# 5461 HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

The Board of Education shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to prospective graduates who have met all of the requirements adopted in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a), 6A:8-5.1(b), or 6A:8-5.2(d). The Board shall not issue a high school diploma to any student who does not meet the criteria specified in the requirements adopted in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a), 6A:8-5.1(b), or 6A:8-5.2.(d).

The words and terms used in this Policy shall have the meanings as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3.

The Board shall provide students exiting grade twelve without a diploma the opportunity for continued high school enrollment to age twenty or until the requirements for a State-endorsed diploma have been met, whichever comes first.

The Board shall allow any out-of-school individual to age twenty who has otherwise met all State and local graduation requirements but has failed to pass the State proficiency test to demonstrate proficiency through alternative means as set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)6. through 6A:8-5.1(f), as applicable, pursuant to the standards applicable to the student's graduating class. Upon certification of passing the test applicable to the student's class in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8, a State-endorsed diploma shall be granted by the high school of record.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:20-1.4, the Commissioner of Education shall award a State-issued high school diploma based on achieving the Statewide standard score on a New Jersey High School Equivalency Assessment (NJHSEA) to individuals age sixteen or older who are no longer enrolled in school and have not achieved a high school credential. The Board shall provide students awarded a State-issued high school diploma pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(c) or 6A:8-5.2(d) the opportunity for continued high school enrollment to age twenty-one if eligible pursuant to the IDEA.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(d), the Commissioner shall award a State-issued high school diploma to individuals age sixteen or older and no longer enrolled in high school based on official transcripts showing at least thirty general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education.

Included in the thirty general education credits must be a minimum of fifteen credits with at least three credits in each of the five general education categories as follows: English; mathematics; science; social science; and the humanities.

The Board shall award a State-endorsed high school diploma to any currently enrolled student, regardless of grade level, who:

1. Has demonstrated proficiency in the State graduation proficiency test, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)7. or as set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(e).

2. Has presented official transcripts showing at least thirty general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education; and

3. Has formally requested such early award of a State-endorsed high school diploma.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-7. and 18A:7E-3., the Superintendent shall report annually to the Board at a public meeting not later than September 30, and to the Commissioner:

1. The total number of students graduated;

2. The number of students graduated under the substitute competency test process;

3. The number of students graduated under the portfolio appeals process;

4. The number of students receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternate requirements for graduation as specified in their IEPs;

5. The total number of students denied graduation from the twelfth grade class; and

6. The number of students denied graduation from the twelfth grade class solely due to failure to pass the State graduation proficiency test, substitute competency tests, or portfolio appeals process based on the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:8.



N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-7.; 18A:7E-3.
N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1; 6A:8-5.2; 6A:20-1.4

Adopted: 17 November 2026