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## **Guidelines for high school graduation**

### **Key dates in HB 07-1118 as modified by SB 08-212**

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*Colorado Association of School Boards  
June 11, 2008*

HB 07-1118 established a process for developing guidelines for high school graduation at the state level that will be considered as each local board of education revises its own local graduation requirements. That process is still in place following the adoption of the Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act (SB 08-212) this session, although it is no longer the focus of the state's new education initiative. The new Act is a comprehensive piece of legislation that is intended to take standards-based education to the next level.

A complete timeline for implementation of the Act is beyond the scope of this memorandum. Most of the immediate responsibilities in SB 08-212 are directed specifically to the State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (Commission). Those dates that relate specifically to high school students are included in this document.

The following timeline addresses key steps in the process of modifying graduation requirements with a focus on the responsibilities of the local board of education. Most activities must occur on or before the date listed. SB 08-212 did modify the previous timeline established by HB 07-1118.

**May 1, 2008**— the State Graduation Guidelines Development Council (Council) develops and recommends to the State Board a comprehensive set of guidelines for the establishment of high school graduation requirements. That report was delivered at a work session of the State Board on May 14. The work of the Council was preempted by passage of the Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act (SB 08-212), which sets the stage for the next generation of standards-based education.

**December 15, 2009**— the State Board will adopt new or revised standards that identify the knowledge and skills that a student should acquire as the student progresses from preschool through elementary and secondary education. The State Board will take into account any career and technical education standards adopted by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. The standards are to be aligned to ensure that a student who demonstrates attainment of the standards as he/she progresses through the system will be able to demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness prior to or upon attaining a high school diploma.

**December 15, 2009**— the State Board will adopt a comprehensive set of guidelines regarding high school graduation requirements to be used by each school district board of education when developing local high school graduation requirements. The local school board retains the authority to develop its own unique graduation requirements as long as they meet or exceed any minimum standards or basic core competencies or skills identified in the guidelines created by the State Board. (Although the date was modified from the original date of July 1, 2008, this requirement in HB 07-1118 remains unchanged.)

**December 15, 2009**—the State Board and the Commission shall negotiate a consensus and adopt a description of postsecondary and workforce readiness.

**By July 1, 2010**—local school boards must undertake a community-based process to develop a blueprint for the education system in the community and to determine the skills students will need to be successful after

graduation. School boards shall seek input from the community at large, which may include students, parents, business persons, neighboring school districts, and BOCES. (Originally this date was July 1, 2009 in HB 07-1118.)

School boards shall use this blueprint, along with guidelines for high school graduation requirements developed by the State Board to establish high school graduation requirements applicable to students enrolling in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade beginning July 1, 2010<sup>1</sup>. To assist the State Board in fulfilling its duties under SB 08-212, each local board shall provide to the State Board information concerning the blueprint and the input received in developing the blueprint.

Each school board shall report its blueprint and its new or revised high school graduation requirements to the public through the accreditation process as determined by the State Board. In its report the school board shall demonstrate how its high school graduation requirements meet or exceed any minimum standards, core competencies or skills identified in the Guidelines for High School Graduation Requirements.

**December 15, 2010**—the State Board shall adopt a system of assessments that are aligned with the new or revised standards. Along with adoption of the assessments, the State Board shall also make recommendations concerning a system of ratings for public schools that recognizes each school's success in supporting the longitudinal academic growth of students.

**December 15, 2010**—the State Board and the Commission shall negotiate a consensus and adopt one or more postsecondary and workforce planning assessments, postsecondary and workforce preparation assessments, and postsecondary and workforce readiness assessments that local education providers shall administer.

**July 1, 2011**—the State Board shall adopt criteria that a local school board may apply if the board chooses to endorse high school diplomas to indicate that students have achieved postsecondary and workforce readiness. There will be several types of endorsements available to recognize outstanding achievement and particular areas of focus.

**Beginning with the 2011-12 academic year**—Additional services must be provided to any student enrolled in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade who cannot demonstrate competency in English. A cost study will be conducted (by March 1, 2010) to address the services and resources necessary to implement this requirement. The cost study will also address the resources necessary to implement all of the requirements in SB 08-212.

**On or before December 15, 2011**—Each local board shall review its preschool through elementary and secondary education standards in comparison with the state standards to ensure that the local standards meet or exceed the state standards. The local board is also required to review the curricula provided by its high schools to ensure that a student who successfully completes the curricula will be prepared to demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness prior to or upon attaining a diploma.

**On or before December 15, 2012**—each student who enrolls in a public high school shall enroll in and successfully complete a postsecondary and workforce readiness program. Each student will be required to enroll in this type of program, with the exception of special education students. Each high school student's final transcript shall describe the student's level of postsecondary and workforce readiness. This may also become a graduation requirement.

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<sup>1</sup> If a school board has undertaken a comprehensive community-based process and has revised its high school graduation requirements within the previous 2 years, it does not need to develop a new blueprint or make revisions to its high school graduation requirements.