

Agawam (0005) Public School District - FY 2026 - CD Policy and Local Graduation Requirements - Rev 0

Section 1: Competency Determination Requirements (for more information, access the [Technical Guidance](#))

In this section, you will:

- **Explain how a student earns full credit and shows mastery in accordance with your district's grading policy.**
- **Describe how a student meets the Competency Determination requirements for each content area: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and U.S. History.**

Submission Questions

* **General:** Satisfactorily completing coursework shall mean a student earns full credit in accordance with the district's grading policy. Describe how a student earns full credit in accordance with the district's grading policy (e.g., course grade above a 70, course grade of meeting or exceeding expectations, etc.).

Agawam School Committee Policy IKFE - Competency Determination

Competency Determination Requirements

A determination of competency shall include:

- Demonstrating mastery of skills, competencies and knowledge in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science.
- Satisfactory completion of coursework aligned to the standards measured by the high school English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science MCAS assessments administered in 2023. Starting with the graduating class of 2027, students will also be required to demonstrate competency, as described above, with respect to U.S. History. [Note: Students who have met the competency determination standard in English Language Arts, Mathematics or Science (i.e. students who passed the MCAS test in these subject areas) prior to January 3, 2025, retain that benefit and must only meet the District's graduation requirements.]

* **General:** Showing mastery shall mean a student successfully completes 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 identified in the district's Competency Determination policy. Describe how a student shows mastery in accordance with the district's grading policy.

Mastery

To show mastery, a student must earn a passing grade (D- or better) on:

1. The final assessment for a course; or
2. A capstone or portfolio project; or
3. An equivalent measure determined by the teacher/department (such as class assessments, research or inquiry project, or performance task).

* **English Language Arts:** For English Language Arts, the student must: (i) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of two years of high school English language arts courses. List the local course offerings that your district will certify as meeting the Competency Determination coursework requirement in this content area.

English Language Arts/ELA (two years): English 9 & English 10
Advanced Placement Literature and Composition

* **English Language Arts:** Review the skills, competencies, and knowledge that a student must demonstrate mastery of as identified in the relevant Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Describe how a student will show mastery in English Language Arts.

0010 ENGLISH 9 LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT

This integrated experience, based on a Survey of Literature, will provide ninth grade Language Arts students the opportunity to expand and polish reading, writing, research, technology, listening, viewing, and speaking skills while studying a variety of genres. Active reading strategies, process writing, and higher order/critical thinking skills will be utilized to analyze and interpret reading selections from specific time periods. Students will connect to their own lives while demonstrating proficiency in the writing process through narrative, reflective, descriptive, persuasive literary analysis, and research writing. Students will demonstrate effective use of technology through a variety of presentation formats.

0020 ENGLISH 10 LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT Prerequisite: English 9 This integrated experience, based on World Literature, will provide tenth grade Language Arts students the opportunity to expand and polish reading, writing, research, technology, listening, viewing, and speaking skills while studying a variety of genres. Active reading strategies, process writing, and higher order/critical thinking skills will be utilized to analyze and interpret reading selections from specific time periods. Students will connect to their own lives while demonstrating proficiency in the writing process through narrative, reflective, descriptive, persuasive literary analysis, and research writing. Students will demonstrate effective use of technology through a variety of presentation formats.

0042 AP LITERATURE/COMPOSITION LEVEL I FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT Following the College Board's suggested curriculum designed to parallel college-level English courses, the AP English Literature and Composition course enables students to develop critical standards for evaluating literature. Students study the language, character, action, and theme in works of recognized literary merit; enrich their understanding of connotation, metaphor, irony, syntax, and tone; and write compositions of their own (including literary analysis, exposition, argument, narrative, and creative writing. This course does have summer reading and writing requirements.

* **Mathematics:** For mathematics, the student must: (i) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of one year of both Algebra I and Geometry; or (ii) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of one year of both Integrated Math I and Integrated Math II. List the local course offerings that your district will certify as meeting the Competency Determination coursework requirement in this content area.

Mathematics (two years): Algebra 1 and Geometry

* **Mathematics:** Review the skills, competencies, and knowledge that a student must demonstrate mastery of as identified in the relevant Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Describe how a student will show mastery in mathematics.

0100 ALGEBRA I LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT

This course is designed for grade nine students who took grade eight Pre-Algebra or those who took grade eight Algebra and wish to further develop their understanding of algebraic concepts before enrolling in a course in geometry. This course is suggested for students who plan to attend a four-year college and take the SAT. Topics covered in the first half of the course include variables, equations and inequalities, polynomials, formulas, factoring, and word problem applications. The basic concepts of arithmetic will be applied in these units to the terminology of algebra. Other topics in the course include probability, rational expressions and equations, graphs, systems of equations, proportions, quadratic equations, and irrational numbers.

