

Overview

Graduation and Promotion

This section of the Education Toolkit outlines the regulations and policies governing graduation and promotion requirements for District of Columbia Public Schools (“DCPS”) and Prince Georges County Public Schools (“PGCPS”). Youth in foster care often attend many schools on their path to graduation and, partially as a result, have lower graduation rates. Monitoring credits earned and requirements met each year is essential to ensure on-time graduation.

This section provides information about the DC and Maryland regulations that govern graduation and promotion, as well as the local school policies in DC and PGCPS. It also provides practical worksheets outlining the academic requirements of each jurisdiction in order to keep track of credits as they are earned.

DC Regulations & Policies

DC requires students to complete twenty-four (24) Carnegie Units in order to graduate with a DCPS diploma, one of the highest credit requirements in the country. However, unlike Maryland, DC does not require that students pass any state-level academic exams or assessments. In order to be promoted to 10th grade students must successfully complete both Algebra and English 1. One hundred (100) hours of community service are also required for graduation.

Under DC regulations, although students can be retained in any grade, they can only be retained once while enrolled in DCPS without a comprehensive review and approval by the regional superintendent. Parents should be notified if their student is at risk for retention at least 90 calendar days before the end of the school year.

Students who have graduated or withdrawn from school after 1999 can request a copy of their DCPS high school diploma from their high school registrar. Students who graduated before 1999 or attended a high school that is now closed can submit a request through the DCPS records request portal at [https://dcps.mycusthelp.com/webapp/rs/\(S\(1ntny5ehaadlh2mmxbtogn2\)\)/supporthome.aspx](https://dcps.mycusthelp.com/webapp/rs/(S(1ntny5ehaadlh2mmxbtogn2))/supporthome.aspx). Students who attended a Public Charter School should contact the DC Charter School Board at (202) 328-2660.

DCPS’s graduation, truancy, attendance, and promotion policies were updated in August 2018. The links to the updated regulations and policies are available below.

Maryland Regulations & PGCPS Policies

PGCPS requires that students complete twenty-one (21) credits in order to graduate, as well as earn passing scores on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Maryland High School Assessments (HSAs). At least four (4) credits must be earned after the completion of Grade 11. A combined seventy-five (75) infused and independent service-learning hours are required for graduation. Hours are pro-rated for students who transfer in to PGCPS.

In PG County, retention in elementary school is ultimately determined by the school principal, and in middle school, by the associate superintendent. An appeals process is made available to parents who disagree with a retention decision and provide written notification of the intent to appeal. Promotion to middle and high school is based on acquisition of transition skills outlined in Administrative Procedure 5123.2. Middle school students who fail two core courses must complete summer school coursework successfully in order to be promoted.

Current students, or those who have graduated or last attended PGCPSS within the last three years should contact their last school of attendance to order their student records; students may be able to obtain informal copies of records and informal transcripts free of charge. Students who have withdrawn at any time during the current school year should similarly contact the last school attended for copies of records. Everyone else needs to request official copies of student records/information online at: <https://pgcpsmd.scribborder.com/application>.

Special Education/English Language Learners

In DC, special education students are eligible for promotion as determined in accordance with the agreement of the Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) team. For English Language Learners, any decision on retention must be made in conjunction with the bilingual/English as a Second Language (“ESL”) teacher.

A special education student in the District who does not earn a diploma may earn a Certificate of IEP completion. The decision that a student will pursue a Certificate rather than a high school diploma must be made by the multi-disciplinary IEP team no earlier than the student’s 9th grade year.

In PG County, consideration of all promotion/retention/graduation options are determined by the IEP team with the agreement of the parent based upon the student’s IEP. A special education student who does not earn a diploma can earn a Maryland Certificate of Completion. If a Certificate is received before age 21 a student is still entitled to a free appropriate education (“FAPE”) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) (see 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400-1409).

English Language Learners should not be retained solely on the basis of their lack of proficiency in English. However, all ESL students must meet the same credit, service learning, and functional test requirements for graduation as non-ESL students unless they receive a waiver.

Legal & Policy Resources

- DC
 - [D.C. Mun. Regs. 5-A, §§ 2201-2299 \(DC Graduation Policies\)](#)
 - [D.C. Mun. Regs. 5-E §§ 21, 22, 2103, 2200, and 2204 \(Attendance, Truancy, Grades, Promotion, Reporting, and Graduation Policies\)](#)
 - [DCPS Pre-K to Graduation Policies \(August 2018\)](#)
- MD
 - [Md. Code Regs. 13A.03.02 \(Graduation Requirements for High Schools in Maryland\)](#)

➤ PGCPS

- [Administrative Procedure 6150 \(Educational Requirements and Options\)](#)
- [Administrative Procedure 6151 \(Student Service-Learning Graduation Requirements\)](#)
- [Administrative Procedure 5123.2 \(Promotion/Retention/Acceleration\)](#)

