

IV. Instruction

C. Academic Achievement

2. High School Graduation

GRADUATION POLICY FOR THE NARRAGANSETT SCHOOL SYSTEM

In accordance with the regulations of the Rhode Island Board of Education, the graduation requirements for Narragansett students include demonstration of proficiency and apply to all students within the district. These graduation requirements include a demonstration of student proficiency that involves multiple measures of performance for all students.

Only students who demonstrate fulfillment of these graduation requirements and proficiencies shall participate in the graduation ceremony and receive a diploma. However, parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who has not met the above requirements, has an active Individual Education Plan (IEP), is eligible for a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) until the age of twenty-one, will have completed four years of high school and who wishes to participate in the graduation ceremony with his or her class, may request that the student participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of completion. That request must be approved by the high school principal. Receipt of a certificate of completion under this policy will not affect a student's right to receive FAPE, or to receive a diploma in the event that the student should subsequently meet the above requirements.

Requirements

The requirements for a Narragansett High School Diploma shall include:

1. Completion of required coursework credits, both in total and for specific subjects. Course requirements for graduation are delineated in the Program of Studies, which is reviewed annually by the School Committee in accordance with Policy IV. A. 3. a. Annual Review of Program of Studies. Under extenuating circumstances, the credit requirement for physical education/health may be waived for medical reasons.
2. Completion of a portfolio including work samples that, when viewed in combination with other graduation requirements, demonstrate that necessary proficiencies in six core content areas (English, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts and technology) are met. Portfolio standards are delineated in the Portfolio Handbook, which is reviewed annually by the high school leadership team and made available both online and in hard copy form to parents, students, and the community.
3. Completion of a Senior Project including an in-depth research paper of the chosen topic, a product showing tangible evidence of the student's experience in the field with a mentor, the Senior Project portfolio documenting the entire Senior Project process, and a presentation providing an opportunity for the student to showcase the knowledge gained through the Senior Project experience to a panel of judges. When viewed in combination with other graduation requirements, the Senior Project must demonstrate that necessary proficiencies are met. Details about the Senior Project process are outlined in the Senior Project Manual, which is reviewed annually by the high school leadership team and made available both online and in hard copy form to parents, students, and the community.
4. Completion of community service. The Student Handbook will outline a system for monitoring community service.

Demonstration Timeline

All requirements must be met prior to graduation. Graduation shall be available to students when all requirements are met. The following policy timelines are included to guide staff and students in completion of

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the requirements for a diploma and are guidelines, not requirements. A diploma shall not be denied for proficiencies and requirements fulfilled after the dates herein, but prior to graduation.

1. Coursework should be completed on a reasonable and manageable schedule throughout the high school career. It is unwise to delay much required work until later years. School guidance shall support students and families in this effort.
2. The school's timeline for portfolio completion shall provide for completion prior to the end of the junior year. This timeline provides an opportunity for students desiring to concurrently enroll in higher education during their senior year and for students whose portfolio fails to demonstrate proficient work to remedy both the proficiency and the portfolio submission in time for graduation.

Measurement of Proficiency The determination of which students do and do not meet graduation requirements shall be based on a fair and reliable system. Students who believe that they have been improperly denied a diploma may utilize the school system's appeal procedure, described below, through administrative steps to the principal, Superintendent, School Committee, and Commissioner of Education.

1. Coursework completion shall be as recorded on the student transcript as determined by passing grades in each course.
2. Portfolios and Senior Project proficiency shall be assessed according to procedures determined by the High School Principal, approved by the Superintendent, and presented to the School Committee. These procedures shall be described in detail in the Portfolio Manual and Senior Project Manual, available online and in hard copy form. Students may submit their graduation portfolio for the formal review as early as May of their junior year, but not later than January of their senior year. Any portfolio or demonstration found to be insufficient for graduation shall be re-evaluated by at least one other reviewer or reviewing body.

Transferring Students

It is recognized that students entering the school system near to graduation may have difficulty completing graduation requirements, particularly if they transfer from a school with substantially different requirements. Consequently, the following standards shall be used for transferring students.

1. In order to receive a Narragansett High School diploma, a student must have attended Narragansett High School for at least a full semester immediately prior to graduation.
2. Students entering Narragansett with two or more years of coursework necessary prior to graduation (typically before the start of the junior year) shall meet all requirements in order to receive a Narragansett diploma.
3. Students entering Narragansett with less than two years of coursework necessary prior to graduation (typically after the start of the junior year), may either meet the requirements of Narragansett, or the requirements of the school from which they transferred. Should the latter be chosen, the requirements must be verified in writing from the prior school and the choice noted on the transcript. A student exercising the option of meeting the requirements of another school must do so in writing, cosigned by parents if under 18 years of age.
4. Individual cases that are not addressed by this policy may be considered on a case by case basis by the High School Principal, subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Appeal Procedure

Both students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their disagreements regarding attainment of any graduation requirement. This informal procedure is intended to encourage communication among students, parents/guardians and school staff in order to facilitate a mutual understanding

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of graduation expectations. In cases when informal appeals do not result in resolution, the following formal appeals process should be invoked:

1. Formal appeals shall be in writing and shall set forth a statement of the facts and the specific remedy sought. The written appeal shall be filed with the high school principal. Absent extraordinary circumstances, the high school principal shall, within five (5) business days, conduct a formal conference with the student and his/her parents/guardians, permitting him or her to provide any necessary information relevant to the appeal. Absent extraordinary circumstances, a written recommendation shall be rendered within five (5) business days of the formal conference unless an extension is mutually agreed to by the parties. The recommendation shall be sent to the complainant and respondent.
2. If the appeal is not resolved at the school level, the parties may appeal to the Superintendent, who shall hold a hearing within five (5) business days of receipt of the appeal. Absent extraordinary circumstances, a written recommendation shall be rendered within five (5) business days of such hearing.
3. In the event that the appeal is not resolved at the central office level, the parties may file an appeal to the School Committee, who will hold a hearing during executive session. At that time, both the High School Principal and the student and their parents/guardians may present the facts relevant to the appeal. The School Committee's decision will then be communicated to both parties within five (5) business days.
4. If the student and their parents/guardians wish to appeal the decision of the School Committee, they may forward their appeal to the Rhode Island Department of Education in accordance with their procedures.

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Narragansett School System
Narragansett, Rhode Island