1. ***Will seniors be able to graduate in 2020?***

Current seniors who meet all district and state requirements may graduate this school year. The requirement that students take end-of-course assessments in Algebra I, English II, Biology and U.S. History has been suspended for seniors because these assessments cannot be administered in spring 2020. Statewide, students are required to earn a minimum of 24 Carnegie units to graduate.

1. ***If state and federal assessments are not being administered, how will students meet graduation requirements?***

Any student grades 7 through 12 enrolled in school during the 2019 – 2020 school year as of March 16, 2020, the first date of school closures due to COVID-19, that has passed the Algebra I, Biology, English II, and/or U.S. History course(s), but has not passed the corresponding EOC subject area test(s) or met one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the test(s), will be allowed to graduate, if all other state and local graduation requirements have been met.

*See backup material (item 1) from the March 26, 2020 meeting of the State Board of Education for details regarding graduation requirements (Process Standard 14) for students impacted by the suspension of state and federal assessments due to the COVID-19 school closures.*

1. ***What students are exempt from ever having to take or pass the Algebra I, Biology, English II and/or U. S. History end of course assessment(s)?***

**Answers (please read each one)**

1. Any student grades 7 through 12 that is enrolled in Algebra I, Biology, English II and/or U. S. History during the 2019 – 2020 school year and earns the Carnegie Unit credit will not be required to take and/or pass the corresponding EOC subject area test(s) or meet one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the test(s) in order to meet the graduation requirements regardless of their expected graduation date/year.
2. Clarification: The student will need to have earned the Carnegie unit credit prior to the end of the 2019 – 2020 school year before the summer MSIS data submission deadline. If the Carnegie unit for the course is not earned by the end of the Spring 2020 semester or prior to the summer MSIS data submission deadline through credit recovery, extended school year, and/or summer school, etc., this rule suspension will not apply.
3. Any student grades 7 through 12 enrolled in school during the 2019 – 2020 school year as of March 16, 2020, the first date of school closures due to COVID-19, that has passed (earned the Carnegie Unit credit) the Algebra I, Biology, English II, and/or U.S. History course(s) prior to or during the 2019 – 2020 school year, but has not passed the corresponding EOC subject area test(s) or met one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the test(s), will be allowed to graduate, if all other state and local graduation requirements have been met regardless of their expected graduation date/year. These students are typically referred to as “retesters”.
4. Any student in grades 7 through 12 who took a Fall 2019 EOC assessment as a first-time test taker (4x4 districts) and failed the corresponding EOC assessment will not be required to re-take the corresponding EOC assessment or meet one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the test(s), in any future school year to meet graduation requirements regardless of their expected graduation date/year.
5. Any student enrolled in Algebra I, Biology, English II, or U.S. History in the 2019 – 2020 school year who fails the course (does not earn the Carnegie Unit credit) in the 2019 – 2020 school year and must repeat the course in the 2020 – 2021 school year (or thereafter) to earn the Carnegie Unit credit will be required to pass the corresponding EOC assessment or meet one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the assessment as outlined in Appendix A-5.
6. Any student currently enrolled in school in the 2019 – 2020 school year who earned a Carnegie Unit credit in Algebra I, Biology, English II or U.S. History in a school year prior to 2019 – 2020, but took the assessment as a first time test taker in the Fall 2019 or was planning to take the assessment as a first-time test taker in Spring 2020 will not be required to take and/or pass the EOC assessment or meet one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the assessment when school reconvenes regardless of their expected graduation date/year.
7. The composite score option outlined in Appendix A-5 will not be available to students who do not have four (4) EOC subject area test scores.
8. Students who are not currently enrolled in the 2019 – 2020 school year, but are still attempting to meet the graduation requirements through re-test opportunities will be required to pass the EOC assessment or meet one (1) of the options in lieu of passing the assessment as outlined in Appendix A-5.
9. ***How are Carnegie units addressed under minutes requirements? Will Carnegie credit be awarded by grade only?***

