



## **Graduation Pathways Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q1: What is the purpose of the Graduation Pathways?**

A: The purpose of Graduation Pathways is to ensure that every Hoosier student graduates from high school with:

- 1) A broad awareness of and engagement with individual career interests and associated career options;
- 2) A strong foundation of academic and technical skills; and
- 3) Demonstrable employability skills that lead directly to meaningful opportunities for postsecondary education, training, and gainful employment.

The pathways provide schools with flexibility while expanding options for students to pursue their educational and career interests and goals. Specifically, the pathways move from a one-size-fits-all approach where earning a diploma was dependent on passing graduation qualifying exams. Instead, Graduation Pathways will allow all students to select from multiple ways to graduate that align with their strengths and interests while furthering their career goals and skills. These Pathways encourage relevancy and student engagement while maximizing more individualized options to meet every student's unique goals and needs.

Because students will get to select from options that best align to their postsecondary goals, their high school experience will be more engaging to them personally. Additionally, the pathways give students something of value and meaning to help them succeed in the next step along their personal journey—whether it is continuing their education and training, enlisting in the military, or entering the workforce. Every student's unique pathway and postsecondary aspiration will be valued and respected within these new requirements.

### **Q2: What does a student need to do to graduate from high school?**

A: Beginning with the graduating class of 2023, Indiana high schools students must satisfy all three of the following Graduation Requirements:

1. Earn a High School Diploma;
2. Learn and Demonstrate Employability Skills;  
*AND*
3. Demonstrate Postsecondary-Ready Competencies.

### **Q3: What does that mean exactly?**

A: To graduate high school, a student must meet the statutorily defined diploma credit and curricular requirements. This includes the:

- General Diploma;
- Core 40 Diploma;
- Academic Honors Diploma; OR
- Technical Honors Diploma.



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To learn and demonstrate *employability skills*, a student must fulfill ONE of the following:

- Completion of a *project-based learning* experience
  - Examples include completion of a course capstone, completion of a research project, completion of the AP Capstone Assessment, or other school options that have been approved by the Indiana State Board of Education;

*OR*

- Completion of a *service-based learning* experience
  - Examples include participation in a meaningful volunteer or civic engagement experience, engagement in a school-based activity, such as a co-curricular or extracurricular activity or sport for at least one academic year, or other school options that have been approved by the Indiana State Board of Education;

*OR*

- Completion of a *work-based learning* experience
  - Examples include completion of a course capstone, completion of an internship, obtaining the Governor's Work Ethic Certificate, employment outside of the school day, or other school options that have been approved by the Indiana State Board of Education.

To demonstrate *postsecondary-ready competencies* a student must fulfill at least ONE of the following:

- Honors diploma: Fulfill all requirements of either the Academic or Technical Honors diploma;

*OR*

- ACT: Earn the college-ready benchmark scores;

*OR*

- SAT: Earn the college-ready benchmarks scores;

*OR*

- Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB): Earn at least a *minimum* Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score to qualify for placement into one of the branches of the US military;

*OR*

- State- and Industry-recognized Credential or Certification;

*OR*

- State-, Federal-, or Industry-recognized Apprenticeship;

*OR*

- Career-Technical Education Concentrator: Earn a C average or higher in at least *six* (6) high school credits in a career sequence;

*OR*

- AP/International Baccalaureate/Dual Credit/Cambridge International courses or College Level Examination Program (CLEP) Exams: Earn a C average or higher in at least *three* (3) courses;

*OR*

- Locally created pathway that earns the approval of the State Board of Education by meeting its framework.



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## **Q4: When do schools need to start implementing Graduation Pathways?**

A: The Graduation Pathways requirements will start with freshmen beginning high school in 2019-20. This is the graduating class of 2023.

Students graduating in 2019, 2020, 2021, or 2022 may satisfy graduation requirements by either passing the current graduation qualifying exams (ISTEP 10 or ECAs) or completing the Graduation Pathways. The option to satisfy graduation requirements through completion of the Graduation Pathways is dependent upon whether the student's school makes this opportunity available.

There is legislation pending in the Indiana General Assembly that would allow students graduating in 2018 to use the Graduation Pathways in lieu of current qualifying exams.

## **Q5: Can a student use the Graduation Pathways to satisfy the graduation requirements, even if graduating before 2023?**

A: Yes, students may opt-in to using a Graduation Pathway in lieu of the graduation qualifying examination (e.g., ISTEP 10). The State Board Of Education recommends schools work towards allowing students to opt-in.

## **Q6: Does earning a General Diploma still mean a student is an Indiana graduate?**

A: Yes. There is legislation pending in the Indiana General Assembly that would move Indiana to a one diploma system with four designations (General, Core 40, Academic Honors, and Technical Honors). The General Diploma will still be an option for Indiana students.

## **Q7: If a student is earning a General Diploma, does that student have to complete the Graduation Pathways?**

A: Yes.

## **Q8: If a student is earning a Certificate of Completion, does that student have to complete the Graduation Pathways?**

A: No.

## **Q9: If a student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), does that student have to complete the Graduation Pathways Requirement?**

A: Yes. If a student is earning a high school diploma (and not a Certificate of Completion), the student will need to fulfill the Graduation Pathway requirements. The student's IEP must include accommodations and resources to help meet these requirements. IEP goals and services must also support students to meet these requirements.



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## Q10: What is the status of the waiver for the diploma?

A: The legislature defines the waiver in statute. There is legislation pending in the Indiana General Assembly that would change the waiver. Any changes the legislature makes to the law will be reflected in future guidance documents.

