ALABAMA SEAL OF BILITERACY

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On April 1, 2022, the Alabama Legislature passed, and Governor Kay Ivey signed Act #2022-200, which established the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy and recognizes graduates who have demonstrated an indicated level of proficiency in English and at least one other world language, including American Sign Language, by high school graduation. This high school diploma designation also provides employers and universities with a method of identifying bilingual candidates, students with 21st Century skills, and those who prioritized the study of other languages and cultures. Moreover, the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy emphasizes the importance of both bilingualism, which facilitates improved communication and boosts the local economy and cultural understanding.

The *Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Overview and Guidelines for Public Schools* describes student eligibility criteria, pathways for which students demonstrate proficiency, methods for earning and awarding the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, and best practices to ensure equitable access for all students to pursue this additional recognition.

More information can be found on the Alabama Achieves Graduation Requirements page..

CIVICS EXAMINATION

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In 2017, the Alabama Legislature passed, and Governor Kay Ivey signed Act #2017-173 mandating that Alabama students complete the Alabama Civics Exam. The Alabama Civics Exam questions represent the content of those questions utilized by officers of the United States Citizens and Immigration Service as part of the application process for citizenship.

Earning a passing score on this exam is required for graduation, unless a waiver is granted by school administration. A student may take the Alabama Civics Exam multiple times to receive a passing score. There are two cases in which the requirement to pass the Alabama Civics Test may be waived by a school administrator:

- A student who has successfully passed the United States Government course but has not passed the Civics Exam after two attempts.
- A special education student who is not “learning at a level appropriate for his or her grade level.”

A school administrator does not need to seek Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) permission prior to issuing a waiver for the Alabama Civics Exam.

REPORTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE: Documentation of this passage must be entered into PowerSchool by a selected school representative, such as an administrator or counselor. A guide to entering Civics Test scores can be found on the ALSDE Schoology website.

EXAM ACCESS: Exam information and resources are included in the "Course Content" and "Alabama Social Studies" groups within Schoology. The Alabama Civics Exam folder contains the following:

- Schoology assessment version of the test.
- Directions for copying the Schoology version into district or school Schoology courses.
- Microsoft Word version of the test, translated in Spanish, Korean, and Arabic.

More information can be found on the Alabama Achieves Graduation Requirements page.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

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Effective for students of the graduating Class of 2026 who entered Grade 9 for the first time during the 2022-2023 school year, the *Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway* shall be issued to students who earn the required credits and earn one or more of the following college and career readiness indicators:

- Earning a benchmark score in any subject area on the ACT® college entrance exam.
- Earning a qualifying score of three or higher on an Advanced Placement® exam.
- Earning a qualifying score of four or higher on an International Baccalaureate® exam.
- Earning college credit while in high school.
- Earning a silver or gold level on the ACT® WorkKeys® Exam.
- Completing an in-school youth apprenticeship program.
- Earning a career technical industry credential listed on the compendium of valuable credentials of the Alabama Committee on Credential Quality and Transparency (ACCQT).
- Being accepted into the military before graduation.
- Attaining Career and Technical Education (CTE) completer status.
- Completing an ALSDE-approved computer science course.
- Any additional College and Career Readiness (CCR) indicator approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.

Except for students who are pursuing the *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Essentials Pathway* or the *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway*, no student shall receive the *Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway* without earning one or more of the college and career readiness indicators. Any student not receiving the *Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway*, who later becomes in compliance, may only receive the *Alabama High School Diploma: General Education Pathway* if the remedy occurs within the two years of their initial failure to graduate.

More information can be found on the Alabama Achieves Graduation Requirements page.

EARLY COLLEGE INITIATIVES

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COMBINED ADVANCED PLACEMENT/DUAL CREDIT COURSES

This information provides official guidance to local education agencies (LEAs) for students completing Dual Credit courses through ALSDE/College Board-approved Advanced Placement courses. Allowing students to complete an ALSDE/College Board-approved Advanced Placement course, participate in the corresponding Advanced Placement Exam, and earn college credit through the Dual Credit course, helps eliminate students' need to choose between both academically, rewarding opportunities.

