Certificate of Proficiency/High School Equivalency

Adopted: 06/19/1984 **| Last Revised:** 02/03/2026 **| Last Reviewed**: 02/03/2026

The principal of each high school shall distribute to each student in grades 11-12 an announcement explaining the California Proficiency Program (CPP). Announcements from the California Department of Education (CDE) or its contractor shall be distributed early enough to enable interested students to register for the test to be given in the fall of that year.

The principal also shall advise students that the certificate of proficiency awarded upon passing the CPP is equivalent to a high school diploma. However, once the student has taken the CPP, passed the language arts and mathematics subtests and exited high school, they may choose to take the remaining High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)- Equivalency subtests in science and social studies to earn their California High School Equivalency Certificate, which provides more opportunities than the certificate of proficiency does alone.

A student may take the CPP if the student meets one of the following conditions:

1. Is age 16 or older

2. Has been enrolled in the 10th grade for one school year or longer

3. Will complete one school year of enrollment in 10th grade at the end of the semester during which the next CPP will be administered

If a student receives the certificate of proficiency, the district shall indicate the student's accomplishment and the date of the award on the student's official transcript.

Any student who has received the certificate of proficiency may be exempted from compulsory school attendance upon the student's request, with verified parent/guardian consent as appropriate.

The consent form to be exempted from compulsory school attendance shall be provided by the Superintendent or designee and shall contain at least the following information:

1. A general explanation of the student's rights of exemption from compulsory attendance and of re-enrollment in the public high schools,

2. The date of issuance of the certificate of proficiency,

3. The signature of the parent/guardian and the date,

4. The signature of the school administrator who has personally confirmed the authenticity of the parent/guardian's signature and the date.

If a student age 16 or 17 terminates enrollment after receiving the certificate of proficiency, the student may re-enroll in the district. If enrollment is subsequently terminated again, the student may be denied re-enrollment until the beginning of the following semester.

High School Equivalency Certificate
Obtaining a high school equivalency certificate requires passing a general educational development test designated by the State Board of Education pursuant to Education Code 51420, including the General Educational Development (GED) test, or the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET).

Any person is eligible to take a test leading to a high school equivalency certificate is required to be a resident of California or a member of the armed forces assigned to duty in California and meets any one of the following criteria:

1. Is 18 years of age or older

2. Would have graduated from high school had the person remained in school and followed the usual course of study

3. Is 17 years of age, has accumulated fewer than 100 units of high school credit, is confined to a state or county hospital or to an institution maintained by a state or county correctional facility

4. Is 17 years of age, has accumulated fewer than 100 units of high school credit prior to enrollment in an academic program offered by a dropout recovery high school, and has successfully completed the dropout recovery high school's instructional program which is aligned to state standards, offers the opportunity for a high school diploma, and provides services for at least one year

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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 11520-11523 Proficiency examination and certificate
5 CCR 11530-11532.5 High school equivalency certificate
EDUCATION CODE
8400-48403 Compulsory continuation education
48410 Exemption from continuation education
48412 Certificate of proficiency
48413 Enrollment in continuation classes
48414 Reenrollment in district
51420-51427 High school equivalency certificates
52052 Accountability; numerically significant student subgroups
MANAGEMENT RESOURCES
WEBSITES
California Department of Education, California High School Equivalency FAQ https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/gd/
CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services https://legalservices.csba.org/
High School Equivalency Test https://hiset.ets.org/
General Educational Development Test https://ged.com/
California High School Proficiency Examination https://hiset.org/
California Department of Education, High School Equivalency Tests http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/gd
Website California Department of Education, California Proficiency Program
https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/cp.asp

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