

Note: Effective June 30, 2016, the requirement that no secondary student be issued a diploma unless he or she has taken a college and career readiness assessment is repealed. However, school districts still shall require all students in grade 11 and all students in grade 12 who have not previously done so, to take one of the assessments described in 4 AAC 06.717. Students may seek waivers of the requirement under 4 AAC 06.721-.724.

The School Board shall provide for students to take college and career readiness assessments. The exams shall be administered in accordance with state law and regulations. The taking of an assessment is not a requirement for a diploma.

(cf. 5127 - Graduation Ceremonies and Activities)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6146.4 - Reciprocity on Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6146.5 - Differential Requirements for Individuals With Exceptional Needs)

(cf. 6162.5 - Standardized Testing)

The IEP team for a student with a significant cognitive disability may determine whether the student will take the assessment. The IEP team's determination should consider whether the assessment supports the transition plan set forth in the student's IEP.

Legal Reference:

ALASKA STATUTES

14.03.075 College and career readiness assessment

ALASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

4 AAC 06.710 Statewide student assessment system

4 AAC 06.717 College and career readiness assessment

4 AAC 06.718 College and career readiness assessment after student receives a certificate of achievement

4 AAC 06.765 Test Security; Consequences of Breach

4 AAC 06.721 College and career readiness assessment waivers

4 AAC 06.775 Statewide assessment program for students with disabilities

4 AAC 06.790 Definitions

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Note: While taking a college and career readiness assessment is no longer a condition to a student receiving a secondary school diploma, school district's shall require all students in grade 11 and all students in grade 12 who have not previously done so, to take one of the assessments described in 4 AAC 06.717. Regulations governing waivers of this requirement are found at 4 AAC 06.721-.724.

Students are required to take a college and career readiness assessment, unless a waiver is approved. "Taking" this assessment means the student has received a valid score as reported by the assessment vendor. A college and career readiness assessment means the SAT, ACT or certain sections of the WorkKeys assessment. If a student takes the WorkKeys assessment, he or she must take the following sections: applied mathematics; reading for information; and locating information.

The Department of Education and Early Development will provide for the college and career readiness assessment to be administered one time per year at no charge to students. A student may take the assessments additional times at the student's expense.

A waiver may be granted in two instances: 1) when a student has arrived late into the Alaska public school system; or 2) in rare and unusual circumstances as defined by the Department of Education and Early Development.

Procedures for Requesting A Waiver

The district shall maintain in the district office and the office of its high schools a Department approved form for requesting a waiver of the college and career readiness assessment. A student must complete this form and include all required documentation. The waiver request will be considered by the Superintendent or designee who shall make a recommendation to the School Board for approval or denial of the waiver. The recommendation shall be based solely on whether the criteria for granting a waiver under state law has been met for the individual student. The School Board may not grant a waiver unless the student has demonstrated that all other state and district requirements for graduation will be met.

A. Waiver for Late Arrival Into the School System

A student arrives late into the state public school system if the student arrives in Alaska after the completion of all scheduled college and career readiness assessments in the student's year of intended graduation. A student who resides in the state but attends a private school or is home schooled and then transfers to the district after the completion of all scheduled administrations in the student's year of intended graduation may also be eligible for a waiver.

A student's request for a waiver must be submitted on the approved form, must demonstrate that the student has met all other requirements for graduation, and must include the following:

1. Documentation from the school in which the student is currently enrolled which identifies the student's initial enrollment date;
2. Documentation from the out-of-state school district, Alaska private school or home school program from which the student transferred, which includes both the enrollment date and exit date; and
3. Documentation that verifies the date of the student's physical presence in Alaska prior to enrollment in any of the schools in the state. Verification may include: records or receipts of airlines, the Alaska Marine Highway System, or other carriers; hotel receipts; or affidavits or certifications by persons acquainted with or related to the applicant who have personal knowledge of the applicant's physical presence in Alaska.

B. *Waiver for Rare and Unusual Circumstances*

A waiver may be granted for a rare and unusual circumstance only if the circumstance is beyond the control of the student. Additionally, the timing of the circumstance must be such that no other recourse or remedy exists to address the situation before the student's expected graduation date.

A waiver may be granted only for the following reasons:

1. The death of the student's parent or legal guardian occurring within the last semester of the student's year of intended graduation.
2. A medical condition that is a serious and sudden illness or physical injury that prevents the student from taking the college and career readiness assessment and occurs in the last semester of the student's year of intended graduation. The waiver request must be supported by an affidavit or certification from the student's treating licensed medical provider that the diagnosed condition prevented the student from taking the assessment and was beyond the control of the student. The condition cannot be: 1) pregnancy or childbirth, unless the affidavit or certification verifies that an emergency occurred; 2) treatable depression, stress, or stress-related conditions, unless the affidavit or certification verifies that a qualifying emergency occurred; or 3) a condition caused by illegal alcohol or substance abuse.
4. A disability arising in the student's high school career that arises too late to apply for a meaningful accommodation from the testing vendor. A waiver may be granted only if consistent with the student's IEP team recommendations and the student's principal and the district's superintendent support the waiver request.
5. A significant and uncorrectable system error, including one or more of the following:
 - a. Completed exams are lost in transit between the school district and the testing vendor.
 - b. The student's school or district failed to administer the assessment on a scheduled administration date.
 - c. The student was unable to take an assessment or received an invalid score because of a technology failure.
 - d. The student received an invalid score because the assessment was improperly administered or test security requirements were violated.

School Board Action Approving or Denying A Waiver

The School Board's decision approving or denying the request for a waiver will be in writing and delivered to the student by registered mail. The reasons for approving or denying the waiver will be stated in the written decision. The School Board may deliver courtesy copies of the decision to the student or the student's parents/legal guardians by other methods. The School Board will also provide a copy of the decision to the Department. The School Board's written decision will notify the student that denial of the waiver may be appealed to the Department of Education and Early Development.

Note: The following language can be used by the School Board in its written notice to comply with the requirement that the student be notified of the right to appeal in the event the School Board denies a waiver. 4 AAC 06.721 and 06.724. Any form of notification should include notice that the student only has thirty (30) days to appeal: “This decision may be appealed by the student, or student’s parent or legal guardian, to the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Enclosed is the required form that must be used for an appeal. This appeal form must be postmarked no later than thirty (30) days from your receipt of this decision. State law requires that an appeal request state the grounds for the appeal, including a brief summary of the nature of the original waiver request and an explanation of how the School Board erred in denying the waiver. Also enclosed is a copy of 4 AAC 06.724 which further explains the appeal procedures.”

Within twenty (20) days of an appeal being filed, the School Board shall forward to the Department the entire record of the student’s waiver request, including the following documents:

1. The student’s waiver application and any supporting documents included in support of the waiver request;
2. A copy of the School Board’s graduation requirements; and
3. A copy of the student’s most current official transcript.

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