



ALGONQUIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

79 Bartlett Street, Northborough, MA 01532 | 508-351-7010 | NSboro.k12.ma.us/ARHS

A Tradition of Excellence in Service to the Communities of Northborough and Southborough

TO: Regional School Committee & Gregory Martineau, Superintendent
FROM: Sean Bevan, Principal
DATE: February 26, 2025
RE: Competency Determination Proposal

Massachusetts General Law requires students to satisfy the requirements of the "competency determination" (CD) in order to graduate from high school.¹ The central component of competency determination has historically been passing scores on the state-approved assessment tool, the MCAS exam. In November 2024, voters approved Ballot Question 2, "Elimination of MCAS as High School Graduation Requirement," which removed the state-approved assessment tool as a method of determining competency. See the new language from the state below:

The "competency determination" shall be based on the academic standards and curriculum frameworks for tenth graders in the areas of mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, foreign languages, and English, and shall represent a determination that a particular student has demonstrated mastery of a common core of skills, competencies and knowledge in these areas by satisfactorily completing coursework that has been certified by the student's district as showing mastery of the skills, competencies, and knowledge contained in the state academic standards and curriculum frameworks in the areas measured by the MCAS high school tests described in section one I administered in 2023, and in any additional areas determined by the board. Satisfaction of the requirements of the competency determination shall be a condition for high school graduation.

The DESE recommendation states that even with local graduation requirements, a district should have a ruling from its local school board to establish a competency certification process in line with the wording of the statute.

Current Graduation Requirements:

Classes of 2025 and 2026 (*language in the 2022-2023 Program of Studies*):

English*	20.0 credits
Social Studies*	15.0 credits
Mathematics**	15.0 credits
Science*	15.0 credits
Health and Fitness*	10 credits
Applied Arts and Technology OR Fine and Performing Arts	2.5 credits
Economics*	2.5 credits
Digital Literacy	2.5 credits
Electives **	27.5 credits
TOTAL	110.0 credits

¹ Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 69, § 1D(i) (2025). Retrieved from <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/section1d>

Class of 2027 and beyond (*existing language in the 2024-2025 Program of Studies*²):

English*	20.0 credits
Social Studies*	15.0 credits
Mathematics**	15.0 credits
Science*	15.0 credits
Health and Fitness*	10 credits
Fine and Performing Arts	2.5 credits
Economics*	2.5 credits
Digital Literacy or Exploring Computer Science	2.5 credits
Electives**	27.5 credits
TOTAL	110.0 credits

* These fields of study require students to take specific courses for graduation. Details of these courses are described in Parts II and III of the Program of Studies.

** The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education requires that college freshmen seeking admission to a Massachusetts State University take a minimum of four years of math in high school. Students must be enrolled in a math course during their senior year to be eligible for admission to a state college or university.

Competency Determination: (*our proposed new language*)

The ARHS School-Based Leadership Team proposes the following competency determination requirements, effective for the class of 2025 and subsequent classes:

In addition to the graduation requirements above, students must meet the competency determination that State law requires. In order for students to do that, they must:

- Achieve a passing grade in ninth and tenth-grade English (or equivalent courses)
- Achieve a passing grade in Geometry and either Algebra I or Algebra II (or equivalent courses)
- Achieve a passing grade in one of the three core Science classes, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics

Students who fail to meet one or more of these requirements will be monitored and supported in grades 11 and 12. They must either pass classes in relevant subjects in grades 11 and 12, or make up coursework in grades 10 and 11 that meets the standards of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

Students who have transferred to ARHS will be able to meet the competency requirements by demonstrating competency in the standards of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks for ELA, math, and science. The principal or their designee will verify this competency.

Sincerely,
Sean Bevan

² Bevan, Sean (2023, January 12). *Recommendation to adjust ARHS graduation requirements*. <https://tinyurl.com/ARHSGradRequirementsChange>