## Q11: Where can Indiana's employability skills be accessed?

A: Indiana's employability skills were developed by the Department of Workforce Development and can be accessed [here](#).

## Q12: Do students need to complete all the Postsecondary-Ready Competency options to graduate?

A: No. A student only needs to complete one of the options listed. However, a student may engage in or complete multiple options, if desired.

## Q13: Does a school need to offer all Postsecondary-Ready Competency options?

A: No. However, schools are encouraged to offer multiple options to students to increase opportunities for students to demonstrate their postsecondary readiness.

## Q14: What are the current college-ready benchmarks for the SAT and the ACT?

A: The college-ready benchmarks are set by the ACT and College Board for the SAT.

For the 2017-18 school year, the college-ready benchmarks are:

- SAT: 480 in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (ERW) and 530 in Math
- ACT: 18 in English, 22 in Reading, 22 in Math, and 23 in Science

College Board and ACT may change the college-ready benchmarks based on national trend data.

## Q15: What does 'college-ready benchmarks' mean?

A: College Board and ACT determined college-ready benchmarks based on national trend data of students' performance in college-level courses. It is not related to the average performance of Indiana students on these assessments or admissions requirements.

The SAT benchmark scores represent a 75% likelihood of a student achieving at least a C grade in a first-semester, credit-bearing college course in a related subject (e.g., Algebra, Statistics, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, History, Literature, Social Science, or Writing).

The ACT benchmarks represent a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses, which include English Composition, Algebra, Social Science, Biology, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.



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## **Q16: If a student meets the college-ready benchmarks, is there guaranteed admission into a state four-year institution?**

A: No. For additional information, please reference admissions criteria for an individual institution.

## **Q17: Does a student need to earn the combined SAT ERW/Math score or the individual benchmarks for each section?**

A: If the student intends to use his/her SAT score to meet the postsecondary-ready competencies of Graduation Pathways, a student must earn the minimum ERW and Math scores on the SAT to satisfy this requirement. For ERW, the score must be a minimum of 480; for Math, the score must be minimum of 530.

## **Q18: Does the SAT or ACT allow for accommodations?**

A: Yes. Accommodations are worked out between the College Board or ACT and the individual student. Additional information about services for students with disabilities for the SAT can be found [here](#) and for the ACT [here](#).

## **Q19: What is an Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)?**

A: The ASVAB provides students with career information for various civilian and military occupations. ASVAB test scores are broken down by the individual sub-tests and composites of the sub-tests. One of the most critical aspects of these scores is the AFQT, which is used to determine if a student is qualified to join the military service. Each service determines the qualification AFQT score for enlisting.

The AFQT is comprised of a student's test results in Arithmetic Reasoning, Math Knowledge, and Verbal Composite. The Verbal Composite score is a combination of Word Knowledge and Paragraph Comprehension scores.

## **Q20: What are the AFQT scores on the ASVAB?**

A: Each branch of the military has its own qualifying AFQT score. For the 2017-18 school year, the scores are:

Army	31
Marines	31
Navy	35
Air Force	36
Coast Guard	45

These scores are subject to change by the military.



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## Q21: What are state- and industry-recognized credentials and certifications?

A: The State Board of Education defines industry-recognized credentials as those credentials developed or supported by business and industry to verify student mastery of technical skills and competencies in an occupational area that aligns with Indiana's economic sectors. It is approved by Indiana's Department of Workforce Development.

The list of state- and industry-recognized credentials and certifications can be found [here](#).

## Q22: What are state-, federal-, and industry-recognized apprenticeships?

A: Apprenticeships are defined as intensive work-based learning experiences that provide a combination of on-the-job training and formal classroom instruction. They are intended to support progressive skill acquisition and lead to postsecondary credentials and, in some cases, degrees.

The US Department of Labor has a list of federally recognized apprenticeships, which can be accessed [here](#).

Governor Holcomb recently announced his intention to create an Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship in his [Next Level](#) agenda. Once in place, this Office would establish state-recognized apprenticeships.

## Q23: What is a Career-Technical Education (CTE) concentrator?

A: A CTE Concentrator is a student who has earned at least six credits in CTE pathway courses in a state approved College and Career Pathway (Program of Study).

Indiana College and Career Pathways are defined as an aligned sequence of secondary and postsecondary courses. They are being developed with input from business and industry, secondary and postsecondary education, and the public. To view Indiana's Career Clusters and College & Career Pathways, please click [here](#).

## Q24: Are AP/International Baccalaureate (IB)/Dual Credit requirements fulfilled through course or credit completion?

A: A student must take three courses or classes to fulfill this postsecondary-ready option. This option is not based on credits.

## Q25: For the AP/IB/Dual Credit option, what is the difference between a course being in a core content area or as part of a defined curricular sequence?

A: If a student is taking AP/IB/Dual Credit courses as his/her Graduation Pathway, either:

- One of the three courses must be in a core content area (e.g., English, Math, Science, or Social Studies)

OR

- All three courses must be part of a defined curricular sequence. A defined curricular sequence of courses is based on the Indiana College and Career





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Pathways. To view Indiana's Career Clusters and College & Career Pathways, please click [here](#).

## **Q26: What are the parameters or criteria for the locally created pathway option?**

A: The State Board of Education is currently meeting with a number of stakeholder groups to gather input on a framework for the locally created pathway. Guidance is forthcoming.

## **Q27: What is the timeline for approving the locally created pathway option?**

A: The State Board of Education realizes the importance of the timeline for approval. This timeline will be discussed during input sessions for the locally created pathway. Guidance is forthcoming.

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