0110 GEOMETRY LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT Prerequisite: Algebra I This course develops an understanding of the various geometric figures and their relations. Some work in three-dimensional and coordinate geometry is included. Emphasis is placed on logical thinking in practical situations. Other topics include congruent and similar triangles, basic geometric proofs, right triangles (including SOHCAHTOA), surface area and volume of three-dimensional figures, concurrency of lines in triangles, area and perimeter of figures, and introduction of probability.

* **Science:** For science, the student must: (i) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of one year of Biology; or (ii) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of one year of Physics; or (iii) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of one year of Chemistry; or (iv) satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of one year of a Technology/Engineering course. List the local course offerings that your district will certify as meeting the Competency Determination coursework requirement in this content area.

Science (one year): Biology, Chemistry, or Physics (Advanced Placement sections of these courses also satisfy the requirement)

* **Science:** Review the skills, competencies, and knowledge that a student must demonstrate mastery of as identified in the relevant Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Describe how a student will show mastery in science.

0214 COLLEGE PREP BIOLOGY WITH LAB LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT

This course is designed to align the ninth-grade science curriculum with the Massachusetts Science and Technology Framework and to prepare students for MCAS testing. Biology is a course designed to familiarize the student with the living world. It also seeks to develop an understanding and appreciation for the relationships between all living organisms. Topics will include cells, genetics, DNA, biodiversity, levels of organization, the human body, and ecology. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0211 HONORS BIOLOGY WITH LAB LEVEL II FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDITS This ninth-grade honors course is aligned with the Massachusetts Science and Technology Framework to prepare students to take the MCAS test. This course is designed for those students who anticipate taking AP or honors science courses during their high school career. The topics include the same as Biology but at a more rigorous pace and at a more advanced level. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0212 ADVANCED PLACEMENT BIOLOGY LEVEL I FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDITS WITH LAB This course is a second-year college-level biology course. It surveys a broad spectrum of biological science topics: biochemistry, energetics, genetics, evolution, anatomy and physiology, botany, and ecology. This course is intensive and demanding because it is designed to completely cover all topics on the Advanced Placement Exam and provide extensive preparation for the Exam. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0225 COLLEGE PREP CHEMISTRY WITH LAB LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDIT Prerequisite: Biology, Algebra I Recommended: Algebra II concurrently or teacher recommendation This course covers all material present in the Massachusetts Science and Technology Framework including such topics as atomic structure, bonding, acids and bases, and dynamics of chemical reactions. The course will move at a pace that will allow students to understand and to reinforce the information. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0221 HONORS CHEMISTRY WITH LAB LEVEL II FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDITS Prerequisites: Biology Prerequisite or Concurrent: Algebra II or teacher recommendation This honors course deals with the study of the structure of the atom, phases of matter, dynamics of chemical reactions, energy, and electrochemistry. A detailed mathematical interpretation of data is emphasized. Concepts will be developed through inquiry, problem solving, lectures, and supplemental materials. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0222 ADVANCED PLACEMENT CHEMISTRY LEVEL I FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDITS WITH LAB Prerequisite: Honors Chemistry or an A or B+ in Chemistry. Pre-Calculus Calculus or Statistics must be taken concurrently. This course is a second-year college-level chemistry course with an extensive emphasis on the mathematical interpretation of data. It is designed for the science/engineering college bound student and includes an analytical problem-solving component for the serious science student. Students completing this course may take the Advanced Placement Exam for possible college credit. Topics include atomic structure, chemical bonding, chemical equations, acids and bases, electrochemistry, equilibrium, and thermodynamics. There will be extensive preparation for the Advanced Placement Exam. A summer assignment will be required. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0240 COLLEGE PREP PHYSICS WITH LAB LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDITS Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, Algebra I & II, and Geometry Physics courses involve the study of the forces and laws of nature affecting matter, such as equilibrium, motion, momentum, and the relationships between matter and energy. The study of physics includes examination of sound, light, and magnetic and electric phenomena. This class includes laboratory-based investigations and hands-on activities.

0231 HONORS PHYSICS WITH LAB LEVEL II FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDITS Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, Algebra I & II, and

Geometry This honors course is a traditional college preparatory course designed to acquaint the student with the fundamental laws of the physical world using mathematics and problem solving. The course involves detailed mathematical interpretation of data and required laboratory activities. Topics include mechanics (linear, circular, and rotary motion; forces; momentum; and energy), heat and thermodynamics, electricity and magnetism, wave motion, sound, light, atomic and nuclear physics, and relativity

0232 ADVANCED PLACEMENT PHYSICS LEVEL I FULL YEAR 1.5 CREDITS WITH LAB Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, Pre-Calculus or Calculus must be taken concurrently. AP Physics is a comprehensive college level algebra-based course designed to acquaint the student with the fundamental laws of the physical world. Subject matter will be presented through lectures, demonstrations, problem solving, laboratories, and reading assignments. Topics covered include mechanics (linear motion, projectile motion, circular motion, forces, dynamics, conservation of momentum and energy, and gravitational effects), electricity (static electricity and DC circuits), wave motion, and sound.

