Differential Graduation & Competency Standards & Certificates of Educational Achievement for Students with Disabilities

Adopted: 12/08/1998 | **Last Revised:** 03/10/2026 | **Last Reviewed**: 03/10/2026

The Governing Board recognizes that students with disabilities are entitled to a course of study that provides them with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and that modifications to the district's regular course may be needed on an individualized basis to provide FAPE. In accordance with law, each student's individualized education program (IEP) team shall determine the appropriate goals, as well as any appropriate individual accommodations necessary for measuring the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on state and district wide assessments.

Exemption from District-Established Graduation Requirements

District students shall complete all course requirements for high school graduation as specified in Board Policy 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements. However, a student with a disability that entered the ninth grade in the 2025-26 school year and later may be exempted from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the Board that are in addition to the statewide course requirements for high school graduation if the student's IEP provides for both of the following requirements:

1. That the student is eligible to take the alternate assessment as described in Education Code 60640

2. That the student complete state standards aligned coursework to meet the statewide coursework specified in Education Code 51225.3

Any such exempted student shall receive a diploma and be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and school activity related to graduation in which a student of similar age without a disability would be eligible to participate.

The district's responsibility to provide FAPE shall not terminate when a student with a disability who is exempted from district-adopted graduation requirements participates in graduation activities unless the student's IEP team, which includes the parent/guardian and student, has determined that the student has completed the high school experience.

Certificate of Educational Achievement/Completion

Instead of a high school diploma, a student with disabilities may be awarded a certificate or document of educational achievement or completion if the student has met one of the following requirements:

a) The student has satisfactorily completed a prescribed alternative course of study approved by the Board of Education of the school district which the student attended or the district with jurisdiction over the student as identified in his/her IEP; or

b) The student has satisfactorily achieved his or her IEP goals and objectives during high school as determined by the IEP team; or

c) The student has satisfactorily attended high school, participated in the instruction specified in his or her IEP, and has met the objectives of the statement of transition services.

A student with disabilities who meets any of the criteria specified above shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation which a graduating student of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate.

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 3070 Graduation
EDUCATION CODE
60900.2 Students with disabilities graduation reporting
51225.31-51225.32 Graduation exemption for students with disabilities
56341 Individualized education program team
56345 Individualized education program contents
56390-56392 Recognition for educational achievement; special education
60640 Alternate assessment eligibility

FEDERAL
UNITED STATES CODES
20 USC 1400-1482 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS
34 CFR 300.1-300.818 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
34 CFR 300.320 Definition of IEP

MANAGEMENT RESOURCES
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATION
Alternate Assessment IEP Team Guidance
Diploma Pathway for Students who Qualify for the California Alternate Assessment, November 2024
WEBSITES
CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services https://legalservices.csba.org/#
U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers
California Department of Education http://www.cde.ca.gov/

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