- \*6142.6 Basic skills
- \*6145 Extracurricular activities
- \*6147 Standards of proficiency
- \*6154 Homework/makeup work
- \*6171.4 Special education
- \*6200 Adult/community education

\* Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual

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