High School Graduation Requirements/Exemptions from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements

Adopted: 07/15/2025 | **Last Revised:** n/a | **Last Reviewed**: n/a

District students are required to complete graduation course requirements specified in Board Policy 6146.1, including the requirements imposed by Education Code 51225.3 and those adopted by the Board. However, a foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student who transfers into the district or between district schools any time after completing the second year of high school, or a newly arrived immigrant student who is in the third or fourth year of high school and is participating in a newcomer program, shall be exempted from any graduation requirements adopted by the Board that are in addition to statewide course requirements. This exemption shall not apply if the Superintendent or designee makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate by the end of the fourth year of high school.

Within 30 days of the transfer into a school or of the commencement of participation in a newcomer program, as applicable, the Superintendent or designee shall notify any eligible student of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for it.

Special Circumstances for 2020-21 School Year

If during the 2020-21 school year a student was in the third or fourth year of high school and was not on track to graduate in four years, the district shall exempt the student from any local graduation requirements adopted by the Board that are in addition to statewide course requirements specified in Education Code 51225.3.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide a student who was enrolled in the third or fourth year of high school during the 2020-21 school year and was not on track to graduate in the 2020-21 or 2021-22 school years the opportunity to complete the statewide coursework required for graduation, which may include, but is not limited to, completion of the coursework through a fifth year of instruction, credit recovery, or other opportunity to complete the required coursework.

Retroactive Diplomas

Any student who completed grade 12 between the 2003-04 through 2014-15 school years and met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma.

In addition, the district may retroactively grant high school diplomas to former students who:

1. 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 Superintendent or designee shall consider any coursework that may have been completed outside of the United States or through online or virtual courses.

2. Were interned by order of the federal government during World War II or are honorably discharged veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, provided that they were enrolled in a district school immediately preceding the internment or military service and did not receive a diploma because their education was interrupted due to the internment or military service in those wars.

   Deceased former students who satisfy these conditions may be granted a retroactive diploma to be received by their next of kin.

3. Are veterans who entered the military service of the United States while in grade 12 and who had satisfactorily completed the first half of the work required for grade 12 in a district school.

4. 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.

Policy Reference Disclaimer:
These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the Board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

Legal References:

STATE

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS
5 CCR 1600-1651 Graduation of students from grade 12 and credit toward graduation
5 CCR 4600-4670 Uniform complaint procedures

EDUCATION CODE
60900.2 Students with Disabilities Graduation Reporting
220 Prohibition of discrimination
47612 Average daily attendance in charter school
48200 Compulsory attendance
48204.4 Parents/guardians departing California against their will
48412 Certificate of proficiency
48430 Continuation education schools and classes
48645.5 Former juvenile court school students; enrollment
48980 Parent/Guardian notifications
49701 Provisions of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children
51224 Skills and knowledge required for adult life
51224.5 Algebra in course of study for grades 7-12
51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements
51225.2 Course credits
51225.3 High school graduation requirements
51225.31 Graduation exemption for students with disabilities
51225.35 Mathematics course requirements; computer science
51225.36 Instruction in sexual harassment and violence; districts that require health education for graduation

51225.5 Honorary diplomas; foreign exchange and terminally ill students
51225.6 Instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation; districts that require health education for graduation
51225.9 Courses of study, grades 7 to 12; career technical education
51226.7 Model curriculum in ethnic studies
51228 Course of study; offerings and timely opportunity
51230 Credit for community emergency response training
51240-51246 Exemptions from requirements
51250-51251 Assistance to military dependents
51410-51413 Diplomas
51420-51427 High school equivalency certificates
51430 Retroactive high school diplomas
51440 Credit and granting of diploma to veterans and members of the military service
51450-51455 Golden State Seal Merit Diploma
51744-51749.6 Independent study
56390-56392 Recognition for educational achievement; special education
60640 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress
66204 Certification of high school courses as meeting university admission criteria
67386 Student safety; affirmative consent standard

FEDERAL

UNITED STATES CODES
20 USC 7011 Definition of newcomer student
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS
34 CFR 300.1-300.818 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

COURT DECISION
O'Connell v. Superior Court (Valenzuela) (2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 1452
WEBSITES
CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services https://legalservices.csba.org/#
California Department of Education, High School http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs
University of California, List of Approved A-G Courses https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/freshman-requirements
CSBA http://www.csba.org/

Policy Adopted: 07/15/2025