Graduation Requirements Worksheet

District of Columbia Public Schools

Subject	Required Credits	Earned Credits	Still Needs	In Progress	Best Case Needs
English	4				
Science	1				
Lab Science	2				
Biology	1				
Math (upper level)	1				
Algebra	1				
Algebra 2	1				
Geometry	1				
DC History	.5				
U.S. Government	.5				
U.S. History	1				
World History 1	1				
World History 2	1				
World Languages	2				
Music	.5				
Arts	.5				
Phys Ed. / Health	1.5				
Electives	1.5				
Career/College	2				
TOTAL	24				

Graduation Requirements Worksheet

Prince George's County

(Effective for entering freshmen in Fall 2014 – Fall 2016)

Subject	Required Credits	Earned Credits	Still Needs	In Progress	Best Case
English	4				
Lab Science	2				
Biology	1				
Math	1				
Algebra	1				
Algebra 2	1				
Geometry	1				
LSN Gov't	1				
US History	1				
World History	1				
Health	.5				
Fine Art	1				
Phys Ed.	.5				
Tech Ed.	1				
Completer Sequence	2-9*				
Electives	0-2*				
Total	21				

*2 language credits and 2 elective credits OR 2 advanced technology credits and 2 elective credits OR 4-9 credits of MSDE approved career and technology program.

Assessment Requirements

To earn a Maryland High School Diploma students must achieve a passing score in Algebra, Biology, English and Government courses.

School Year 2014-2015 - Grade 9

- PARCC English 9
- PARCC Algebra 1 HSA Biology
- HSA Government

School Year 2015-2016 - Grade 10

- PARCC Algebra 1 or PARCC Geometry or PARCC Algebra 2 PARCC English 10
- HSA Biology HSA Government

School Year 2016-2017 - Grade 11

- PARCC Algebra 1 or PARCC Geometry or PARCC Algebra 2 PARCC English 11*
- HSA Biology HSA Government

*College and Career Ready Determination

School Year 2017-2018 - Grade 12

- PARCC Algebra 1 or PARCC Geometry or PARCC Algebra 2 HSA Biology
- HSA Government
- 17-18 increases to 733 combined score for Algebra 1 and English 10 HSAs
- Transition courses if a student is not college and career ready

Must meet individual scores or combined score requirement of 794/1450			
Subject:	Date Passed:	Score: HSA/PARCC	Method:
Algebra 1		/412/725	
English 10		/396/725	
Biology		/400	
Government		/394	

Students who fail the assessments twice can satisfy the requirements via a Bridge Academic Validation Plan if they are on track to graduate and participate in intervention activities. Bridge plans are project modules that are completed on the topic. The number of modules correlates to the score achieved.

Accommodations:

HSA – Students with disabilities are entitled to all accommodations in the student’s IEP

PARCC – Allows more accommodations for all students, but does not permit as many accommodations as the HSA and are more stringent to obtain.

Graduation Requirement Worksheet

Prince George's County

Subject	Required Credits	Earned Credits	Still Needs	In Progress	Best Case Needs
English	4				
Lab Science	2				
Biology	1				
Math	1				
Algebra	1				
Geometry	1				
LSN Gov't	1				
US History	1				
World History 1	1				
Health	.5				
Fine Art	1				
Phys Ed	.5				
Completer Sequence	2-9 (2 language; 4				
Electives	0-3				
Tech Ed.	1				
Total	21				

High School Assessment (HSA) Requirements

Student entered 9 th grade in:			
Subject:	Date Passed:	Score:	Method:
Algebra/Data Analysis		/412	
English 10		/396	
Biology		/400	
Government		/394	

Students entering 9th grade after 2005:

- MUST pass Algebra/Data Analysis, English 10 and Biology; OR
- Obtain an overall combined score of 1208 or 1602; OR
- Complete Bridge Plan for Academic Validation; OR
- Score high enough on AP or IB exam in equivalent subject tests

Students entering 9th grade from 2009-2012:

- Do NOT need to pass Government HSA but can use it to achieve combined score
 - o Can achieve 1602 for English, Algebra, Biology and Gov't; OR
 - o Can achieve 1208 for English, Algebra and Biology

Students entering 9th grade after 2013:

- MUST either pass the government HSA; OR
- Include the gov't HSA score to meet combined 1602

Requirements for Participation in the Bridge Plan

- Have passed or be enrolled in the HAS-related course; AND
- Taken the specific HSA twice without passing or earning a score that would satisfy the combined-score option; AND
- Be firmly on path to completing graduation requirements; AND
- Have participated in approved assistance or remediation program; AND
- Have met the school's attendance requirements

Graduation Requirements

Tips on Fulfilling your Requirements:

