2026 NATIONAL REPORT CARD

Massachusetts

CLASS OF 2026 GRADE	PROJECTED CLASS OF 2031 GRADE
F	F

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Is a high school course with personal finance concepts required to be taken as a graduation requirement?

No, personal finance is not included in the graduation requirements, either as a standalone course or embedded in another course, and schools are not required to offer financial literacy courses. High school students must meet both local and state requirements in order to earn a high school diploma. Historically, Massachusetts had not specified courses to be taken in high school in order to graduate; this was done exclusively at the local level. The state requires that all students meet the Competency Determination (CD) standard, which previously required a passing score on MCAS, a state assessment exam in English, mathematics and science. In 2024, a ballot measure was passed eliminating the requirement that students take and pass the MCAS exam. Starting with the Class of 2026, Massachusetts has approved new rules for the CD standard that require students in high school successfully complete five year-long courses (this increases to six year-long courses beginning with the Class of 2027). None of these state mandated content areas include personal finance content. Additional local graduation requirements are set by each local school district. Compared to the vast majority of states, the Massachusetts high school graduation requirement system is fairly unique. Only 9.7% of Massachusetts high school students live in a school district that requires a standalone personal finance course as a local high school graduation requirement, according to *NGPF's 2026 State of Financial Education Report*. This report indicates that 70.6% of high school students live in a school district that offers a financial literacy course as an elective.

Sources:

- Massachusetts Graduation Requirements and Related Guidance
- G. L. c. 69, § 1D Competency Determination (CD) standard
- 603 CMR 30.00: Standards for Competency Determination and Local Graduation Requirements
- Ballotpedia Massachusetts Question 2 (2024)
- NGPF's 2026 State of Financial Education Report

PRE-K TO GRADE EIGHT EDUCATION STANDARDS

Massachusetts does not require that personal finance concepts be taught to students in grades K to eight. The state's mathematics and social studies standards include modest levels of personal finance concepts in the economics strand and in a few grades. Local school districts may integrate financial literacy from grades K to eight in a variety of subjects, such as mathematics, history, and social science, but there is no requirement to do so.

Sources:

- Curriculum Frameworks

PROJECTED GRADE FOR CLASS OF 2031

No policy change is pending that would change Massachusetts's grade.

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Massachusetts

CLASS OF 2026 GRADE	PROJECTED CLASS OF 2031 GRADE
F	F

HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION STANDARDS

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) sets statewide education goals, including the creation of education standards. State law allows but does not require BESE to include the teaching of financial literacy in public schools. Such standards may include *"the teaching of family life skills, financial literacy and consumer skills, and basic career exploration and employability skills."* In 2019, a law was approved that: (i) required the creation of financial literacy education standards; (ii) allowed schools to incorporated these standards into existing curriculum (e.g., mathematics, history and social sciences, technology, or business); and (iii) required the state's Department of Education to assist schools in the selection of materials and curriculum on personal financial literacy and to identify and offer information on resources for professional development activities and instruction on personal financial literacy to educators. Standards for Personal Financial Literacy for high schools are included in the 2018 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework. These standards may be used as a standalone course or incorporated into a variety of subjects.

Sources:

- G. L. c. 69, § 1D
- G. L. c. 69, § 1R
- Current Frameworks DESE
- 2018 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework (pages 173-175)

EXTRA CREDIT

Massachusetts has an Economic Empowerment Trust Fund to encourage and facilitate economic empowerment. Its funds may be used to establish financial literacy programs in schools. This organization sponsors a Financial Education Innovation Fund Grant for Massachusetts high schools. The funding is for schools to offer their students financial education fairs, also known as "Credit for Life Fairs." These are engaging, hands-on events help students explore real-life budgeting and money management. In 2021, the State Treasurer's office issued the following report: *Personal Financial Literacy Education in the Massachusetts Public School System*. The data in this report indicates that a majority of students attend high schools that offer a standalone personal finance elective in the state but that very few attend a high school that requires a standalone personal finance course as a local graduation requirement. The DESE website contains a list of personal finance resources for educators.

Sources:

- Economic Empowerment Trust Fund
- Financial Education Innovation Fund Grant
- Personal Financial Literacy Education in the Massachusetts Public School System
- DESE Website Search Financial Literacy (Download document entitled Curricular Materials at a Glance: K-12 Personal Financial Literacy)