



Frequently Asked Questions

The 83rd legislature passed House Bill 5 (HB5) and it was signed into law by the Governor on June 10, 2013. Below are commonly asked questions about the new legislation and its impact on San Elizario Independent School District students.

End-of-Course (EOC) Exams

1. Which end-of-course (EOC) exams are required for graduation under HB5?

*English I, *English II, Algebra I, Biology and US History (*reading and writing combined)

2. Will EOC exam results be included in grades?

No, HB5 eliminated the requirement that EOC exam results be counted towards a student's grade.

New Graduation Plans

3. What are the graduation plans established under HB5?

HB5 replaces the Minimum High School Program, Recommended High School Program and the Distinguished High School

Program and the Distinguished Achievement Programs with three new programs:

- *The Foundation High School Program,*
- *The Foundation High School Program with Endorsement, and*
- *The Foundation High School Program, plus Endorsement, plus Distinguished Level of Achievement*

San Elizario ISD has established the Foundation High School Program, plus Endorsement, plus Distinguished Level of Achievement as the district's prescribed graduation plan beginning with 2014-2015 incoming freshmen (the class of 2018). This means that students entering ninth grade in school year 2014-2015 will be enrolled in courses that ultimately satisfy the Distinguished Level of Achievement, which is effectively the Foundation High School Program, plus an Endorsement that includes Algebra II as one of the four math courses. San Elizario ISD has also established a continued 4x4 core content requirement be included in all Endorsement plans.

4. When are the new graduation plans effective?

HB5 makes the new graduation plans effective for students entering grade 9 in school year 2014-2015.

5. What are the new endorsements under HB5?

The new Endorsements under HB5 are:

- Arts and Humanities
- Business and Industry
- Multidisciplinary Studies
- Public Service
- STEM

A list of programs of study under each Endorsement can be found on the SEISD district website: www.seisd.net

6. What courses are qualified for each endorsement area?

To see a list of approved courses for each endorsement area, please visit www.seisd.net.

7. Will San Elizario ISD offer all five endorsements?

HB5 requires school districts to make available to high school students courses that allow a student to complete the requirements for at least one endorsement. HB5 further provides that a school district that offers only one endorsement curriculum must offer the multidisciplinary studies endorsement curriculum.

San Elizario Independent School District currently offers a variety of Programs of Study (POS) that fit under each of the five endorsements.

8. When must a student choose an endorsement?

HB5 states that a school district shall ensure that each student "upon entering 9th grade" indicates in writing an endorsement that the student intends to earn. San Elizario ISD students will first select an endorsement in the spring of their 8th grade year.



9. May a student switch from one endorsement to another?

Yes. HB5 requires that a school district permit a student to choose, at any time, to earn an endorsement other than the endorsement the student previously indicated. Once a student has begun their Junior year, change may not be possible because students may not be able to complete all courses necessary for them to earn a different endorsement. Students who wish to change their initial endorsement option will be required to meet with their counselor for more information.

10. May a student choose more than one endorsement?

Yes, a student may earn more than one endorsement.

11. Under what graduation plan must a student graduate in order to be considered for automatic admission to a Texas public four year institution of higher education under HB5?

A student qualifies for automatic admission to a Texas public four year institution if the student is in the top 10% of his or her class, met the requirement of the Foundation high School Program, earned an endorsement, and successfully completed Algebra II among the student's four credits in mathematics.

Students are exempt from this rule if they are ranked in the top 10% of their graduating class and either

- 1) Meet the ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on ACT tests or
- 2) Earn an SAT score of at least 1500 out of 2400.

Because San Elizario ISD has prescribed the Distinguished Level of Achievement High School Program (Foundation High School Program, plus endorsement and Algebra II), all SEISD students in the top 10% of their class graduating under the Distinguished Level of Achievement Program, will qualify for automatic admission.

12. What are performance acknowledgements and how can a student earn them?

Performance acknowledgements may be earned for outstanding performance in/on:

- a dual credit course; or
- bilingualism and biliteracy; or
- a College Board advanced placement (AP) test of International Baccalaureate (IB) examination; or
- the PSAT, ACT-PLAN, SAT or ACT

13. May a district require more credits for graduation for all students?

Yes. *School districts have the authority to establish requirements in addition to what the state requires of students for graduation. This is a local decision.*

14. Will San Elizario ISD require addition credits for graduation?

San Elizario Independent School District will require two additional credits:

- Professional Communications – Speech (.5 credit)
- Dollars and Sense – Financial Literacy (.5 credit)
- 4th Year of Social Studies (1 credit)

Counseling

15. When are students counseled on graduation options?

Currently law requires each school counselor at an elementary, middle and high school to advise students and their parents or guardians regarding the importance of postsecondary education, coursework designed to prepare students for postsecondary education, and financial aid availability and requirements.

HB5 requires that information explaining the advantages of the Distinguished Level of Achievement and of each endorsement be published on the district's website and be made available to student in grades 9 and above. A counselor or school administrator is required to review Personal Graduation Plans (PGPs) with each student entering 9th grade together with that student's parent or guardian. Before the conclusion of the 9th grade school year, and for each request for endorsement change made by the student and/or parent, the student and the student's parent or guardian must confirm and sign a personal graduation plan update for the student.



Special Education

16. How is it defined how some students receiving special education services can be determined to not need LOTE to graduate? A student, who due to disability, is unable to complete two courses in the same language in a language other than English, will be allowed to substitute for those credits two credits in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies or two credits in career and technology education, technology applications, or other academic electives. A credit allowed to be substituted under this subsection may not also be used by the student to satisfy a graduation credit requirement other than credit for completion of a language other than English. The rules must provide that the determination regarding a student's ability to participate in language other than English courses will be made by the ARD committee.

17. How will students receiving special education services graduation plan be updated? As we now have IEP, what will the options be?

Students receiving special education services will have the same graduation options as students in general education.

18. How can the new Foundation High School Program support students in Lifeskills?

Students who have a significant cognitive disability will continue to receive a functional academic skills curriculum which may include a structured communication-based approach, functional skills training, community based instruction, intensive transition services and access to general education, small group and individual instruction in order to achieve independence.