

TOPIC: GRADUATION GUIDELINES DISCUSSION

PREPARED BY: REBECCA HOLMES, COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

I. SUMMARY

In May, 2013, the State Board of Education adopted the graduation guidelines that districts must meet or exceed beginning in 2021. The purpose of Colorado's high school graduation guidelines is two-fold:

1. To articulate Colorado's shared beliefs about the value and meaning of a high school diploma
2. To outline the minimum components, expectations and responsibilities of local districts and the state to support students in attaining their high school diploma

State law outlines several considerations the state board took into account when adopting the graduation guidelines, including:

- Alignment with the description of postsecondary and workforce readiness
- Alignment with the postsecondary academic admission standards for public, four-year colleges and universities
- Recognition of multiple and diverse pathways to a diploma
- Articulation through a standards-based education system
- Attainment of skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century
- Importance of academic and career planning

The guidelines also include minimum competency levels in math, English, science and social studies for entrance to workforce, armed forces and postsecondary education.

II. BACKGROUND

In 2013, the SBE adopted a draft menu that districts may use to outline locally adopted pathways through high school and toward a locally awarded high school diploma. That menu will be finalized in 2015. The requirement that districts must meet or exceed those requirements will go into effect for the high school graduating class of 2021.

CCHE heard a very brief update on this work as it related to the joint adoption of the PWR Endorsed Diploma in June. This agenda item in December will be a chance to get more information and understand implications for and alignment with the new proposed admissions and remediation policies.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation at this time; this item is for discussion only.

ATTACHMENT A: Graduation Guidelines Factsheet

ATTACHMENT B: Graduation Guidelines FAQs