

## GRADUATION OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

### Types of Graduation Options

The graduation options available to students are determined by LEA/district board policies and these options must be written into a school's charter. This may include:

- A diploma based on the state mandated requirements,
- A diploma based on A-G requirements, or
- A charter school may set their own diploma requirements,
- A certificate of completion.

Students with disabilities must be given adequate notice of the requirements for the types of graduation options offered.

The following table shows a comparison of the different types of graduation options.

Subject Area	State Mandated Requirements for High School Graduation (EC 51225.3)	A-G Requirements (as approved by UC course approval process)	Certificate of Completion (EC 56390)
English	Three Years.	Four years.	Satisfactorily completed a prescribed alternative course of study approved by the district governing board and identified in the student's IEP
Mathematics	Two years, including Algebra I.	Three years, including algebra, geometry, and intermediate algebra. Four years recommended.	AND Satisfactorily met his or her IEP goals and objectives as determined by the IEP team
Social Studies/ Science	Three years of history/social studies, including one year of U.S. history and geography; one year of world history, culture, and geography; 1/2 year of American government and civics, and 1/2 year of economics.	Two years of history/social science, including one year of U.S. history or 1/2 year of U.S. history and 1/2 year of civics or American government; and one year of world history, cultures, and geography.	AND Satisfactorily attended high school, participated in instruction, and met the objectives of the statement of transition services.
Science	Two years, including biological and physical sciences.	Two years with lab required, chosen from biology, chemistry, and physics. Three years recommended.	
Foreign Language	One year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education.	Two years in same language required. Three years recommended.	NOTE: The above is a requirement of a



Visual and Performing Arts	One year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education.	One year of visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art.	standard public school, but not of a charter school. A charter school can use this Ed. Code as a guideline for determining criteria for the board approved certificate of completion option.
Physical Education	Two years	Not Applicable	
Electives	Not Applicable	One year	

### Termination of Special Education Services

The following table illustrates the guidelines around the termination of special education services. A prior written notice is required upon the termination of special education services for any of the below situations.

If student's 22nd birthday is between January and June, the student may continue through remainder of the fiscal year (school year and ESY ending July 1).	EC 56026(c)(4)(A)
If student's 22nd birthday is in July, August, or September of new fiscal year, then the student will not be allowed to begin a new fiscal year (school year and ESY ending July 1 of the current year).	EC 56026(c)(4)(B)
If student's 22nd birthday is during October, November, or December, student shall be terminated from program on December 31 of current fiscal year, unless student would otherwise complete his or her IEP at the end of the current fiscal year.	EC 56026(c)(4)(C)
Student graduates from high school with regular high school diploma.	EC 56026.1(a)

### Certificate of Completion or Regular High School Diploma

The IEP team must determine which graduation option is most appropriate for the student, given the options made available by the LEA/district as determined by the governing board. Not all LEAs/districts offer a diploma based on the state mandated requirements; some choose to offer only diplomas based on A-G requirements or their own requirements as outlined in their charter. If the student is on track for earning a regular high school diploma, either A-G or state mandated, then the student has until the date indicated on the table above to complete this course of study. Students may not receive a diploma if they do not meet the requirements of the types of diplomas offered as determined by the LEA/district.

The LEA/district cannot deny a student a diploma based on their disability, but the student does not have a right to a diploma because of their disability either. The certificate of completion option is available to those students who are not able to complete the requirements for a regular high school diploma as offered by the LEA/district. These students are eligible for educational placement and services in accordance with their IEP until the date indicated on the above table. If the school is a charter school, the governing board of the LEA/district approves the requirements for the certificate of completion graduation option. In a standard public school, the certificate of completion option is in accordance with EC 56390 as stated above.

The graduation option chosen by the IEP team shall be documented clearly as part of the Transition Plan as well as marked on the Offer of FAPE- Educational Settings page of the IEP.

### California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

If the student has a current and valid IEP that indicates the student is scheduled to receive a high school diploma and has satisfied or will satisfy all state and local graduation requirements other



than passing the CAHSEE, then an exemption or a waiver may be granted. In order to be able to qualify for a waiver or exemption from the CAHSEE the student is required to first take the CAHSEE in grade ten for the purpose of meeting the federal requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Appropriate accommodations and modifications must be made available to students with IEPs and must be listed on the Test Accommodations/ Modifications page of the IEP.

- **Exemptions-** This is an exemption from the requirement of passing the CAHSEE in order to receive a high school diploma. The exemption from meeting the CAHSEE requirement will be in effect until June 30, 2015, unless the State Board of Education extends the implementation of the alternative means assessment one additional year.
- **Waivers-** If the student scores 350 or higher on the mathematics and/or ELA portion of the CAHSEE with the use of modifications, then the school may request a CAHSEE local waiver. At the parent or guardian's request, a school administrator shall submit a request for a waiver to the governing board. The charter governing board may waive the requirement to successfully pass one or both subject matter parts of the CAHSEE for an eligible student with a disability.

### California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE)

The California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE) is a testing program established by California law (EC 48412). The passing of this test earns a student the legal equivalent of a high school diploma.

The CHSPE consists of two sections: an English-language Arts section and a Mathematics section. If a student passes both sections of the CHSPE, the California State Board of Education will award a Certificate of Proficiency, which by state law is equivalent to a high school diploma (although not equivalent to completing all coursework required for regular graduation from high school).

If a student with an IEP takes and passes the CHSPE, the student is still eligible to receive educational placement and services in accordance with their IEP at the LEA/district until they meet the requirements of one of the graduation options offered by the LEA/district.

### Graduation Checklist

When preparing a student with an Independent Education Plan (IEP) to graduate with a high school diploma, please ensure the IEP team has completed the following steps:

- Schedule an exit IEP meeting.
  - It is recommended that this meeting be held within the last 8-10 weeks of school.
- At the IEP meeting, complete the following:
  - Update Present Levels of Performance
  - Complete SEIS Post-Secondary Exit Page 1 and Page 2
  - Ensure the student's "Age of Majority" information has been discussed with the student and documented on the SEIS Individual Transition Plan page 2 form.
  - Send the parent/guardian a Prior Written Notice (PWN) confirming that they student has met the requirement to graduate with a high school diploma. The notice shall also specify federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), states that students who receive a high school diploma are no longer eligible to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). As a result, the student's graduation is considered to be a change in placement and upon graduation from high school the student will no longer be eligible for special education related services. Lastly, the notice shall include contact information for the LEA, should the parent disagree with the determination.
  - Provide the parent/guardian/student with a copy of the last signed IEP and the last triennial assessments.