The MDE is suspending the requirement of the minimum of 140 hours of instruction required for each Carnegie unit of credit offered and 70 hours for each one-half (½) unit offered. School districts shall determine a process for awarding a Carnegie unit credit for courses that are incomplete for school year 2019-20. Carnegie units shall not be granted for courses where the student was never enrolled during the 2019-20 school year. Districts may not enroll a student in a Carnegie unit bearing course after March 16, 2020, the first date of school closures due to COVID-19, for the sole purpose of awarding a Carnegie unit credit, unless one (1) of the following conditions are met:

1. the district is on a 4x4 block schedule and the student is taking a one-half (½) credit course,
2. or the student is enrolling in an approved online course through Mississippi Online Course Approval (MOCA) with the expectation that the student will complete the course by the end of the Spring 2020 semester.

The conditions outlined above are not applicable to transfer students enrolling in a school district on or after March 16, 2020.

***Based on approved school board policy, local school districts have the authority to issue a standard high school diploma to any student who meets the minimum graduation requirements as approved by the State Board of Education. See Appendix A in Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2019.***

1. ***Will students still have to meet the Carnegie Unit credit requirements outlined in Process Standard 14.1 and the Appendices of the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2019?***

Due to the impact of school closures related to COVID-19, the MDE will suspend citations associated with changing local school board graduation requirements mid-year. The local school board has the authority to suspend and/or amend the graduation requirements set forth by the local school board for the 2019-2020 school year. In no circumstance shall a student be allowed to graduate with less than the minimum number of Carnegie units set forth by the State Board of Education and outlined in Appendix A.

Clarification: Local districts may establish additional local **requirements approved by the local school board** as authorized under Miss. Code Ann. § 37-16-7. Local districts have the option of granting high school diplomas as outlined in Appendices A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4. The waivers granted by the State Board of Education allow districts to amend or establish local board policy to waive additional requirements above the state minimum and allow students to graduate using the minimum requirements outlined in Appendices A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4.

1. ***Will there be a Prom for 2020?***

As of March 31, 2020 in accordance with State and Local current orders; the 2020 GHS Prom has been postponed until May 9, 2020. Reconsideration will be given if updated State and/or Local orders are given.

1. ***What happens if Prom is canceled?***
   1. 1st year participating seniors will receive a full refund once a completed W-9 has been completed and submitted to the GPSD Business Office. Appropriate business procedures must occur, and the individual will receive a school issued check in the mail.
   2. 2nd year participating seniors will receive a 2020 prom gift set to commemorate a “Virtual Prom” at a TBA date
   3. 1st year participating juniors will receive a 2020 prom gift set to commemorate a “Virtual Prom” at a TBA date. Remaining balance will be applied to each paid junior member’s 2021 senior fees.
2. ***Will there be a Senior night?***
   1. As of March 31, 2020, Senior Night is still scheduled for May 15, 2020.
3. ***What about Senior Night Attire?***
   1. The tradition of using the same attire is not currently feasible for the 2020 Senior Night.
      1. Male students who paid a deposit/partial/full payment can contact the Mr. Bobby rep at Lucsos 662-335-1017 to obtain full amount paid or store credit.
      2. Female seniors who have not paid an initial deposit do not have to cancel any orders
      3. Seniors will wear appropriate attire as defined in the Senior Night Handbook (TBA) in the voted on class colors of Rose Gold and Cream.
4. ***If Senior Night is canceled, what will happen with awards?***
   1. School leadership is currently working on an alternative method to present awards and other senior recognitions.
5. ***What about scholarship applications?***
   1. Most scholarship deadlines have been extended and have been posted on the GPSD social media page. This information is also located under the student tab on the GHS webpage. Counselors are currently working with all scholarship personnel.
6. ***Is graduation canceled?***
   1. As of March 31, 2020, graduation is still scheduled for May 22, 2020 at WCCC.
7. ***If graduation is canceled, will an alternative ceremony be planned?***
   1. Although District and School leadership are researching alternative graduation option, a decision has not been finalized.
8. ***What will happen to Senior Fees?***
   1. Graduation Diploma and Covers will be ordered as normal
   2. The remaining balance will be refunded to students’ guardians who have completed a W-9.