Alabama Community College System (ACCS) institutions may award Dual Credit for students enrolled in ALSDE/College Board-approved Advanced Placement courses when the combined course curriculum covers the objectives for the respective Dual Credit course.

Only Advanced Placement courses approved annually through the AP Course Audit process are allowed.

When a student is registered for a combined Advanced Placement/Dual Credit course, the student's schedule and secondary transcript should reflect the Advanced Placement Course Name and Dual Credit Course name using the following procedure:

> Using the Advanced Placement Course number, the school administrator must locally edit the course number and course details to reflect the Advanced Placement Course Name combined with the Dual Credit Course Name.

Ex.	01005E1000	AP English Language & Comp – Dual ENG 101
	01006E1000	AP English Literature & Comp – Dual ENG 102
	03056E1000	AP Biology – Dual BIO 103
	02124E1000	AP Calculus AB – Dual MTH 125
	04157E1000	AP US Government/Pol – Dual POL 211

It is the responsibility of each LEA to confirm and enter that a student has obtained "College Credit Attainment" as a College and Career Ready Indicator in the PowerSchool Student Information System (SIS). In addition, a secondary school teacher assigned to teach Dual Enrollment for Dual Credit courses must be employed as an adjunct faculty member of the institution and must meet the credentialing requirements of the college and applicable accrediting agencies.

ALSDE GUIDING PROCEDURES FOR DUAL ENROLLMENT/DUAL CREDIT

This provides LEAs with updated information to reflect current policies and procedures regarding dual enrollment/dual credit through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) and Alabama four-year colleges/universities.

DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSE/HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECT AREA EQUIVALENCY LIST

The Dual Enrollment Course/High School Subject Area Equivalency List is updated regularly and identifies dual enrollment courses taken through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) that may satisfy one or more Alabama High School Diploma graduation requirements.

More information can be found on the Alabama Achieves Early College Initiatives page.

Alabama High School Graduation Requirements
Guidelines for Implementation and Additional Information

FINANCIAL LITERACY COURSE REQUIREMENT AND EXAMINATION

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In 2023, the Alabama Legislature passed, and Governor Kay Ivey signed, Act #2023-179 mandating that Alabama students entering Grade 9 in the 2024-2025 academic year complete a course in personal financial literacy along with an accompanying financial literacy examination. The financial literacy course must include instruction in the following topics:

- Banking and Financial Institutions
- Managing Finances and Budgeting
- Money Management and Personal Tax Liabilities
- Saving and Investing
- Risk Management and Insurance
- Saving and Investing
- Credit and Debt Management
- Business and Legal Concepts

Content standards found in the following course(s) have been reviewed and approved to fulfill the instructional requirements specified in Act #2023-179:

- Career Preparedness (22153G1000)
- Career Preparedness B (22153G0522)

The Financial Literacy Examination, developed by the ALSDE, must be administered to all students at the completion of one of the previously listed approved courses. The Financial Literacy Examination consists of fifty (50) multiple-choice questions that assesses each of the required instructional topics. To earn a passing score on the Financial Literacy Examination, students must answer a minimum of thirty (30) items correctly; however, a passing score is NOT required for graduation.

Documentation of students' performance must be recorded in the Test Results area within the PowerSchool Student Information System (SIS). Recording a student's score in PowerSchool should occur before awarding credit for the completed course.

The requirement to complete the Financial Literacy Examination can be waived by a school administrator for special education students not learning at a level appropriate for their grade level.

REPORTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE: Documentation of this passage must be entered into PowerSchool by a selected school representative, such as an administrator or counselor. A guide to entering Financial Literacy Examination scores can be found on the ALSDE Schoology website.

EXAM ACCESS: Exam information and resources are included in the "Course Content" and "CTE Director Resources" groups within Schoology. The Financial Literacy Examination folder contains the following:

- Schoology assessment version of the test.
- Directions for copying the Schoology version into district or school Schoology courses.
- Microsoft Word version of the test, translated in Spanish, Korean, and Arabic.

WAIVERS: All existing Career Preparedness course waivers will be sunset using the academic year listed on the approved waiver letter or by June 30, 2026, whichever date applies first. To provide the flexibility needed to implement the financial literacy requirement(s), existing waivers may be granted an extension of one (1) additional academic year beyond the current waiver expiration date.

