

Guidance for the Approval of Non-Public Schools in Rhode Island

UPDATES

What is the regulatory guidance regarding curriculum, especially the core academic subjects?

Revision: For state grade level standards in math, English Language Arts, and Science, please visit: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/instructionassessment/overview.aspx>

What are the Basic Education Requirements for the granting of a diploma?

To earn a diploma from a Rhode Island high school, each student will have to meet the minimum requirements established in each of the three areas specified in the Regulations:

1. Performance on the state assessment or assessments;* and
2. Successful completion of state and local course requirements; and
3. Successful completion of two performance-based diploma assessments.

These three areas are non-compensatory – meaning that low performance in one of the three areas cannot be offset automatically by high performance in one or both of the other areas. Although performance across the three areas is related, each of the three areas contributes unique and important information for determining a student’s overall proficiency for earning a high-school diploma. Successful completion of courses aligned to rigorous, high-quality state and local content standards is the core indicator of student proficiency in each of the six core academic areas. Performance on the state assessments provides another measure of achievement in the critical subjects of reading and mathematics or other content areas as designated by the Board of Regents, helping to certify that each student receiving a diploma throughout the state has acquired comparable necessary literacy and numeracy skills. Successful completion of performance-based diploma assessments, including presentation of a student’s portfolio or exhibition work, provides evidence that the student is able to successfully integrate core content knowledge and applied learning skills.

These three areas have remained essentially unchanged since the introduction of proficiency-based graduation requirements in the 2003 Regents Regulations. Although the conjunctive nature of the requirements has evolved since 2003, the importance of each of the areas in determining a student’s overall proficiency for graduation has remained consistent over time. The conjunctive nature of the requirements does not imply that curriculum and instruction should focus on each of the requirements separately or in isolation. Curriculum and instruction aligned with state and local standards that integrates applied learning skills in coursework across all academic areas will prepare students to meet each of these requirements.

You may consult [The Board of Regents Secondary Regulations - March 2011](#) and [Secondary Regulations Initial Guidance - March 2011](#) for additional information.

* In July 2014, it became RI law to postpone the use of state assessments as a component of the RI Diploma System. The existing Secondary Regulations and guidance are currently under revision.

What are the requirements for fire drill reporting and evacuation of students in an emergency?

Private schools must instruct and train the pupils by means of drills to leave school buildings and/or be locked down in an emergency in the shortest possible time and without confusion or panic. Fifteen drills are required annually, including fire, lockdown, and evacuation drills. At least one drill shall be conducted each month, and at least one out of every four must be obstructed drills, i.e. at least 1 or more exits and stairways blocked. As part of the required 15 emergency drills, each school must conduct two evacuation drills and two lockdown drills. One lockdown drill shall occur in September and one in January. Neglect by a private school to comply is a violation punishable by a fine not exceeding \$200.

Non-Public Schools with Residence Facilities

In residence facilities in private schools, there shall be at least four (4) drills or rapid dismissals during the academic year for each school building or residence facility, at least two (2) of which shall be held between the months of September through December inclusive. The remaining two (2) drills shall be held between the months of January through June inclusive. At least one drill or rapid dismissal shall be obstructed so that at least one or more exits or stairways in the school building or dormitory are blocked off or not used. For purposes of this section "residence facility" shall mean dormitory, fraternity, sorority, or any other type of residence hall, whether on campus or off campus, owned or leased by a college, university, post-secondary institution, public schools, or private school with accommodations for twenty (20) or more students. For purposes of this section "residence facility" shall mean dormitory, fraternity, sorority, or any other type of residence hall, whether on campus or off campus, owned or leased by a college, university, post-secondary institution, public schools, or private school with accommodations for twenty (20) or more students. Neglect by a private school to comply is a violation punishable by a fine not exceeding \$200.