

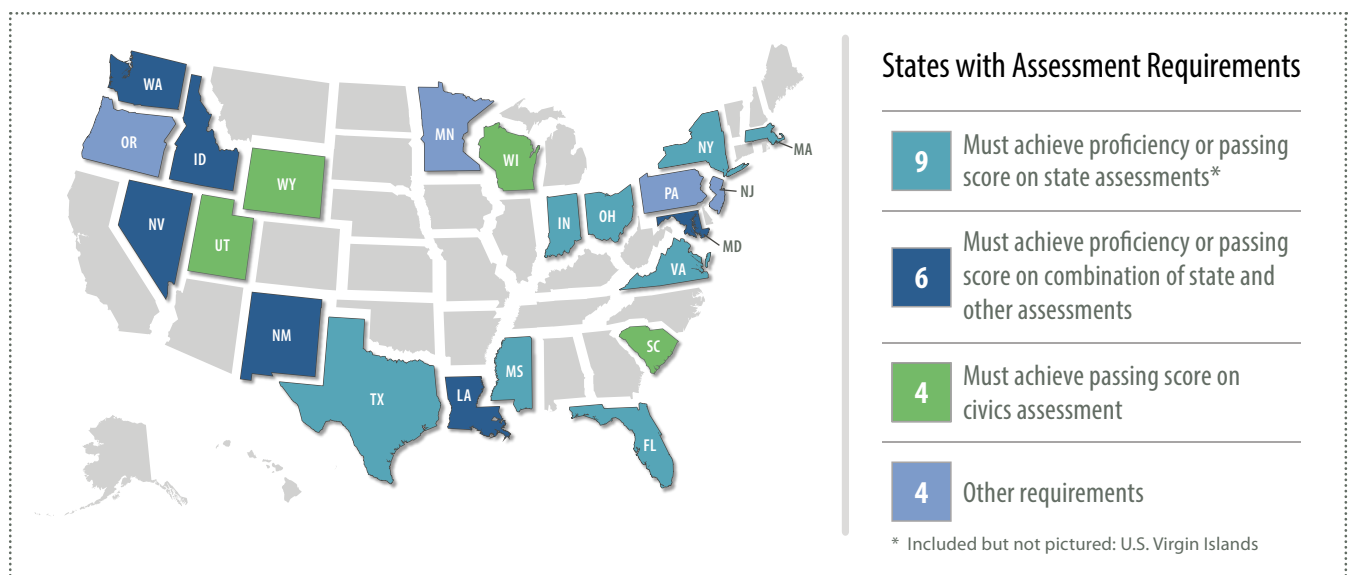
Assessments for High School Graduation

Which assessments are states requiring students to take, or to take and pass, for high school graduation?

In the past year, a number of states have eliminated the requirements for high school exit or graduation examinations and retroactively issued diplomas to students who had completed all other graduation requirements but had not passed the required examinations. On the other hand, some states have begun to require students to pass a civics test as a condition for high school graduation. The Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI) recently conducted a scan of states' current assessment requirements for high school graduation, reviewing websites maintained by state departments of education and other government agencies.¹ This CSAI Update provides a summary of what the scan found.

Assessment Requirements

As of June 2016, 30 states do not require students to take and pass an assessment in order to graduate from high school. On the other hand, 23 have an assessment requirement of some sort in place.



¹ For the purposes of this update, the term "states" refers to the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and eight U.S. territories. Information was not available for six states (American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Republic of the Marshall Islands); thus, this update discusses findings for 53 states (n = 53).

Other Requirements

Oregon is the only state that requires students to pass the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments; however, it allows students to use banked scores from previous state assessments or scores from college and career readiness (CCR) assessments to meet this requirement. New Jersey allows students to pass either the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments or a CCR assessment. Minnesota allows students to pass state or locally determined tests or take a CCR assessment to graduate from high school. In Pennsylvania, districts have the authority to decide how students will meet the state's assessment requirement for graduation. In other words, districts can choose whether students, in order to graduate, should achieve proficiency on the state end-of-course Keystone Exams, include their Keystone Exam scores in the calculation of their course grades, take and pass locally selected assessments, and/or take and pass Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate examinations.

Future Assessments to Be Required by States

Seven states that have not previously required a graduation assessment have now mandated such assessments, with implementation dates in the relatively near future. These states are listed in the table below.

STATE	FUTURE ASSESSMENT(S) REQUIRED
Arizona	Beginning with the class of 2017, students are required to pass a civics test based on the United States Immigration and Naturalization Examination.
Colorado	Beginning with the class of 2021, students are required to earn a minimum score on a CCR assessment or assessments (e.g., ACT, Compass, WorkKeys, SAT, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate) in the subject areas of English and mathematics.
Connecticut	Beginning with the class of 2020, students must satisfactorily complete end-of-school-year examinations in algebra 1, geometry, biology, American history, and grade 10 English.
Missouri	Beginning with the class of 2021, students are required to pass a civics test based on the United States Immigration and Naturalization Examination.
North Dakota	Beginning with the class of 2017, students are required to pass a civics test based on the United States Immigration and Naturalization Examination.
Rhode Island	Beginning with the class of 2020, students are required to pass state assessments in six core areas (English language arts, math, science, social studies, arts, and technology) and to complete two performance assessments or diploma assessments (e.g., exhibitions, portfolios, comprehensive course assessments).
Vermont	Beginning with the class of 2020, students must demonstrate proficiency in all of the following content areas in order to graduate: literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, physical and health education, arts, and transferable skills (e.g., communication, collaboration, creativity, innovation, inquiry, problem solving, and use of technology). Local school boards are responsible for creating their own proficiency tests.

For detailed information about the specific assessments required for high school graduation in each state, please visit the [CSAI website](#) and read the full report.



CSAI Update is produced by the The Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI). CSAI, a collaboration between WestEd and CRESST, provides state education agencies (SEAs) and Regional Comprehensive Centers (RCCs) with research support, technical assistance, tools, and other resources to help inform decisions about standards, assessment, and accountability. Visit www.csai-online.org for more information.



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