Effective immediately, additional waiver requests for embedding Career Preparedness standards into other courses, including the embedding of Career Preparedness A in CTE Foundation courses and/or the embedding of Career Preparedness B in Economics, will no longer be issued to the 2024-2025 cohort or future cohorts.

In addition, the memorandum issued by the Alabama State Department of Education on February 27, 2017, is hereby rescinded effective with the 2025-2026 School Year, which will result in Career Preparedness no longer be considered as an embedded component of Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) course(s).

More information can be found on the Alabama Achieves Graduation Requirements page.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

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DIPLOMA PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may choose from three pathways that lead to an *Alabama High School Diploma*: *General Education Pathway, Essentials Pathway, and Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway*. All students with disabilities that meet the graduation requirements for their selected pathway will receive an *Alabama High School Diploma*.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON THE GENERAL EDUCATION PATHWAY: *Alabama High School Diploma*: *General Education Pathway* courses are aligned to the *Alabama Courses of Study* and are designed to prepare students to be college and career ready.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON THE ESSENTIALS PATHWAY: The *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Essentials Pathway* is limited to a student with an active IEP. This pathway is designed to allow students to participate in career preparation and competitive employment. The content of Essentials pathway courses is not fully aligned to the *Alabama Courses of Study*. Students who earn credit in at least one (1) Essentials/Life Skills Core course must complete all requirements of the Essentials pathway, including the following:

- Career Preparedness (Career and Academic Planning, Computer Applications, and Financial Literacy)
- Community-Based Work Training
- Two (2) Career and Technical Education courses in a sequence
- Workforce Readiness or Transition Services
- Cooperative Education/School-Based Enterprises and/or Essentials Career Preparation

Students must have a minimum of 140 hours of apprenticeship (paid) experience or 140 hours of internship (unpaid) experience. The *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Essentials Pathway* may be accepted by most Alabama community colleges; however, the diploma pathway may not be accepted by most four-year institutions, may not be accepted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for eligibility purposes, or may not be accepted by branches of the United States Military, either active duty or reserves.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON THE ALTERNATE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS PATHWAY (AAS): The *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway* is limited to students with a significant cognitive disability. Since the content of *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway* courses is not fully aligned to the *Alabama Courses of Study*, this diploma pathway will prepare a student for supported, competitive employment and supported, postsecondary education for a student with an intellectual disability.*

For a student pursuing the Alabama High School Diploma: Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team must have completed the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) Alternate Participation Decision-Making Tool.

GRADUATION AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: The awarding of an *Alabama High School Diploma*: *General Education Pathway* ceases the local education agency's responsibility for providing a free appropriate public education.

Students with disabilities who complete all coursework on the *Alabama High School Diploma*: *General Education Pathway* and who meet all graduation requirements will earn and be awarded an *Alabama High School Diploma*: *General Education Pathway*. These students will count as federal and state graduates in the Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate.

Students with disabilities on the *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Essentials Pathway* or *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway* will receive their selected diploma; however, students will not be counted to the U.S. Department of Education as a federal graduate in the Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate. Those students are considered state completers, not federal graduates nor dropouts.

According to the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),* students with disabilities who have not earned the *Alabama High School Diploma*: *General Education Pathway* are entitled to a free appropriate public education until the age of 21. Students pursuing the *Alabama High School Diploma*: *Essentials Pathway or Alabama High School Diploma*: *Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway* who meet the requirements for graduation and who will continue receiving special education and related services beyond Grade 12 may participate in graduation activities with his or her non-disabled peers and be awarded his or her *Alabama High School Diploma.*

A student who is awarded *the Alabama High School Diploma*: *Essentials Pathway or Alabama High School Diploma*: *Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) Pathway,* and who will not return to continue receiving special education and related services beyond Grade 12, is considered a change in placement for a student with a disability. The *Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Take Action* must be used to document the proposed change of placement (graduation) to ensure that the student and parent have been fully informed of the proposed termination of special education services.

The Summary of Academic and Functional Performance must be completed for every student who exits special education services with an *Alabama High School Diploma*, or who will be exceeding the age of eligibility (age of 21) for receiving a free appropriate public education.

More information can be found on the Alabama Achieves Graduation Requirements page.