

STUDENTS

Series 5000

Policy #5012.1.1

Graduation Requirements

Graduation from our public schools implies (1) that students have satisfactorily completed the prescribed courses of study for the several grade levels in accordance with their respective abilities to achieve; (2) that they have satisfactorily passed any examinations and/or standards established by the faculty and approved by the EASTCONN Board of Directors; (3) that they have fulfilled the legally mandated number and distribution of credits; and (4) that they have successfully completed their IEP as determined by the Planning and Placement Team. The adopted school calendar shall indicate a graduation date which is no earlier than the 180th day.

EASTCONN conforms with state regulations regarding credits for graduation from high school. For classes graduating in 2023 and thereafter, graduation requirements will be as follows:

	Graduation Requirements (25 credits)
<p style="text-align: center;">Humanities</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 English - 3 Social Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0.5 Civics - 1 Fine Arts - 1 Humanities Electives 	9 Credits
<p style="text-align: center;">Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -4 Mathematics -3 Laboratory Sciences -2 STEM Electives 	9 Credits
<p style="text-align: center;">Fitness, Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Physical Education and Wellness - 1 Health and Safety Education 	2 Credits
World Languages	2 Credits
Mastery Based Examination	1 Credit
Open Electives	2 Credits

In order to graduate and be granted a diploma students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) credits, twenty-three and one half (23.5) of which MUST consist of the following required courses/credits: (A) Nine credits in the Humanities, including not fewer than (i) four credits in English; (ii) three credits in Social Studies, including at least one credit in American History and at least one-half credit in Civics and American Government; (iii) one credit in Fine Arts; and (iv) one credit in a Humanities elective; (B) nine credits in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, including not fewer than (i) four credits in Mathematics; (ii) three credits in Laboratory Sciences; and (iii) two credits in a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics elective; (C) one credit in Physical Education and Wellness; (D) one credit in Health and Safety Education; (E) two credits in World Languages; and (F) one credit in Mastery-Based Examination. The remaining two credits may consist of elective courses.

EASTCONN will provide adequate student support and remedial services for students. Such student support and remedial services shall provide alternate means for a student to complete any of the high school graduation requirements, previously listed, if such student is unable to satisfactorily complete any of the required courses or exams. Such student support and remedial services shall include but not be limited to, (1) allowing students to retake courses in summer school or through an on-line course; (2) allowing students to enroll in a class offered at a constituent unit of the state system of higher education; (3) allowing students who received a failing score, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, on an end of the school year exam to take an alternate form of the exam; and (4) allowing those students whose individualized education plans state that such students are eligible for an alternate assessment to demonstrate competency on any of the five core courses through success on such alternate assessment.

Credits

A credit defined as the equivalent of one forty minute class period for each day of a school year. One-half credit is given for courses that complete work in one semester. If physical education is not taken because of medical excuse, another subject may be substituted.

Only courses taken in grades nine through twelve, inclusive, and that are in accordance with the statewide subject matter content standards, adopted by the State Board of Education, shall satisfy this graduation requirement except that a student may be granted credit:

- a) for the successful completion of coursework at an institution accredited by the Department of Higher Education or regionally accredited college or university;
- b) for the successful completion of a summer course or summer courses comparable (as determined by the Principal) to the subject(s) in which the student was deficient.
- c) for a study abroad course work that is deemed equivalent to the course work which the student would have completed had they not traveled abroad;

- d) for the successful completion of on-line course work, provided that: (1) the workload required by the on-line course is equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom setting; (2) the content is rigorous and aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where appropriate; (3) the course engages students and has interactive components, which may include, but are not limited to, required interactions between students and their teachers, participation in online demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs; (4) the program of instruction for such on-line coursework is planned, ongoing and systematic; and (5) the courses are (i) taught by teachers who are certified in the state or another state and have received training on teaching in an on-line environment, or (ii) offered by institutions of higher education that are accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited;
- e) upon achievement of a passing grade on a subject area proficiency examination identified and approved by the Commissioner of Education;
- f) for having satisfactorily completed community service, provided that such community service: is supervised by a certified school administrator or teacher; consists of no fewer than fifty hours of actual service that may be performed at times when school is not regularly in session, and no fewer than ten hours of related classroom instruction; does not include partisan political activities; and, provided further, no more than one-half credit may be granted for such service; or
- g) for successful demonstration of mastery of the subject matter content achieved through educational experiences and opportunities that provide flexible and multiple pathways to learning, including cross-curricular graduation requirements, career and technical education, virtual learning, workbased learning, service learning, dual enrollment and early college, internships and student-designed independent studies, provided such demonstration of mastery is in accordance with such state-wide subject matter content standards.

