



POLICY TITLE:	
High School Graduation Requirements Approval Process Policy	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: September 30, 2011 June 20, 2016	MOST RECENTLY UPDATED: April 23, 2018

**POLICY**

Once a charter is fully approved by DC PCSB, a public charter school has exclusive control over its instructional methods. However, as agreed to in a school’s charter agreement, changes to a school’s curriculum that impact its mission require a charter agreement amendment. For high schools, graduation requirements are an inherent part of the education program DC PCSB approves when it approves a high school charter application. The School Reform Act states that public charter schools must graduate students who (1) are nationally and internationally competitive; (2) are educated individuals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and (3) perform competitively on district-wide assessments. To that end, DC PCSB will approve applications for public charter high schools that contain graduation requirements equivalent to or surpassing<sup>1</sup> those outlined in the DC Municipal Regulations (DCMR) Title V-A, Chapter 22 ([read here](#)). To ensure a public charter high school is held accountable to the graduation requirements approved in its application, DC PCSB will include those graduation requirements in its charter agreement.

If a school has school-specific graduation requirements that are equivalent to or surpassing those outlined in the DCMR and the school grants students waivers from a school-specific graduation requirement, then the criteria to receive a waiver must be included in the school’s graduation requirements (or other policy formally approved by the school’s board) and the school’s Board of Trustees must approve each student waiver. High school

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<sup>1</sup> Surpassing DCMR graduation requirements means exceeding the number of credits or exceeding, on the whole, requirements needed to graduate as outlined in the DCMR. All high school diplomas issued by public charter schools authorized by DC PCSB must be signed by the DC PCSB Chair or Vice Chair. Accordingly, all high school diplomas, along with a final transcript signed by the School Registrar for each student receiving a diploma, must be sent to DC PCSB’s offices for signature at least two weeks before graduation.



graduation requirements must include all the course requirements and additional activities (e.g., community service and portfolios) required for graduation and are subject to the terms of DC PCSB's Credit Recovery policy. If a school offers competency-based learning, then the school must obtain the appropriate waivers from DC PCSB pursuant to the process developed by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, per the [High School Credit Flexibility](#) regulations. Any school with graduation requirements that allow competency-based learning/ award competency-based units must work with DC PCSB staff to incorporate its competency-based learning into its charter agreement.

**Board Approval Acknowledged by:**

  


Rick Cruz  
DC PCSB Board Chair

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