



## Information for Rhode Island Parents and Families

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the 2011 Secondary Regulations

Beginning with the class of 2014, **all** students must complete the following, at a minimum, to earn a high school diploma:

- 20 courses
  - 4 English Language Arts, 4 math, 3 science, 3 social studies, and PE/Health and other locally required or elective courses
- 2 diploma assessments (exhibition, portfolio and/or comprehensive course assessment)
- State assessment (NECAP) – get a score of 2 (partially proficient) in both reading and mathematics
- Meet additional requirements of districts and the local school

To see the full set of the 2011 regulations go to [www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov).

**1. What happens if current juniors or seniors (classes of 2012 and 2013) do not meet the required achievement level (score of 2) on the reading and mathematics state assessments?**

*Students in the classes of 2012 and 2013 and their families should refer to the student handbook and the school website for details of what they need to do to show they are ready to earn a diploma.*

**2. What is the passing score on the state assessment for the classes of 2014 and beyond?**

*Beginning with the class of 2014, the minimal passing score is 2 (partially proficient) on the state reading and mathematics assessments.*

**3. What if a student, who is supposed to graduate in June of 2014, does not pass the NECAP in his or her junior year?**

*If a student does not score at least a 2 (partially proficient) on the reading and/or math NECAP tests, then the school will develop a Progress Plan with the family and student. If a student has received additional instruction and has followed their Progress Plan, but still does not show sufficient progress on the NECAP retake, they may take a different test to show they are ready to earn a diploma. Information on acceptable tests will be provided to schools and families prior to the 2012-13 school year.*

**4. If a student is a member of the graduating class of 2012 or 2013 but remains in school for a fifth year or beyond, should they be held to the 2014 requirements?**

*No. These students are expected to fulfill the requirements that were in place when the student arrived to the school.*

**5. Can a school have requirements that expect the student to do more than what the state requires?**

*Yes. The RI Secondary Regulations sets the minimum requirements.*

**6. If a student has a learning disability will he or she be eligible to earn a diploma?**

*All students who successfully complete the coursework, diploma assessments, and NECAP assessment requirements are eligible to earn a diploma. Schools have a legal responsibility to make sure that students with disabilities have the supports to learn and meet the requirements. Those supports, or accommodations, are developed during the process of writing the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).*

**7. Will English-language learners (ELLs) be able to earn a diploma?**

*ALL students who successfully complete the coursework, diploma assessments, and NECAP assessment requirements are eligible to earn a diploma. English language learners who have low levels of English proficiency, have been served by Rhode Island public schools for less than four years, and who have had **uninterrupted** formal schooling before entering Rhode Island public schools will be eligible to take a different test that will measure what they know. Information on acceptable tests will be provided to schools and families prior to the 2012-13 school year.*

**8. Will a student who is taking the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA) get a diploma?**

*If your student is taking the RI Alternative Assessment, they are **not** eligible for a diploma. However, they must be tested because State and Federal Law requires that all students are tested. The state assessment system is meant to ensure that each student is instructed and supported toward passing the NECAP or RIAA.*

**9. The new Secondary Regulations for the class of 2014 and beyond have a section on certificates. What is a certificate and who is eligible for certificates?**

*Certificates are documents awarded to students that recognize that a student has achieved workplace skills or mastered industry related content. Any student can earn certificates while enrolled in high school. A certificate is **NOT** a high school diploma.*

*Examples of certificates are general work readiness certificates and career specific certificates or credentials earned as a result of successful completion of a career and technical program of study.*

**10. The new Secondary Regulations for the class of 2014 and beyond have a section on commendations. How can a student earn a Regents Commendation on their diploma?**

*To earn a Regents Commendation, your child must exceed the minimal requirements by scoring at least a 3 (proficient) on the NECAP and by meeting or exceeding other local and state requirements. See your school student handbook or website for details.*

**11. What are the supports that schools must provide for students?**

*There are several supports that every middle and high school must provide to help students earn a diploma. The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) provides students the opportunity to set goals and track their own progress toward achieving them. Schools will work with students in developing their ILP and guide them to take courses that will help them achieve their goals. In addition, if your child is not reading on grade level, your child must be provided with a Personal Literacy Plan (PLP) or other literacy supports. These supports will help the school monitor a student's progress and help them become a better reader. Students may be provided additional supports as necessary that are specific to their individual needs.*