



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent
of Education

July 11, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education
FROM: Thomas R. Bice *TRB*
State Superintendent of Education
RE: Phasing Out the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam*

On September 10, 2009, the State Board of Education voted unanimously on a resolution that included phasing out the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam* (AHSGE) and replacing it with end-of-course tests. Systems were notified that the 2011-12 first-time ninth graders would be the last cohort required to pass the AHSGE in order to receive a diploma.

As was presented to the State Board of Education at Tuesday's meeting, the dates for phasing out the AHSGE and beginning end-of-course assessments have been modified. As a result, first-time ninth graders of 2011-12 (tenth grade class of 2012-13) will **NOT** be required to take or pass the AHSGE as a diploma requirement. First-time ninth graders of 2010-11 (eleventh grade class of 2012-13) will now be the last cohort required to pass the AHSGE as a diploma requirement.

End-of-course tests will be administered for the first time in 2012-13 and will include English 9, English 10, Algebra I, geometry, and biology. Any student enrolled in courses for which an end-of-course assessment is scheduled will take these end-of-course tests even if they have previously taken the AHSGE. Results for this first year of end-of-course tests will be utilized for instructional purposes and for establishing baseline data only. There will be no high-stakes consequences for students or for schools based on the end-of-course tests administered in 2012-13. More details related to these tests will be provided as they are finalized.

Since the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam Requirement* brochure was given to the first-time ninth graders of 2011-12 informing them that they would be required to pass the AHSGE in order to receive a diploma, we ask that you provide the attached amended notification to these students and their parents informing them of these changes. If you have questions concerning this, please contact Mrs. Rebecca Mims, Student Assessment, at 334-242-8038 or rmims@alsde.edu.

TRB/GAT/RWM
Attachment

cc: City and County System Test Coordinators
High School Principals

FY12-2099

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

On September 10, 2009, the State Board of Education voted unanimously on a resolution to phase out the use of the *Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE)* as a graduation requirement. The AHSGE will be replaced with end-of-course tests aligned with instructional content to ensure that our graduates are prepared for the workforce, technical school, and two- and four-year colleges.

This new concept goes into effect in the upcoming 2012-2013 school year and applies to first-time ninth graders of 2011-2012. This will result in your student **NOT** being required to take or pass the AHSGE as a graduation requirement. With this change, your school's faculty and administration can now fully devote their focus to preparing their students for college and career readiness.

In future years, though not for the 2012-2013 administration, these new end-of-course tests will be used as a percentage of the student's grade. We are excited about this new direction of returning to a focus of assessment being used to inform instruction and student learning for the students we serve across the state of Alabama.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

TRB:LAK