- *Be informed and responsible when selecting your courses. Make sure you take the required classes as early as possible and check your Individual Graduation Portfolio (IGP) to ensure you are on track to reach graduation. For more information, ask your counselor or check DCPS: DCPS.bridges.com*
- *Start working on your community service hours right away! Talk to your counselor about finding a site as soon as possible; do not put these hours off until your senior year.*
- *Talk to your counselor, teachers and other adult resources. They are there to help and can address your questions and concerns about staying on track for graduation.*
- *Check your Letter of Understanding (LOU) each year to track your progress toward graduation.*

Subject Area	Credit requirement
English I-IV	4
Math (including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and Upper Level Math)	4
Science (including Biology, two lab sciences and one additional science)	4
Social Studies (including World History I & II, DC History, US Gov. and US History)	4
World Language (Two courses in the same language)	2
Art	0.5
Music	0.5
Health and Physical Education	1.5
Electives	3.5
Total Required	24
Minimum Community Service Hours	100

At least 2.0 credits of the 24.0 required credits must be CLCP (College Level Career Prep, such as AP, IB, CTE and college -level courses).

**Keep in mind that this is the bare minimum. Some school programs, colleges and employers may have additional requirements. **



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REQUIREMENTS FOR NINTH GRADE ENTRY IN SY 2009-2010 OR LATER

	Banneker IB II	Banneker CP II	Columbia Heights	DCPS II 24 Credits	Eastern IB	Ellington	McKinley II	McKinley Distinguished	Phelps ACE	Schools without Walls	Stay II 24 credits	National External Diploma Program
Subject Area												
English	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0
Algebra	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
Geometry	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Upper Level Math	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Lab Science*	3	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
Biology	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Science	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
World History	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
U.S. History	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
D.C. History	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
U.S. Government	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
World Language	4	3	2	2	4	2	3	3	2	2	2	0
Music	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
Art	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
Fine Arts	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health & Physical Education	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	0
Career & Technical Education	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	4	6	0	0	0
Community Lab	1.5	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theory of Knowledge	1.5	0	0	0	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capstone	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	Y**	0	0	0	0
Internship	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	Y**	0	0.5	0	0
Latin	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Project	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Other	1.5	1	4	3.5	0	3.5	1.5	1.5	0	3.5	5	5
Total Credits Required	28.5	26	28	24	28	24	27	28	26.5	25.5	24	5
<i>College Level/Career Preparatory</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	0

*Students who began High School in 2007-08 or 2008-09 require any three lab sciences.

** Students at McKinley Tech must complete Internships and/or capstone projects within their CTE major requirements.

All Ellington students must additionally meet the requirements of their Arts major, not identified in this chart.

Graduation, Promotion, and Records Requests

Resources and Links

◆ DCPS High School Academic Standards

- <https://dcps.dc.gov/node/1350446>
- This website offers DCPS's published details regarding high school academic standards, grading policies, requirements for selective high school admissions, and links to DCPS graduation requirements and other relevant documentation. These policies were updated in August 2018 and effective for the 2018-2019 school year.

◆ DCPS Inactive Student Records Center

- [https://dcps.mycusthelp.com/webapp/_rs/\(S\(po10zbofupwdpt3y5heewlfu\)\)/supporthome.aspx](https://dcps.mycusthelp.com/webapp/_rs/(S(po10zbofupwdpt3y5heewlfu))/supporthome.aspx)
- This is DCPS's portal for students to access records from a DCPS school that has been closed. This website also offers links to Frequently Asked Questions regarding DCPS records requests.

◆ DCPS Community Service Website

- <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/community-service>
- This website offers details regarding DCPS's community service graduation requirements, including links to DCPS's approved Community Service Hours Verification Form and published guides to community service.

◆ PGCPS Records Request Portal

- <http://www1.pgcps.org/Student-Records-and-Transfers/cards/How-to-Request-a-Student-Record/>
- This website links to the PGCPS Student Records Department. Please select "Request Student Records Online," and you will be redirected to the website through which requests for formal student records should be made.

◆ PGCPS Administrative Procedure 5123.2, General Procedures Pertaining to Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration of Students

- <https://www1.pgcps.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=161557>
- This administrative procedure pertains to promotion and retention of students within Prince George's County School System. Promotion and retention shall be based upon the degree of success the individual student has achieved in completing the educational program designated to meet his/her needs.

◆ PGCPS Administrative Procedure 5121.3, Grading and Reporting for High Schools, Grade 9-12

- <https://www1.pgcps.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=161555>
- This administrative procedure provides guidance to administrators regarding the grading and reporting systems used in all high school and centers within PGCPS.

◆ PGCPS Administrative Procedure 5129, Student Transcript Request

- <https://www1.pgcps.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=161571>
- This administrative procedure provides procedures for completion, collection, and dissemination of student transcript requests submitted by students and parents/guardians.