



NEW HEIGHTS

CHARTER SCHOOL

BROCKTON

Competency Determination and Graduation Requirements Policy

Revised: November 2025

Adopted: December 2025

Section 1: Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish clear requirements for graduation and competency determination (CD) at New Heights Charter School of Brockton (NHCSB), in alignment with Massachusetts state law and NHCSB’s mission to prepare all students for college.

Section 2: Applicability This policy applies to all enrolled NHCSB students in grades 6–12, including students with disabilities, English Learners (ELs), and students who enroll after the first day of school of a new school year.

Section 3: Graduation Requirements and Competency Determination

- **Competency Determination** - Beginning with the Class of 2026, students demonstrate competency by successfully completing coursework certified by NHCSB as meeting Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks standards. Passing coursework is defined as achieving a grade of 60 or higher in all required courses.
- **Minimum Course Requirements for High School Students (Class of 2026 and Beyond)**
 - English: 4 units
 - Mathematics: 3 units
 - Science: 3 units
 - Social Studies: 3 units
 - Core Electives: 5 units
 - Foreign Language/ESL: 2 units
 - PE/Wellness: 2 units

Total Minimum Units for Graduation: 26 units

Early College: Every student at NCHSB will be offered the opportunity to complete a minimum of 12 college credits or 4 courses at one of our college partners.

Community Service: 100 hours (25 hours/year). If a student enrolls in New Heights during the month of January or later, they will not be responsible for that year’s community service hours.

Senior Capstone Project: All graduating seniors will present a capstone project that incorporates their coursework, community service, and early college journey.

Section 4: Students with Disabilities and English Learners

- **Students with Disabilities:** Accommodations and modifications outlined in IEPs or 504 Plans will be used to support successful completion of required coursework. Alternate evidence of competency (portfolios, performance-based assessments, MCAS, college completion, etc) may be used where appropriate and approved by the New Heights' Academic Leadership Team.
- **English Learners:** EL students will receive language development support and accommodations. Multiple measures, including performance tasks or bilingual assessments, may be used to evaluate competency in each subject area.

Section 5: Late-Enrolling Students - Students who enroll after the start of high school will have individual plans developed to ensure access to graduation pathways. Prior coursework and transcripts from their sending district/school will be reviewed for credit equivalency.

Section 6: Use of MCAS Scores - While no longer required for graduation, MCAS scores may be considered as one measure of competency. MCAS results may also inform instructional support and interventions.

Section 7: Appeals Process - Students and families may appeal the school's decision to award or deny a CD in writing to the Principal or Designee within 15 school days. Appeals should include supporting evidence of competency. A review committee composed of members of the Academic Leadership Team will evaluate the appeal and issue a written decision within 10 school days. The committee's decision is final at the school level.

Section 8: Transcript Review Requests - Current and former students may request a transcript review to verify competency and graduation status. Requests must be submitted in writing to the Registrar or student's Academic Counselor. The review will evaluate academic records, transferred credits, and evidence of previously earned competency. If discrepancies are found, the student will be notified, and records will be updated.

Section 9: Grade Promotion and Retention - Students are promoted based on satisfactory completion of coursework with a D- average or higher, attendance, and overall academic achievement. Middle and high school students failing core content classes may need to attend summer school to earn promotion eligibility. Retention policies are based on the developmental and educational needs of students. Families are notified throughout the year of academic concerns via progress reports, warning letters, and retention notices.

Section 10: Policy Communication and Compliance - This policy will be shared with families, staff, and students and adheres to all state and local regulations. NHCSB remains committed to equitable access to graduation pathways and rigorous preparation for college and career success.

Signature Lines for Adoption:

Adopted on 12/2/25 by the Board of Trustees following a lengthy discussion with the Academic Leadership Team and Principal in addition to the Executive Director.