



Guidelines

Applying For Waivers and Appeals

The High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE)
August 2010

General Requirements: Students may be eligible for a waiver from passing/taking the Alaska High School Graduation Examination. A student may submit an application to the local governing board requesting a waiver. However, to qualify for a high school graduation diploma, a student must meet all other state and local school district graduation requirements, in addition to either passing the high school exam or receiving a waiver from passing/taking the exam from the local governing board. The Department of Education & Early Development has developed three forms to make application to the local governing board. Guidelines for helping students make application follows.

Waiver Process

1. Student completes waiver application and submits the application to the local governing board.
 - A. If the waiver request is due to late arrival, use Form Number 05-04-013. Submit the form to the regional school board. The regional school board may not grant a waiver until the student's last semester of year of intended graduation. This will allow time for the student to complete all academic requirements and participate in the spring HSGQE administration.
 - B. If the waiver request is for a rare and unusual circumstance, use Form Number 05-04-014. The regional school board may not grant a waiver until the student's last semester of year of intended graduation. This will allow time for the student to complete all academic requirements and participate in the spring HSGQE administration.
 - C. If the waiver application is due to passing another state's exit exam, use Form Number 05-04-015. The regional school board may grant the application at any time following the student's enrollment in school and filing the application.
2. A student who has applied to a regional school board for a waiver from passing the HSGQE must continue to take the Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Examination until the regional school board approves the waiver the last semester of the year of intended graduation. A student who passed another state's exit exam will take the HSGQE until the regional board can meet to approve the waiver.
3. The regional school board must act upon the student's application and notify the student by registered mail whether the application was approved or denied. The school board must also provide a copy of its decision to the Commissioner of Education & Early Development.
4. The student may appeal a school board's denial of a waiver to the Commissioner of Education & Early Development by completing HSGQE Appeal Form Number 05-04-016. Appeals must be sent to the Commissioner at 801 W. 10th St., Suite 200, PO Box 110500, Juneau, AK 99811-0500. Appeals must be postmarked no later than 30 days following the student's receipt of the regional school board's decision to deny.
5. Waivers and appeal forms are available from school districts or can be obtained on the web at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/forms/home.cfm>.

Types of Waivers

- **Arriving late into Alaska Public School System (4 AAC 06.773)**
Form Number 05-04-013

To apply for a waiver under this section the student must submit, with this application, the following:

- ❑ Documentation from the school in Alaska in which the student is currently enrolled, including the student's initial enrollment date. The documentation must indicate that the student arrived in the state with two or fewer semesters remaining in the student's intended year of graduation.
- ❑ Documentation that verifies the date of the student's physical presence in Alaska prior to enrollment in any of the schools or school options in the state. Documentation may include records or receipts of airlines, the Alaska Marine Highway system, or other carriers, hotel receipts, or affidavits or certificates by persons acquainted with or related to the applicant who have personal knowledge of the applicant's physical presence in Alaska.
- ❑ Documentation from the out-of-state school district from which the student transferred, including enrollment date and exit date from the school district.

- **Rare and Unusual Circumstances (4 AAC 06.774)**
Form Number 05-11-020

Waivers for rare and unusual circumstances must demonstrate that the rare or unusual circumstance was beyond the control of the student, the student's parents, and the school and that no other recourse or remedy existed to address the rare and unusual circumstances before the student's intended year of graduation.

To apply for a waiver from **passing** the HSGQE under this section the student must submit, with the application, the following documentation:

- ❑ **Death of a Parent**
To be eligible for this waiver, the student's parent must have died in the final semester of the student's intended year of graduation. Documentation must indicate the date of the death and that the parent was the natural parent or legal guardian.
- ❑ **Serious and Sudden Illness or Injury**
To be eligible for this waiver, the student must have experienced a serious and sudden illness or physical injury that prevented the student from taking the HSGQE in the final semester of the student's intended year of graduation. Documentation must include an affidavit or certification from the student's treating licensed medical professional. The documentation must indicate that the diagnosed medical condition prevented the student from taking the HSGQE and was beyond the control of the student or student's parents.
- ❑ **Disability**
To be eligible for this waiver, the student must have experienced a disability that developed within the student's high school career. The disability must have arisen too late for the school to develop a meaningful and valid alternative assessment. Documentation must be provided from the student's IEP team which includes the date on which the disability was determined, information describing why no meaningful or valid alternative assessment could be used, and documentation of support from the school principal and district superintendent.
- ❑ **District or System Error**
To be eligible for this waiver, a student must have experienced a significant and uncorrectable system error related to the HSGQE. Documentation must include

verification completed examination materials from the last administration of the student's year of intended graduation were lost in transit between the school and the department; or verification that the school or district failed to administer the exam during one of the administration dates within the student's senior year.

❑ **Unable to Participate due to disability**

A diploma-track student who is unable to participate in one or more subtests of the HSGQE because of the student's disability may request from the governing body permission to take the modified HSGQE or the nonstandardized HSGQE, if eligible under the *Participation Guidelines*, in place of one or more subtests of the HSGQE for the first time the student sits for the HSGQE. A Request for Permission (form #05-05-020) must be filed before October 31, of the student's sophomore year or the year in which the student is first enrolled in the state. The waiver is later submitted the final semester of the student's year of intended graduation.

To apply for a waiver under this section the student must submit all of the following:

- An approved copy of the Request for Permission and all required attachments, which was submitted before October 31, of the student's sophomore year or the year in which the student first enrolled in the state.
- An approved copy of the alternative assessment application: modified or nonstandardized HSGQE, which was filed by the IEP/504 team 60 days in advance of the spring test window, of the student's sophomore year.
- Documentation of proficiency on all three subtests of the modified or nonstandardized HSGQE.

● **Passed Another State's Competency Examination (4 AAC 06.777)
Form Number 05-04-015**

To be eligible for this waiver from **taking** the HSGQE, a student must have taken and passed all parts/subtests of another state's high school graduation exam in reading, English, and math. Note: many states offer a variety of assessment types at different grade levels. It is the district's obligation to investigate the other state's exit exam description prior to submitting an application to the local school board.

Documentation includes one of the following options:

- ❑ The out-of -state school from which the student transferred must transmit directly to the regional school board an assessment report from the school where the student passed all parts/subtests of a secondary competency examination. The report must contain a summary of the student's assessment history in the school issuing the report. If the school where the student passed a secondary competency examination directly transmitted this information when the student enrolled in the Alaska public school system, then the student need not provide the information again with this application.
- ❑ The out-of -state school from which the student transferred must transmit directly to the regional school board student transcripts demonstrating the student passed all parts/subtests of a secondary competency examination. The transcript must show the subtests of the statewide secondary competency exit exam and the subtests that the student has passed if an assessment report is not available. If this information was transmitted directly from the school when the student enrolled in the Alaska public school system, then the student does not need to provide the information again with this application.