

Arkansas
Profile of State High School Exit Exam Policies

<i>State exit exam policy</i>	All students must pass the end-of-course Algebra I exam of the Arkansas Comprehensive Assessment Program in order to receive a high school diploma.
Type of test	End-of-course exams
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine prospective high school graduates' knowledge and skill levels relative to those needed for entry-level employment ● Determine prospective high school graduates' knowledge and skill levels relative to those needed for postsecondary education ● Determine prospective high school graduates' mastery of the state curriculum ● Encourage districts and schools to identify and serve students at risk of academic failure ● Provide data to state policymakers on student attainment of state education goals to inform educational policy decisions ● Increase alignment of local curriculum and programs of instruction with state education standards ● Promote equity of opportunity across all student groups ● Meet a state mandate
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for financial reasons	No
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for <i>other</i> reasons	Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, all students enrolled in English II must score at the pass level on the English II end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course, which is required for graduation. Students who do not pass the initial high-stakes assessments will receive two additional retest opportunities before participating in a formative strand analysis remediation and taking an alternative form of the tests.

Year first administered	The Algebra I end-of-course examination was first given in the 2000-01 school year but became a high-stakes assessment beginning in the 2009-10 school year. The English II end-of-course examination will not be operational until the 2014-15 school year.
Year diplomas first withheld	<p>The high-stakes requirements for Algebra I began with all students in grades 9 or below in the 2009-10 school year who had not already obtained credit for Algebra I. Students who did not obtain the requisite pass scale score on the initial administration of the Algebra I EOC will have multiple opportunities to retest. Therefore, no diplomas have yet been withheld.</p> <p>Act 1307 of 2009 mandated the development and implementation of only two high-stakes end-of-course assessments: Algebra I and English II. Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, all students enrolled in Algebra I must score at the pass level on the Algebra I end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course. Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, all students enrolled in English II must score at the pass level on the English II end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course. Students who do not pass the initial high-stakes assessments will receive two additional retest opportunities before participating in a formative strand analysis remediation and taking an alternative form of the tests. Geometry and biology are considered general end-of-course assessments under Act 1307 of 2009 and do not contain the high-stakes pass requirement.</p>
Subjects tested on exam	Algebra I, English II (2014-15), geometry, biology
Subjects required for graduation	Algebra I, English II (2014-15)
Grade exam first administered	This varies based upon the student's completion of the course. Generally, the Algebra I end-of-course examination is not administered to students prior to Grade 7; however, there are exceptions to this practice.
Grade(s) exam aligned to	The Algebra I EOC Examination is aligned to the Algebra I course framework, which is part of the 2004 Arkansas Mathematics Curriculum Framework.

Number of retakes allowed <i>before</i> the end of grade 12	As mandated in Act 1307, students who do not pass the initial high-stakes assessments in Algebra I and English II will receive two additional retest opportunities before participating in a formative strand analysis remediation and taking an alternative form of the tests.
Number of retakes allowed <i>after</i> grade 12	Act 1307 of 2009 does not limit the number of times the student may participate in the formative strand analysis remediation and take the alternative form of the high-stakes tests.
Is the exit exam used for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability purposes?	Yes
Is the same cut score used for graduation and NCLB accountability purposes?	<p>Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, the requisite scale score for any high-stakes end-of-course assessment shall be set only at the cut score necessary to demonstrate the minimum satisfactory passing level for that subject. This cut score is separate from what is reported for No Child Left Behind.</p> <p>The state board of education shall establish the requisite passing scale score for the Algebra I and English II end-of-course examinations. The Algebra I pass scale score was approved by the state board of education in December 2009, and the English II pass scale score will be established at a later date.</p>
Consideration given to changing the cut score needed to pass the exam for graduation purposes in the past year	No
Alternate paths to graduation for students other than English language learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities	Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, any student eligible for a high-stakes end-of-course assessment shall not obtain academic credit for the course until the student obtains the requisite pass scale score set by the state board on the high-stakes end-of-course assessment OR obtains the requisite score established by state board rule on an alternative assessment. An alternative assessment shall be an ACT assessment, SAT assessment, advanced placement test, or International Baccalaureate test. Additionally, if a student with disabilities identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,

	<p>20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq. is unable to meet the requirements of this section because of the nature of the student’s disabilities, the student may graduate from high school by demonstrating alternative competencies or alternative levels of competency under the student’s individualized education program.</p>
<p>Determination of eligibility to pursue these alternate paths to graduation</p>	<p>Students who meet or exceed a requisite score set by the State Board of Education on alternative assessments [ACT, SAT, Advanced Placement (AP) tests, or International Baccalaureate (IB) tests] are eligible to receive credit for the corresponding high-stakes assessment.</p> <p>Students identified as unable to meet the pass requirements of the high-stakes assessment because of the nature of his or her disabilities as determined through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed by an annual review conference committee may graduate from high school by demonstrating alternative competencies or alternative levels of competency as defined in the IEP.</p>
<p>Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners</p>	<p>Specific details on alternate paths to graduation for English language learners are still under consideration by the state.</p> <p>Accommodations are available for English language learners. Allowable accommodations include: extended time, word-to-word dictionary, individualized schedule, preferential seating, small group testing, individual testing, reading of the math/writing/science test in English, and noise buffers.</p>
<p>Alternate paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities</p>	<p>Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, “if a student with disabilities identified under IDEA is unable to meet the requirements of the high-stakes end-of-course assessments because of the nature of the student’s disabilities, the student may graduate from high school by demonstrating alternative competencies or alternate levels of competency under the student’s individualized education plan.”</p> <p>Accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Allowable accommodations include: transcribing, recording, signing directions, preferential seating, small group testing, individual testing, reading of the math/writing/science test, magnifying devices, noise buffers, individualized schedule, extended time, large print test, Braille test, and</p>

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Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for undergraduate admission purposes?	No
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for placement purposes?	No
Are students who meet a certain standard on the state exit exam granted exemptions on college placement exams?	No
Can students receive any form of postsecondary education course credit for their performance on the exit exam?	No
State participation in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	Arkansas has adopted the CCSS in both English language arts and math.
CCSS testing consortia membership	Arkansas is a member of Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
Impact of adoption of the CCSS on high school exit exam policies	The adoption of the CCSS will change the content standards for Algebra I and English II.
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in English language arts with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Yes. The current English Language Arts assessment will be replaced by the PARCC high school English Language Arts assessment aligned to the CCSS in 2014-15.
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in math with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Yes. The current Algebra I assessment will be replaced by the PARCC high school mathematics assessment aligned to the CCSS in 2014-15.

Plans to maintain current exit exams in subjects other than English language arts and math once the Common Core State Standards are fully implemented	Not applicable
Will changes in state exit exams mentioned above make the exams more rigorous, less rigorous, or about the same?	While the PARCC assessments have yet to be developed, we believe that they will be no less rigorous than our current assessment and will use innovative item types and technology to measure the full range of the CCSS in ways that are difficult to do in traditional paper and pencil tests.
Preparation for students and teachers to transition to new exam	Arkansas is phasing in the CCSS over time beginning with K-2 in 2011-12, 3-8 in 2012-13, and 9-12 in 2013-14 in order to give schools time to build capacity and make the systemic changes needed to put the CCSS in place. The Arkansas Department of Education will place priority resources on professional development focused on Next Generation instruction based on the CCSS.