These credits may be counted toward the required graduation total and satisfy course distribution requirements as determined by the EASTCONN Board of Directors.

Students may use course work successfully completed in middle school to satisfy the distribution requirements for World Language and Mathematics, and may not be required to re-take a course they have already completed. However, those waivers from a specific course requirement do not count as credits toward the total credits required for graduation.

Awards of High School Diplomas

Students who complete all graduation requirements shall receive a diploma at the June commencement.

Students who would otherwise be attending an EASTCONN school/program but are in the juvenile justice system and are being educated under the oversight of the administrative unit of the Department of Children and Families shall receive a diploma if they are seventeen years of age or older and have earned the minimum credits required for graduation.

Students who have achieved a high level of proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages, including American Sign Language and any other language spoken by a federally recognized Native American tribe, may have the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy affixed on their diplomas; and shall have included in their transcript a designation that they have received the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy.

Commencing with the graduating class of 2023 (beginning with the incoming class of 2019-2020) and for each graduating class thereafter, in order to graduate and be granted a diploma, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) credits, including not fewer than (1) nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education; (5) two credits in world languages and (6) a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment, (7) Services Learning (no fewer than 50 hours), (8) Electives.

The EASTCONN Board of Directors shall grant a student credit towards meeting high school graduation requirements for (1) completing a world-language course provided by a non-profit organization and (2) passing a subject area proficiency test identified and approved by the Commissioner of Education. Up to four credits for a private non-profit world language course shall be granted if the student achieves a passing grade on a test prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. In other subject areas, credit shall be granted, based upon successful passage of the subject area proficiency tests prescribed or identified and approved by the Commissioner of Education, regardless of the number of hours spent by the student in a public school classroom learning the subject matter.

Instruction

Graduation Requirements (Based on a Mastery-Based Learning)

To ensure that all students graduate from our schools with the knowledge, skills, and work habits they will need in adult life, EASTCONN Schools have adopted a mastery (proficiency) based system of teaching, learning, promotion, and graduation. All students will need to demonstrate achievement of all cross-curricular and content-area graduation standards before receiving a high school diploma. These new graduation requirements will ensure that each student provides evidence that they have achieved expected learning standards, and acquired the knowledge, skills, and work habits that will prepare them for postsecondary education and modern careers.

EASTCONN's standards-based diploma system also requires our schools and educators to provide the interventions, support systems, and personalized-learning pathways that each student needs to master the expected standards and graduate college, career and life ready.

Graduation from EASTCONN schools implies (1) that students have satisfactorily completed the prescribed courses of study for the several grade levels in accordance with their respective abilities to achieve, (2) that they have satisfactorily passed any examinations and satisfactorily demonstrated the district's performance standards, assessed in part by the statewide mastery examinations, established by the faculty and approved by the Board of Education, and (3) that they have fulfilled the legally mandated number and distribution of credits.

Commencing with the graduating class of 2023 (beginning with the incoming class of 2019-2020) and for each graduating class thereafter, in order to graduate and be granted a diploma, students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of twenty-five (25) credits, including not fewer than (1) nine credits in the humanities, including civics and the arts; (2) nine credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; (3) one credit in physical education and wellness; (4) one credit in health and safety education; (5) one credit in world languages and (6) a one credit mastery-based diploma assessment.

The Principal shall submit to the EASTCONN Board of Directors through the Executive Director his/her detailed requirements and standards to agree with the goals of our schools as adopted by the EASTCONN Board of Directors. It is expected that the faculty will apply measures of achievement to provide evidence that each student has progressed far enough toward school goals to warrant graduation.