* **U.S. History:** Beginning with the graduating class of 2027, the student must satisfactorily complete coursework in the equivalent of a one-year U.S. History course. List the local course offerings that your district will certify as meeting the Competency Determination coursework requirement in this content area.

U.S. History (one year): U.S. History I, U.S. History II, or
Advanced Placement U.S. History (or a combination of semesters from each)

* **U.S. History:** Review the skills, competencies, and knowledge that a student must demonstrate mastery of as identified in the relevant Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Describe how a student will show mastery in U.S. History (beginning with the graduating class of 2027).

0300 UNITED STATES HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT I LEVEL III FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT

Students will examine the origins of the United States during the Revolutionary and Constitutional eras. Students will study the basic framework of American democracy and the basic concepts associated with American government. Students will also study America's westward expansion, the establishment of political parties, and the various economic and social changes that take place during this time period. Lastly, the students will learn about how sectional conflicts led to the Civil War, the consequences of the Civil War including Reconstruction, and continuing through the late 1800's, including the Gilded Age and Progressivism.

0301 UNITED STATES HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT I HONORS Teacher Recommendation Required LEVEL II FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT

This advanced course offers sophomore students the opportunity for a more in-depth study of United States History. More preparation time, more homework, and more open-ended assessment will be required in the study of United States History from the American Revolution to Reconstruction. Students will examine the origins of the United States during the Revolutionary and Constitutional eras. Students will study the basic framework of American democracy and the basic concepts associated with American government. Students will also study America's westward expansion, the establishment of political parties, and the various economic and social changes that take place during this time period. Lastly, the students will learn about how sectional conflicts led to the Civil War and the consequences of the Civil War including Reconstruction.

0330 ADVANCED PLACEMENT UNITED STATES HISTORY LEVEL I FULL YEAR 1 CREDIT Juniors and Seniors Open to Sophomores with teacher recommendation The challenging AP United States History program provides juniors and seniors with the factual knowledge, analytical thinking, writing skills, and comprehensive test-taking skills conducive for success in any college or university in the nation. The course helps prepare students to take the Advanced Placement U.S. History Exam for possible college credit given each May and also for achievement testing. *This course has a civics engagement project requirement during the school year. This is a college-level course, and once a student begins the course in September, the student is required to remain in the class for the entire academic year.

Section 2: Additional Requirements

In this section, you will:

- **List any other requirements of your Competency Determination policy in addition to those outlined in Section 1.**

Submission Questions

* In addition to the coursework and mastery requirements outlined in the previous section, please describe any other requirements of your district's Competency Determination policy (learning experiences, coursework, etc.).

Additional Considerations

- Students who do not earn the required passing grades in the above-prescribed courses may enroll in summer school, credit recovery courses, or be scheduled to take additional coursework by their school counselor. This will provide a student who has yet to meet the competency determination requirements additional opportunities to meet this standard for graduation.
- To meet the needs of diverse learners, Multilingual learners, and transfer/late enrolling students, the district will ensure that the implementation of the competency determination policy reflects the learning experiences of all students and includes opportunities to ensure that specialized supports, modifications, extended/additional learning opportunities, and alternative assessment methods are available to ensure that the pathway to graduation is differentiated where needed.

Section 3: Additional Considerations

In this section, you will:

- **Provide additional information on the implementation of your Competency Determination policy for specific student groups including students with disabilities, English learners, and late-enrolling students.**

Submission Questions

*** Students with Disabilities:**

- Describe how your district provides students with disabilities, including Massachusetts students receiving a publicly funded education in an out-of-district day or residential school, equal opportunity to meet the CD requirements, including any specialized supports, modifications, or alternative demonstration methods used as part of the policy.

Students with Disabilities

The Agawam Public Schools 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 Learners:**

- Describe how your district provides English learners equal opportunity to meet the CD requirements, including any specialized supports or considerations.
- If your district indicated in Section 1 that certain ESL courses meet the ELA coursework requirement of the CD, describe how you will determine which students this may apply to and how grade-appropriate ELA standards are integrated into the ESL courses that you certify as meeting the requirement.

English Language Learners

The Agawam Public Schools 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:**

- Describe how your district will evaluate eligibility for the Competency Determination among late-enrolling students, including the use of transcript reviews, course-taking opportunities, or in limited cases qualifying MCAS score-exception. In your response, explain how your policy ensures compliance with state requirements related to equivalent course length, relevant coursework, and demonstration of mastery.

