# "" Senate Bill 744 Talking Points

Senate Bill 744 is a new law in Oregon related to the requirements to earn a diploma. At the heart of the law, SB 744 sets in motion a statewide process to review Oregon’s graduation requirements and make recommendations that best meet the needs of all learners to achieve the knowledge and skills that are critical for success after high school. Part of Oregon’s requirements include how students demonstrate essential skills, like reading, writing, and math in order to earn a diploma. SB 744 places a temporary pause on requiring students to demonstrate proficiency based on state-approved assessment tools in these essential skills areas, while maintaining all course and credit requirements for graduation, as well as the [Personalized Learning Requirements](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/OregonDiploma/PLR/Pages/default.aspx).

The [nine Essential Skills](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/essentialskills/Documents/es_definitions_grad-requirements.pdf) are provided below. The Essential Skills are not to be interchanged with standardized testing; the Essential Skills define what Oregon communities believed students should be able to do when they graduate from high school. There were multiple ways to demonstrate proficiency in relation to the Essential Skills, including state summative assessments, other standardized assessments, and work samples. Only the first three have historically been assessed with state-approved assessment options, which has focused attention on a small subset of what was intended to be a comprehensive, holistic educational approach:

1. *Read and comprehend a variety of text*
2. *Write clearly and accurately*
3. *Apply mathematics in a variety of settings*
4. Listen actively and speak clearly and coherently
5. Think critically and analytically
6. Use technology to live, learn, and work
7. Demonstrate civic and community engagement
8. Demonstrate global literacy
9. Demonstrate personal management and teamwork skills

Senate Bill 744 Requires the Oregon Department of Education to use a transparent process that is equitable, accessible, and inclusive to:

1. **Review existing state requirements for earning a high school diploma** as prescribed by state law and rules adopted by the State Board of Education. This review must include a review of all diploma requirements, including the use of alternative certificates.
2. **Research what other states require for graduation, including whether they require exit exams for high school.** Oregon is one of 11 states that require passing exit exams in reading, writing, and/or math to receive a diploma.
3. **Listen to Oregon’s diverse communities**, particularly those who have experienced the identified graduation outcome disparities, to better understand how graduation requirements can meaningfully position students for greater success in life and in their careers.
4. **Continue the COVID-19 related suspension of the use of state-approved assessment options to demonstrate Essential Skills** for two additional years as a part of the charge to evaluate the graduation requirements and their impact.

# Oregon’s Current Requirements for Graduation

1. **Reading, writing, and math are still required to receive a diploma in Oregon.** Students who receive a diploma in Oregon must still earn passing grades in 24 high school credits, including four years of language arts (reading and writing) and three years of math.
2. **Oregon’s graduation requirements, which included demonstrations of proficiency based on state-approved assessment options, were developed starting in 2007** and enacted in 2009. The role of assessment in graduation requirements remains an outstanding question in Oregon.
3. **It will take time to study how to develop a graduation process that is equitable, relevant, and designed for the future of all of Oregon’s students.**