Definitions

Competency-Based Learning refers to approaches used in which students advance upon demonstrated mastery. (Multiple terms have been used when discussing this approach, including *proficiency-based*, *mastery-based*, *standards-based*, *outcomes-based* and *performance-based learning*. *Mastery-based learning* is the term used in Connecticut) Students move ahead when they have demonstrated mastery of content, not when they have reached a certain birthday or completed the required hours in a classroom.

A **Mastery-Based Learning Environment** consists of state standards and Agency level-competencies that put the focus on students demonstrating what they know and are able to do through the compilation of a body of evidence. The competencies that all students are expected to meet are clearly articulated. The identified competencies must be drawn from, and align with, the various state-wide subject matter content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. The structure of the learning environment is based on locally-developed graduation competencies; content area graduation competencies; and unit-based student learning objectives. (**Alternate:** Mastery learning, an instructional strategy and educational philosophy, is a set of group-based, individualized, teaching and learning strategies based on the premise that students will achieve a high level of understanding in a given domain if they are given enough time.)

Mastery-Based Graduation Standards are when students earn credits toward graduation by demonstrating mastery of required knowledge and skills rather than by completing courses. Mastery is demonstrated within a traditional classroom setting or in other learning opportunities that are aligned with graduation standards.

Locally-Developed Graduation Competencies are standards created by the local district through research-based curricular concepts that focus instruction on the most foundational, enduring and leveraged concepts and skills within district-determined competencies.

Content Area Graduation Competencies are standards that focus instruction on the most foundational, enduring and leveraged concepts and skills within each content area. Attaining these competencies requires multiple years of learning as students engage with and deepen their capacity through age-appropriate goals. Students are expected to demonstrate achievement for each graduation competency in each required content area over time. (The SDE recommends five to eight graduation competencies in each content area.)

Unit-Based Student Learning Objectives derive from competencies. They are daily classroom learning expectations grouped by units of study or grade levels. They are defined statements of what a student needs to know or be able to do and facilitate the progression toward a complex critical knowledge base or skill.

A **Personalized Learning System** recognizes that students engage in different ways and in different places. Students benefit from individually paced, targeted learning task that start from where the student is, formatively assessing existing skills and knowledge, and addresses the student's needs and interests.

Blended Learning involves instruction that combines traditional face-to-face teaching with online and media-delivered instruction.

Carnegie Unit is a measure of the amount of time a student has studied a subject in class.

Dual enrollment is when students are concurrently earning college credits while enrolled in high school.

The EASTCONN Board of Directors has approved the following schedule of minimum requirements for graduation, which encompasses minimum graduation requirements specified by the state and described in relevant laws, rules, and regulations. The EASTCONN Board of Directors is aware that current law and regulations are subject to change.

1. All students will demonstrate that they have achieved mastery in the content-area graduation standards based on Connecticut state requirements: (or through a demonstration of mastery based on competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education, aligned with state content standards.)

- a. English Language Arts
- b. Mathematics
- c. Social Studies
- d. Science and Technology
- e. Health Education and Physical Education
- f. Visual and Performing Arts
- g. World Languages

EASTCONN’s administration, faculty, and staff will apply the set of standards and performance indicators that are aligned with the content-area standards of the State of Connecticut.

2. All students must satisfy graduation requirements utilizing personalized pathways through active engagement in mastery-based educational experiences in all the above content areas.

EASTCONN High School graduates will demonstrate that they have achieved mastery in the **cross-curricular standards of Scholarship knows as EASTCONN’s Portrait of a Graduate.**

Intrapersonal:

Self-directed

Personally responsible and resilient

Interpersonal:

Collaborative

Effective Communication

Global:

Informed Critical Thinker

Effective Problem-Solver

Creative Innovator

All students will complete a capstone project through which students will demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and work habits by conducting in-depth research, using technological applications, producing a high-quality exhibition of learning and presenting their research and findings to a review panel.



(cf. 5121 - Examination/Grading/Rating)
(cf. 6111 - School Calendar)
(cf. 6146.2 - Mastery Examinations)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-161 Establishment of graduation date.
10-221a High school graduation requirements.
P.A. 22-42 An Act Concerning the Department of Children and Families'
Recommendations for Revisions to the Statutes Concerning Children

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