

**WAIVERS AND VARIANCES
OF HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION ASSESSMENTS****Date: November 11, 2008**

While State Board of Education Rule 160-1-3-.09 provides for waivers and variances of requirements for high school graduation, it is the position of the Columbia County Board of Education that requirements are minimal expectations and are not granted unless significant disability and/or substantial hardship are demonstrated.

(1) PURPOSE

This policy sets forth the eligibility criteria and procedures for requesting and granting either a waiver or variance to the requirement of students to pass all sections of the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHS GT) and the Georgia High School Writing Test (GHS WT). For the purposes of this policy, a waiver may be granted to a student who, due to a disability, is rendered incapable of passing a section of the GHS GT or the GHS WT as documented in the student's individualized education plan or to a student who has not had a reasonable opportunity to pass a section of the GHS GT or the GHS WT due to a substantial hardship beyond the student's control.

When a student is not rendered incapable of passing a section of the GHS GT or the GHS WT due to a disability or substantial hardship, a variance may be granted to allow the student to use alternative means of demonstrating academic proficiency in lieu of passing each section of the GHS GT or the GHS WT.

(2) DEFINITIONS

(a) Substantial hardship - a significant, unique, and demonstrable economic technological, legal, or other type of deprivation to the individual requesting a waiver.

(b) Variance – a decision to grant a modification to all or part of the literal requirements of a rule in lieu of the standard application of the rule.

(c) Waiver – a decision not to apply all or part of a rule to a person who is subject. Requests for a waiver or variance of a high school graduation test shall be filed with the local school superintendent by the student and parent or guardian through the local school's guidance department. The local school superintendent shall validate that application criteria are met and forward the request for local Board of Education approval. Following local Board of Education approval, the superintendent will forward to the State Superintendent of Schools for State Board of Education consideration.

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Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-240; 50-13-9.1. ; §160-1-3-.09

Adopted: December 7, 2005 Effective: December 28, 2005

PROCEDURE: YES

ADOPTED: NEW - 3/23/99

REVISED: 8/10/99, 3/14/06

Columbia County Board of Education