



Mass Core/HHS Graduation Requirements Proposal to Amend

Changing the mindset to improve student
achievement and success

Presentation to School Committee Policy Sub-Committee
December 5, 2024



Why was Mass Core Developed?

MassCore was developed in 2018 to increase the likelihood that high school graduates meet admission requirements for the Commonwealth's four-year public colleges and the University of Massachusetts, as well as improve their chances of admission to private colleges.

Mass Core outlines a recommended program of high school studies while allowing districts the flexibility to set their own requirements.



HPS Mass Core Pilot & Barriers

- A previous principal proposed MassCore in 2021 to implement starting for 2025 graduates
- Post-COVID educational challenges, including issues with behavior, attendance, and staff turnover, have required significant attention and resources from HHS staff and leadership. As a result, the universal rollout of this expectation may be premature at this time.
- With turnover, other initiatives were being implemented
- In September, counselors reclassified students to reflect 24 credits & completed grad checks to determine what was needed
- Concern for our varied populations to meet these requirements (MLL, Special Ed, CTE/Classical, repeating students, students with attendance issues, migrant students with educational disruptions). No room for student error
- Requires continued and expanded during the implementation process to allocate resources accordingly.

| Area of Study | Haverhill High School Credits 20 | MassCore HHS Class of 2025 and beyond Credits 22 MassCore does not include PE/Health as additional credits, yet HPS requires 2 Wellness credits for graduation as it is a state requirement.** This completes a total of 24 graduation credits. |
|--|--|--|
| English (I, II, III, IV) | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Social Studies – including World History II and US History I & II | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Mathematics (*Must include Algebra II) | 3.0 | 4.0* |
| Lab-based Science | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Technology | 0.5 | --- |
| School-to-Career | 1.0 | --- |
| Fine Arts or World Languages | 1.0 | --- |
| Fine Arts | --- | 1.0 |
| World Languages (*Must be the same language) | --- | 2.0* |
| Wellness | 2.0 | 2.0** |
| Electives | 2.5 | --- |
| Additional Mass Core credits (*Must be from technology, school-to career, business, or additional core academic areas) | --- | 5.0 |

53% of Mass HS have adopted MassCore
18% of the total of schools that have adopted MassCore
are public high schools,
and 35% are Charter or Vocational. This information has
not been updated in 2 years (DESE, 2022-2023)



**Surrounding schools districts that have not adopted Mass Core
requirements:**

Methuen

Billerica

Lowell

Greater Lowell Regional Tech

Pentucket

Triton

Shawsheen Tech



Implementation of Mass Core- what needs to be put in place prior to implementation?

Language- no official waiver or testing option/mastery assessment in place. Except for students in language based special education programs and students that pass the Seal of Biliteracy exam. If we provide this, it would assist MLL students not having to take a language. If students do not have two year, counselors sign students up to take SOB Senior year. If they do not pass, they do not receive a diploma. Process of determining best course of action. Typically Levels 1-3 are not placed in a language so they can focus on learning English but then take SOB- compromises graduation if they do not pass. More creative solutions need to be put in place.

PE- Students who complete a full athletic team season have opportunity to receive credit but there was not a formalized process until November 2024. Some credit advancement in place but not consistent each school year

Funding- continuous and expanded funding is necessary for Credit Recovery/Credit Advancement

Student Learning Outcomes-(in progress) Changing mindset and outcome to reflect the vision of a student (long term goals related to career/college readiness) instead of core values (decision making).



Proposal to Amend

Revise the HHS Student Handbook 2024-2025 to reflect previous graduation credits and guidelines for promotion and remove MCAS graduation requirement

| | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| 2023-2024 Graduation Credits | 20 credits |
| 2024-2025 Graduation Credits | 24 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 2023-2024 Guidelines for Promotion | Grade 9 to 10: Earn 4.5 credits and pass both English I and Algebra I Grade 10 to 11: Earn 9.0 accumulated credits and pass English II Grade 11 to 12: Earn 13.5 accumulated credits and pass English III |
| 2024-2025 Guidelines for Promotion | For Class of 2025 and later: Grade 9 to 10: Earn 5.5 credits and pass both English I and Algebra I Grade 10 to 11: Earn 11.0 accumulated credits and pass English II Grade 11 to 12: Earn 17.0 accumulated credits and pass English III |



Graduation Requirement proposal to amend

- Implementation of a Language waiver and/or assessment for the 2025-2026 school year. According to MassCore guidelines, Districts may designate students with demonstrated fluency and literacy in language(s) other than English as meeting the MassCore recommendations for world language.
- Pass 4 years of English/Math to graduate
- Take 4 years of Math- MassCore recommendation (instead of 3 years of math which was previously required)
- MCAS-Students who have already achieved the qualifying MCAS scores in Math, ELA and Science have earned their CD and are eligible to earn a high school diploma provided they meet their local graduation requirements. Students who have not yet earned the CD as of December 5, 2024 would be eligible to do so through “satisfactorily completing coursework that has been certified by the student’s district.”
- 1 Art or 1 credit Language



Recommendations for elevating student success

- Refocus on other ways to adjust our Guidance curriculum to address the expectation that all students graduate prepared for college, career, and life
- Continue to implement and improve the individualized student sessions during the course selection process
- Further incorporate FAFSA education and availability in the Guidance Curriculum 5-12, during grade 9-12 workshops, Senior meetings and Financial Aid nights/application assistance for families
- Develop a plan for our at-risk students and those at-risk for dropping out (presently coordinating with NECCO Center for Adult Education for a HiSet/GED and/or Adult Diploma Program at HHS and close review of at-risk students who would benefit from a referral for HiSet/GED program on site in Lawrence or Haverhill.
- Provide students who complete 22+ credits and have participated in additional rigorous coursework to be provided a Mass Core certificate with their diploma
- Redesigning Haverhill High's 21st Century Expectations of Learning from core values to the vision of a student.