

## **Exit Exams Can Be Optional If You Plan Ahead**

**by**  
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**T**his spring, thousands of high school students will not graduate with a high school diploma. These students took the required courses and received passing grades.

Why? How is this possible?

The students will not graduate because they did not pass their state exit exam. They spent at least twelve years in school. Obviously, they learned something - they have the credits and the grades to prove it.

In some cases, the child knows a great deal about some things and less about others. In some cases, a teacher or two may have strayed from the state curriculum framework.

In most cases, the state changed its curriculum - what it expects teachers to teach and students to learn. The state exit exam reflects the new curriculum. These students are being penalized because they were not taught the new curriculum.

Do students need to pass their state exit exams before they can graduate with a high school diploma?

No.

Private school students do not have to pass state exit exams. Home schooled students do not have to pass state exit exams.

The easiest way to eliminate the exit exam obstacle is to apply your child's high school credits to a diploma from a private school. This is not as difficult or expensive as you may think.

Many home schooled students graduate from a private school in Maine, a school they have never attended, or even seen. The school is the North Atlantic Regional Schools (NARS), a private high school accredited by the state of Maine.

The procedure is simple.

The child registers at the North Atlantic Regional School (NARS). NARS requests the child's records from the public school. The public school sends the records to NARS. If the child's transcript shows that the child has earned the required credits, NARS awards a high school diploma. If the transcript does not show the required credits, NARS can tell you how to obtain the missing credits.

You have a choice.

North Atlantic Regional Schools holds two graduation ceremonies each spring. In June they hold a graduation ceremony in Lewiston, Maine. In May there is a graduation ceremony in Orlando, Florida. You may also graduate anytime during the year, without participating in a ceremony

Getting a diploma from NARS means not having to spend years fighting with the public school so your child can graduate with a high school diploma.

The choice is yours.

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## **North Atlantic Regional Schools Links**

[North Atlantic Regional Schools website](#)

[High School Services](#)

[Graduation Requirements](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Download the NARS High School Handbook](#)

[http://www.narsdiploma.com/downloads/handbook\\_complete.pdf](http://www.narsdiploma.com/downloads/handbook_complete.pdf)

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## **About Sue Heath**

Sue Heath is co-author of [\*Wrightslaw: No Child Left Behind\*](#) (ISBN: 1-892320-12-6) published by [Harbor House Law Press](#). She also writes [Doing Your Homework](#), a column about creative advocacy strategies, that is available on [Wrightslaw](#).

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