

Policy 6146.1: High School Graduation Requirements

Status: DRAFT

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The Governing Board desires to prepare all students to successfully complete the high school course of study and obtain a diploma that represents their educational achievement and increases their opportunities for postsecondary education and employment.

District students shall complete graduation course requirements as specified in Education Code 51225.3 and those adopted by the Board, except for students who are exempted as provided in "Exemptions from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements," below. Students who are exempted from district-adopted graduation requirements shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and school activity related to graduation in which other students are eligible to participate.

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

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra I (or its equivalent) or Mathematics I. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra I or Mathematics I requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete ~~three~~ two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224.5)

Students may be awarded up to one mathematics course credit for 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 towards 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 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. ~~Two~~ One courses in visual or performing arts, and/or world language, and/or career technical education (CTE). For purposes of this requirement, a course in American Sign Language shall be deemed a course in world language. (Education Code 51225.3)
To be counted towards meeting graduation requirements, a CTE course shall be aligned to the CTE model curriculum standards and framework adopted by the State Board of Education. (Education Code 51225.3)
6. Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (Education Code 51225.3)
7. A student shall complete 60 elective credits toward graduation to earn a high school diploma.
8. Beginning with the 2029-30 school year, a ~~one-semester~~ course in ethnic studies. (Education Code 51225.3)

Because the prescribed course of study may not accommodate the needs of some students, the Board shall provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law.

Exemptions from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements

Prior to the beginning of grade 10, the individualized education program (IEP) team for each student with disabilities shall determine whether the student is eligible for exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the Board in addition to the statewide course requirements for high school graduation, and if so, shall notify the student's parent/guardian of the exemption. A student with disabilities shall be eligible for the exemption, if the student's IEP provides for both of the following requirement: (Education Code 51225.31)

1. That the student take the alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards in grade 11 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.

In addition, a foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, or 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 or of the commencement of participation in a newcomer program, as applicable, the Superintendent or designee shall notify any eligible student, and others as required by law, of the availability of the exemption from local graduation requirements and whether the student qualifies for it. (Education Code 51225.1)

Retroactive Diplomas

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through 2014-15 school year and met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma. (Education Code 51413)

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

1. The person was interned by order of the federal government during World War II and was enrolled in a high school operated by the school district or under the jurisdiction of the county office of education immediately preceding their internment and did not receive a high school diploma because their education was interrupted due to their internment during World War II.
2. The person is a veteran of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War; was honorably discharged from their military service; was enrolled in a high school operated by the school district or under the jurisdiction of the county office of education immediately preceding their military service in those wars; and did not receive a high school diploma because their education was interrupted due to their military service in those wars.
3. The person has departed California against their will, as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 48204.4, and, at the time of their departure, was enrolled in grade 12 of a high school operated by the school district, by or under the jurisdiction of the county office of education, or by the charter school; did not receive a high school diploma because their education was interrupted due to their departure; and was in good academic standing at the time of their departure. In making an evaluation as to whether to award a high school diploma to a pupil who meets the conditions of the paragraph, a school district, county office of education, or charter school shall consider any coursework that may have been completed by the pupil outside of the United States or that may have been completed by the pupil through online or virtual courses.
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
5. Deceased former students who satisfy these conditions may be granted a retroactive diploma to be received by their next of kin.

Honorary Diplomas

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

1. 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
2. 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)
