

Pennsylvania
Recognized Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study

The eligibility options for a student graduating from secondary school in Pennsylvania during the 2007 calendar year are:

- ***The Pennsylvania Certificate of Distinction***
- ***A set of courses similar to the State Scholars Initiative.*** This program of study requires passing grades in the following:
 - Four years of English;
 - Three years of math (including Algebra I and a higher level course such as Algebra II, geometry, or data analysis and statistics);
 - Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry or physics);
 - Three years of social studies; and
 - One year of a foreign language.
- ***Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and test scores.*** This program requires a minimum of two Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in high school and a minimum passing score on the exams for those classes. Students must score 3 or higher on AP exams and 4 or higher on IB exams.
- ***Project 720 College and Career Prep Course Sequence.*** This program requires:
 - Four years of English;
 - Four years of Math (including Algebra 1, Algebra 2, geometry, and an additional course in an advanced math);
 - Three years of Science (including biology, chemistry, physics or physical science);
 - Four years of Social Studies; and
 - Two years of a language other than English (optional).
- ***High Schools That Work Award of Educational Achievement.*** Students must complete the HSTW-recommended curriculum in at least two of the three subject areas; complete a concentration in a career/technical field, mathematics/science, or the humanities; and meet all three of the performance goals on the HSTW assessment.
 - The recommended curriculum consists of:
 - English: Four credits in college-preparatory level courses
 - Math: Four credits in college-preparatory level courses, including Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II and a higher level mathematics course such as trigonometry, statistics, pre-calculus, calculus, or Advanced Placement mathematics.
 - Science: Three or more credits in science, including at least two credits in college-preparatory biology, chemistry, anatomy/physiology or physics/applied physics.
 - The concentrations consist of:

- Career/Technical: Four or more credits in a coherent sequence in a career/technical field or major.
 - Mathematics/Science: Four college-preparatory courses each in mathematics and science. At least one higher level course in either mathematics or science must be at the Advanced Placement level.
 - Humanities: Four college-preparatory courses each in English/language arts and social studies and four courses in an area of the humanities, such as foreign language, fine arts or additional English and social studies courses. At least one course in either English or social studies must be at the Advanced Placement level.
 - Performance Goals:
 - The performance goals on the HSTW assessment are a 279 in reading, a 297 in mathematics, and a 299 in science on a scale of 0-500.
- ***Pennsylvania Dual Enrollment Program.*** This program requires that students take nine credits through dual enrollment in order to complete a rigorous high school course of study. A student must either pass the cooperating postsecondary institution's placement exam or receive a certain score on the state's PSSA exam (currently determined locally) to be eligible for participation in the state of Pennsylvania's dual enrollment program. As dictated by state legislation, dual enrollment courses may not be remedial, and it defines the types of postsecondary institutions that may offer dual enrollment, ensuring that they offer substantive, rigorous coursework.
 - Requirements:
 - PSSA: Scored at or above the locally determined threshold score;
 - Placement Exam: Have passed the participating postsecondary institution's placement exam; and
 - College Coursework: Successful completion of nine credits in core academic areas.
- ***Admission to State Institutions of Higher Education.*** To qualify for this program, students must attain proficient or above on all 11th grade PSSA core content areas (math, reading and writing) as well as have successfully completed a set of core subject courses which will adequately prepare them for coursework at a state sponsored four year institution of higher education.
 - Requirements:
 - Four years of English;
 - Three years of Math (in sequential mathematics), which does not include general math, but does include Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, and other advanced math courses;
 - Three years of Science (including at least two of a laboratory science);
 - Three years of Social Studies; and
 - Two years of Foreign Language.