Transfer/Late-Enrolling Students

Students who enroll after their ninth-grade year may be granted a determination of competency by the Agawam Public Schools in one or more of the following ways:

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

Section 4: Appeals Process

In this section, you will:

- **Explain your district's appeals process.**

Submission Questions

* Describe the process through which a student or parent/guardian may appeal to the district a district's determination that a student has not met the requirements of the Competency Determination. Include timelines, responsible personnel, and how decisions are communicated.

Appeals Process

- Current students and/or parents/guardians may appeal the determination of competency in accordance with the following district procedures:
- A competency determination appeal on behalf of a student enrolled in the district, including a student attending an approved special education day or residential school, may be filed by the parent/guardian or student 18 years of age or older to the High School Principal. The High School Principal will work collaboratively with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. If the appeal concerns possible mis-scoring of test items or miscalculation of grades used to make the competency determination, the appellant shall submit a rationale for the request to re-score the student's responses or recalculate the student's grade.
- The appeal must be filed no later than 60 days after the student receives the final grade for a course that satisfies the competency determination.
- If the appeal is based on the belief that the student has demonstrated mastery of the required skills, competencies, and knowledge through an alternative measure, despite not having done so through the standard coursework the appellant shall submit evidence having mastered the required skills and competencies. Such evidence may include, but not be limited to, continuous enrollment in courses aligned with the competency determination coursework requirement, performance in other courses not offered by the school (i.e. dual enrollment courses), and or passing scores on MCAS, provided that an appeal may not be awarded solely on the basis of a qualifying MCAS score.
- Those enrolled in the Agawam School District in the classes of 2003 through 2024 that did not earn a diploma may also appeal the decision through the same process.

Section 5: Diploma Request Process for Previously Enrolled Students

In this section, you will:

- **Explain your district's process for reviewing requests from previously enrolled student who may be eligible for a diploma.**

Submission Questions

- Describe the process through which an eligible student (see eligibility requirements in Appendix B) 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 has the opportunity to determine their current eligibility for a diploma pursuant to the district's CD requirements. Include timelines, responsible personnel, and how decision are communicated.

Agawam Process for Diploma Requests for Previously Enrolled Students

Agawam will offer 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 an opportunity 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., they 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 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.

Former Agawam High School students will be mailed a letter from Agawam High School in February of 2026 informing them of the change in CD requirements. This letter will be mailed. Former students will be instructed to contact Agawam High School if they would like a transcript review by April 30, 2026. A committee consisting of high school administration and a member of guidance will review and determine if the former student meets the requirements to earn a high school diploma under the new CD policy.

Section 6: Certifications

In this section, you will:

- **Complete several certifications regarding the approval and posting of your Competency Determination policy.**

Submission Questions

- ☒ * I certify that the policy has been approved by the governing board of the district.
- ☒ * I certify that the policy has been shared with all students, families/guardians, and district stakeholders.
- ☒ * I certify that the policy has been made publicly available in multiple languages.

* Provide the URL where your policy is posted on your website.

<https://files-backend.assets.thrillshare.com/docum>

Agawam (0005) Public School District - FY 2026 - CD Policy and Local Graduation Requirements - Rev 0

Section 1(a): Definition of a Credit

In this section, you will:

- Define what credit means in your district
- Provide the number of credits required in your local graduation requirements

Submission Questions

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- What is the definition of a credit for the purposes of your local graduation requirements?
- How many credit(s) does a student earn for completing a yearlong course or its equivalent?

Students will be required to accumulate 24 credits in order to graduate.

- One credit is a full-year course taken every day = 1 credit

- One half credit is a half-year, everyday course, or all year, every-other-day-course. = .5 credit ½ Carnegie unit is a half-year course = .5 credit

Section 1(b): Credit Requirements

- Please complete the credit requirements for each school listed by entering the total and subject-specific graduation credits in the appropriate fields, and
- Please also complete the additional information requested for each school.

School Code	School Name	What is the total number of credits required as part of your local graduation requirements?	How many credits are required in each of the following content areas as part of your local graduation requirements?							List any other components of the local graduation requirements (i.e., additional courses, attendance, community service, etc.)
			English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	History and Social Science	World Language	Physical Education	Art	
00050505	Agawam High	* 24.00	* 4.00	* 4.00	* 3.00	* 3.00	* 2.00	* 2.00	* 0.50	- one course in technology .5 credit - one semester of personal finance .5 credit

Section 1(c): Credit Requirements (use this box only for high schools not prepopulated above)

- Please complete the credit requirements for each school listed by entering the total and subject-specific graduation credits in the appropriate fields, and
- Please also complete the additional information requested for each school.

School Code	School Name	What is the total number of credits required as part of your local graduation requirements?	How many credits are required in each of the following content areas as part of your local graduation requirements?

			English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	History and Social Science	World Language	Physical Education	Art	List any other components of the local graduation requirements (i.e., additional courses, attendance, community service, etc.)
N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	