



## High School Graduation Policy

The aspiration of the charter school, in partnership with the community, is to provide an exceptional education that prepares students to be successful members of our democratic society. Therefore, the graduation requirements stated below have been established. The graduation requirements encompass the knowledge, abilities, and experience necessary to develop the essential aptitudes and skills of successful participants in today's society: behavior of character, communication, citizenship, intellect, self-direction, teamwork, wellbeing and productivity.

Students are to be provided with assistance to tailor the requirements according to their individual needs and abilities. Students must demonstrate proficiency in reading comprehension, writing and mathematics. Those students not proficient will be provided with remedial programs after consultation with the student's parent/guardian.

### Course Requirements

To obtain a high school diploma, students shall complete the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified:

1. Three courses in English (Education Code 51225.3)
2. Two courses in mathematics (Education Code 51225.3)

Students shall complete at least one mathematics course that meets the state academic content standards for Algebra I or Mathematics I. Students may complete such coursework prior to grade 9 provided that they also complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224.5).

Successful completion of an approved computer science course that is classified as a "category C" course based on the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) "A-G" admission requirements shall be counted toward the satisfaction of additional graduation requirements in mathematics. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences (Education Code 51225.3)
4. Three courses in social studies, including United States (U.S.) history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics (Education Code 51225.3)
5. One course in visual or performing arts or world language. For purposes of this requirement, a course in American Sign Language shall be deemed a course in world language. (Education Code 51225.3) If a student completed a career technical education course prior to July 1, 2022 that met the requirements of Education Code 51225.3, such course will fulfill the visual or performing arts or world language requirement. (Education Code 51225.3)

6. Nine semester long courses in any of the above categories or other electives. Beginning with the 2029-30 school year, a one-semester course in ethnic studies (Education Code 51225.3) and a one-semester course in career planning will also be part of this nine semester requirement.

**Individuals with Exceptional Needs:**

Eligible students with exceptional needs shall be exempt from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the Charter School's governing board that are additional to the statewide coursework requirements identified above and shall be awarded a diploma from high school as described in 20 U.S.C. § 7801(23)(A)(ii)(I)(bb).

A student with exceptional needs shall be eligible for the exemption and diploma award if the students Individualized Education Program (IEP) provides all of the following:

- The student is required to take the alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards in grade 11 as described in Education Code section 60640(k);
- The student is required to complete state standards aligned coursework to meet the statewide coursework requirements.

Before a student commences grade 10, the student's IEP team shall determine and notify the parent or guardian of whether the student may be eligible to graduate pursuant to the exemption provided for herein.

A student with exceptional needs that meets the criteria for the diploma exemption shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which a student of similar age would be eligible to participate. Participation in graduation activities shall not be construed as termination of the provision of free appropriate public education, consistent with Section 300.102(a)(3)(ii) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

**Other Special Populations**

Students in foster care, homeless children/youth, former juvenile court school students, students who are in a military family or students who are migratory children (collectively, "Special Population Students") who transfer between schools any time after the completion of the student's second year of high school, and who is in their third or fourth year of high school, shall be exempt from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the Charter School board of directors that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements, unless the Charter School makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

If the Charter School determines that a Special Population Student is able to complete the School's graduation requirements, the student and the student's educational right holder shall consult with the student and the student's educational right holder about the student's option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements.

- Consult with the student and the student's educational right holder about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation

requirements will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.

- Consult with and provide information to the student about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
- Permit the student to stay in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements upon agreement with the student (if over 18 years old) or the student's educational rights holder.
- For a student in foster care or a homeless child/youth, consult with the student and student's educational rights holder regarding the student's option to remain in the student's school of origin.

To determine whether a Special Population Student is in the third or fourth year of high school, the number of credits the student has earned to the date of transfer, the length of the student's school enrollment, or, for students with significant gaps in school attendance, the student's age as compared to the average age of students in the third or fourth year of high school, may be used, whichever will qualify the student for the exemption.

The Charter School shall notify a Special Population Student and that student's educational rights holder within 30 calendar days of the date of transfer into the School that the student may qualify for the exemption from local graduation requirements. If the School fails to provide timely notice, the student shall be eligible for the exemption once notified, even if the student no longer qualifies as a Special Population Student.

If a Special Population Student is exempted from local graduation requirements and completes the statewide coursework requirements before the end of the student's fourth year of high school and that student would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the school, the school shall not require or request that the student graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school. If a Special Population Student is eligible for the exemption and would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the school shall not be required to accept the exemption or be denied enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which the student is otherwise eligible, including courses necessary to attend an institution of higher education, regardless of whether those are required for statewide graduation requirements.

If a Special Population Student is not exempted from local graduation requirements or has previously declined the exemption, the Charter School shall exempt the student within 30 days of the date of an exemption request made by the student or student's educational rights holder. If a Special Population Student was eligible for an exemption, was not properly notified of the availability of the exemption, or declined the exemption, the Charter School shall exempt the student within 30 days of the date of an exemption request made by the student or the student's educational rights holder even if the student no longer qualifies as a Special Population Student. A Special Population Student's exemption shall not be revoked by the Charter School.

If a Special Population Student was granted an exemption in a previous school and later transfers to the Charter School, the exemption shall continue to apply after the student transfers or no longer qualifies as a Special Population Student.

If a Special Population Student is exempted from local graduation requirements, in addition to providing notice, the School shall consult with the student and student's educational rights holder on the following:

- Discussion regarding how any of the requirements that are waived may affect the student's postsecondary education or vocational plans, including the ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
- Discussion and information about other options available to the student, including, but not limited to, a fifth year of high school, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
- Consideration of the student's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption.

Any complaints regarding noncompliance with the exemptions for Special Population Students may be made through the Charter School's Uniform Complaint Procedures.

### **Retroactive Diplomas**

In addition, the school may retroactively grant high school diplomas to former students who: (Education Code 48204.4, 51430, 51440)

- Departed California against their will while in grade 12 and did not receive a diploma because the departure interrupted their education, provided that they were in good academic standing at the time of the departure

Persons may be considered to have departed California against their will if they were in custody of a government agency and were transferred to another state, were subject to a lawful order from a court or government agency that authorized their removal from California, were subject to a lawful order and were permitted to depart California before being removed from California pursuant to the lawful order, were removed or were permitted to depart voluntarily pursuant to the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, or departed due to other circumstances determined by the district that are consistent with the purposes of Education Code 48204.4.

In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the Executive Director or designee shall consider any coursework that may have been completed outside of the U.S. or through online or virtual courses.

- Are veterans who entered the military service of the U.S. while in grade 12 and who had satisfactorily completed the first half of the work required for grade 12 in the school
- Were in their senior year of high school during the 2019-20 school year, were in good academic standing and on track to graduate at the end of the 2019-20 school year as of

March 1, 2020, and were unable to complete the statewide graduation requirements as a result of the COVID-19 crisis

### **Honorary Diplomas**

The Board may grant an honorary high school diploma to: (Education Code 51225.5)

- An international exchange student who has not completed the course of study ordinarily required for graduation and who is returning to the student's home country following the completion of one academic school year in the district
- A student who is terminally ill

The honorary diploma shall be clearly distinguishable from the regular diploma of graduation awarded by the district. (Education Code 51225.5)