



FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
1200 South Clinton Street · Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Graduation Pathways/Diploma Q&A

Q. If there are children today who will not be able to score high enough on the SAT, how will that affect their graduation, diploma or ability for future success in employment?

A. There are other ways a student could meet the requirements to graduate. However, it is unclear at this point what options a student will have if they have counted on using the pathway that requires the SAT and doesn't reach the required score.

Q. If a student takes the SAT on his/her own and meets the graduation requirement, does this count for graduation?

A. We expect the logistics of taking the exams will be established by the time the Class of 2023 will be taking the exams.

Q. Lots of answers include "we have to figure these things out," so, what's the deadline for figuring things out? Are districts waiting for guidance from SBOE?

A. Fort Wayne Community Schools is not waiting for final decisions from the State Board of Education. We already have a lot in place to ensure students are prepared for the workforce and education opportunities after high school. We are also in the process of evaluating our course offerings in middle and high school to ensure students have access to classes they need. And, we are revamping our curriculum to be sure it is rigorous for all students and consistent across the District.

Q. How are students going to fit more hours of requirements outside normal school hours when they already don't get out of school until 4 p.m., have sports and extracurricular activities, homework, etc.?

A. Because FWCS has been working to ensure students are prepared for life after graduation for many years, we expect some students who are already heavily involved in extra-curricular activities and a rigorous class schedule are already meeting most of the new pathway requirements. We need to make sure this truly is the case for students in the Class of 2023 and beyond.

Q. How will companies support thousands of internships?

A. We don't know, but we are starting the conversations now to make sure opportunities will be available for our students.

Q. How will our school system pay for all this? There was no extra funding provided.

A. We aren't sure at this point exactly what additional expenses we will have, but we always focus our funds on expenses that are directly connected to student learning.

Q. Will they have training on how to work with our students? Given expectations? How will students get internships? How will they be aligned to curriculum? Will it include afterschool work? Do I have a say in the placements?

A. These are all processes that need to be worked out.

Q. Are the interns going to be paid?

A. In most cases, they likely will not be paid as it will be for educational credit.

Q. Where is the money coming from for the testing for honor Pathways? If we leave it to the students this will stop a lot of low income students from graduating with honors.

A. That is always a concern for us, as well. We do not have an answer at this point.

Q. What are some ways our children with special needs will be supported? Just seems like the thought process was focused on general education and not on *all students*. My child's future should matter too when it comes to obtaining a diploma even though she has a disability (Down Syndrome).

A. We agree with you, and we believe we should do everything we can to help your child achieve success. We hope this process does not prevent that from happening.

Q. I've heard curriculum is changing down to the elementary levels to gear kids toward these pathways. Is this true? Is the government/school system setting my child's career path rather than letting them/the market dictate workforce needs? Can paths be switched?

A. If we are increasing the rigor and expectations at the middle and high school level, then we would expect rigor at the elementary level to increase also. This is part of the work we are doing to revamp our curriculum District-wide. However, this also means that we need to be sure we are meeting students' needs whether they are struggling or achieving above grade level. We do not want to lock children in to a specific path, but we do not know how flexible the state will be in allowing students to switch pathways.

Q. What about transfer students into an Indiana school, will they be behind?

A. We are told there will be a process to bring students into the system in their high school years, but we don't know how that will be accomplished.

Q. Even in small communities, many of our student are doing many of these pathways, but to track all these extra activities will take time. Who will track all these extra requirements? Who, on current staff, have this extra time?

A. No one has extra time. We are not sure how this will be set up to make tracking student progress possible.

Q. What if a student is on the military track and then finds out they cannot join due to medical issue?

A. We do not know yet.

Q. What will be the criteria for passing project-based, service-based, work-based learning experiences? Will it be a moving target from year to year like the SAT/ACT scores?

A. That also has not yet been determined.

Q. Can you opt out of the pathways to get a general diploma?

A. The state is also determining what the diploma will be. It will change from the current system.

Q. Will students work on a farm count for their pathway?

A. It would seem that should qualify under the work-based learning experience, but we do not have that level of detail yet.

Q. Give an example of project-based learning project and service learning experience.

A. Already, many of our middle and high school students participate in project-based and service learning projects. For example, each year students from New Tech Academy at Wayne research downtown Fort Wayne (the rivers, the land, the roadways, the buildings) and come up with their own downtown redevelopment ideas. They present their designs, using maps, computer-assisted design, marketing materials and oral presentation, to leaders in the community. It is a project that combines many subjects and disciplines allowing students to learn about the history and geography of the city while using CAD and necessary literacy skills, among other skills. We would expect this type of project would qualify as project-based learning.