

COMPETENCY DETERMINATION

One of the requirements for graduation in Massachusetts is a determination of competency (CD) in subjects previously covered by the MCAS. In addition to other requirements for graduation, students must have been determined by the district to have achieved mastery of the common core of skills, competency, and knowledge in said areas, and satisfactorily completed 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.

Competency Determination Requirements

A determination of competency shall include:

Demonstrating a mastery of skills in English language arts, mathematics, and science; and the satisfactory completion of relevant coursework aligned to the standards measured by the high school English language arts, mathematics, and science MCAS assessments administered in 2023.

An additional requirement for mastery in US History will apply to the graduating class of 2027, and beyond.

To show mastery, a student must successfully complete, in accordance with the district's grading policy:

1. The final assessment for a course OR
2. A capstone or portfolio project OR
3. An equivalent measure as determined by the Principal, or designee.

A student enrolled in the Blue Hills Regional Technical School will be determined to have satisfactorily completed coursework and earned full credit in accordance with the district's grading policy and the requirements outlined below:

Content Area	Coursework Requirements
English Language Arts	The equivalent of two years of high school English language arts courses.
Mathematics	The equivalent of one year of both Algebra I and Geometry. If a student has successfully completed Algebra I in 8 th grade, and the sending district certifies that the 8 th grade course meets the high school standard, then the coursework requirement for the mathematics component of the CD will be satisfied.
Science	The equivalent of one year of any one of the following disciplines: Biology, Physics, or Chemistry.
U.S. History (Beginning with the graduating class of 2027)	The equivalent of a one-year United States history course.

Aligned Courses:

Blue Hills Regional Technical School offers the following courses in alignment with the state curriculum frameworks that meet the above requirements.

English Courses

English 9
English 10
English 11
English 12
AP English Language and Composition
AP English Literature

Math Courses

Algebra I
Geometry

Science Courses

Biology I
Biology II
Chemistry I
Chemistry II
Physics I
Physics II

History Courses

US History I
US History II

Additional Considerations

Students with Disabilities

The Blue Hills Regional Technical School must both provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education to students with disabilities and must also determine that the student has met the competency determination and local graduation requirements prior to graduating that student. Students with disabilities who have been placed in out-of-district placements must meet the requirements of the competency determination policy of the placing school district. Discussion of the competency determination must be a part of the IEP Team's transition planning.

English Language Learners

The Blue Hills Regional Technical School shall, on a case-by-case basis, determine the appropriate courses necessary for English Language Learners to both achieve language proficiency and meet the competency determination requirements.

Late-Enrolling Students

Students who enroll in a Massachusetts public high school after their ninth-grade year may be granted a determination of competency by the Blue Hills Regional Technical School in one or more of the following ways:

- Transcript review by Principal, or designee.
- Additional course requirements as determined by Principal, or designee.
- A qualifying MCAS score of at least meeting or exceeding expectations achievement levels on the relevant high school MCAS assessment; or by meeting the standard for a substituted equivalent that the district certifies satisfies the same academic standards.

Appeals Process

Current students and/or parents/guardians may appeal the determination of competency in accordance with the following district procedures:

If a student is dissatisfied with the District's decision to award or deny a CD, the following appeals process should take place:

- An appeal in writing will be addressed and sent to the Principal;
- Within 10 school days, and after a transcript review and/or other components, the Principal will respond in writing, and in a language the student can understand, the rationale for the decision;
- The Principal may also request a meeting with the student and parents/guardians;
- The Principal shall be the final arbiter for all decisions.

Process for a current or former student to request a transcript review

Eligible students in the classes of 2003 through 2024 who did not earn a diploma as a result of failing to meet the state's CD requirement have an opportunity to request a transcript review in order to determine their current eligibility for a diploma pursuant to the district's CD requirements.

An eligible student is one who:

1. Was previously enrolled in the district; and
2. Previously met the criteria for a Certificate of Attainment (i.e., student met local graduation requirements but did not receive a high school diploma because they did not earn a CD); and
3. Was not previously reported as a graduate in any district's Student Information Management System (SIMS) submission.

Any eligible student requesting a transcript review should, in writing, contact the Principal. The Principal with the Academic Review Board shall determine if the transcript review meets the new CD requirements. Decisions will be communicated to the eligible student within 8 weeks of initial contact. The Principal shall be the arbiter for all final decisions.

Any student who has not previously met the criteria for a Certificate of Attainment (indicating that they did not meet all local graduation requirements when they exited high school) must meet the district's current CD requirements and local graduation requirements in order to earn a diploma.

Any student who earned the competency determination prior to January 2025 is exempt from this policy.

LEGAL REFS:

DESE Graduation Requirements and Related Guidance
DESE Graduation and Transition Planning for Students with IEPs
DESE Competency Determination Guidance and Policy Submission Process
603 CMR 30.00
M.G.L. c. 69, § 1D

SOURCE: MASC – 2025

Approved by Blue Hills District School Committee on 12/16/25