



Cache County School District

Policy Series 4000: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Policy No. 4900 P5

Eligibility Guidelines for the Utah Alternate Diploma and Certificate of Completion

The Cache County School District (CCSD) Board of Education is committed to ensuring every student receives a high-quality, meaningful, and rigorous education aligned with the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Portrait of a Graduate (focusing on Mastery, Autonomy, and Purpose).

Pursuant to Utah Administrative Code R277-705-5 and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), CCSD has formally established the Alternate Diploma option for students with significant cognitive disabilities (SWSCD). The purpose of this document is to establish a standardized district procedure for special education teachers, school counselors, registrars, and school administrators to implement, track, and award the Alternate Diploma while adhering strictly to state guidelines, federal laws under IDEA, and district policy.

Eligibility & Criteria

An **Alternate Diploma or Certificate of Completion** may be awarded to students who are in specialized programs, have an associated Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and/or will be continuing their education in the specialized program post-graduation.

A student may be awarded a **Certificate of Completion** if they meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) the student has a disability and has completed their senior year and is exiting the school system; however, has not met the state and district requirements for graduation, but has met the goals set forth by the student's IEP, or
- 2) The student was enrolled throughout and has completed their senior year, is exiting the school system, has not met the state and district requirements for graduation, and has made a sincere effort to complete high school, as determined by school administration.

The **Alternate Diploma** is **not** an automatic option for all students in special education, nor is it a regular high school diploma or a Certificate of Completion.

To earn an Alternate Diploma in CCSD, a student must meet **all** of the following state criteria:

- 1) **Significant Cognitive Disability:** The student is formally identified through the IEP process as a student with a significant cognitive disability (SWSCD) under R277-705-2(8).
- 2) **Essential Elements Curriculum:** The student accesses grade-level Utah Core Standards through the alternate achievement standards—the **Essential Elements (EE)** for English Language Arts and Mathematics, and the **Extended Core** for Science.
- 3) **1% Alternate Assessment Flag:** The student participates in Utah's statewide alternate assessment (Dynamic Learning Maps - DLM) instead of standard testing (Utah Aspire Plus / ACT) and is flagged as part of the 1% participation threshold in SCRAM/UTREx.
- 4) **Credit Requirements:** The student meets all modified graduation credit requirements (24 credits minimum) in approved content-area courses prior to exiting school at or before age 22.