

As the Summer Recess Approaches for the Ohio General Assembly Questions Remain Regarding 2019 Graduation Requirements for Schools

By [Leighann Fink](#), Attorney

With the 2017-2018 school year squarely behind us, educators and students alike have questions regarding whether the Ohio Department of Education's stricter graduation requirements will become effective for 2019 graduates. If the Senate takes action on S.B. 216 prior to its summer recess beginning sometime in June, it is possible for legislators to include alternative, more relaxed pathways to graduation in the Bill, similar to those added to H.B. 49 for 2018 graduates. However, based upon recent statements from Senator Peggy Lehner, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, it seems unlikely there will be any movement on S.B. 216 prior to the summer recess. This means stricter graduation requirements will be in place for 2019 graduates at the start of the 2018-2019 school year.

In order to graduate in 2019, students must take and earn a state minimum of 20 credits in specific subject areas, including English Language Arts, Health, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies, and other electives. Students must also receive instruction in Economics and Financial Literacy, and complete at least two semesters of Fine Arts. Individual districts, however, may require more than 20 credits to graduate. Along with the credit requirements, students must also choose one of three pathways to graduation and:

- (1) score 18 out of 35 possible points on seven end-of-course state tests with a minimum of 4 points in Mathematics, 4 points in English, and 6 points across Science and Social Studies;
- (2) earn a minimum of 12 points by receiving a State Board of Education approved, and industry recognized, credential or group of credentials and earn the required score on the WorkKeys test; or
- (3) earn remediation free scores in Mathematics and English Language Arts on either the ACT or SAT.

It appears that the end of the 2017-2018 school year closed the door on alternative graduation pathways such as maintaining a 2.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale in all courses completed during the 12th grade year; attending classes regularly at an attendance rate of 93% during the 12th grade year; and completing 120 hours of work or community service. With these, and other, alternative pathways gone, students must comply with the requirements stated above in order to earn their diploma in 2019, unless the Senate takes specific action in the coming days or weeks ahead.

Please contact any of the listed attorneys regarding the possible effects of the 2019 stricter graduation requirements for students in your district. We welcome your questions.

Helen Carroll
330.571.7608 | hcarroll@ralaw.com

Diana Feitl
216.615.4838 | dfeitl@ralaw.com

Fred Compton
330.849.6610 | fcompton@ralaw.com

Leighann Fink
330.849.6633 | lfink@ralaw.com