Policy 6146.1: High School Graduation Requirements

Status: ADOPTED

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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. Unless exempted as provided in "Exemptions from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements," district students shall also complete other course requirements adopted by the Board. 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: Graduating Classes of 2026, 2027, and 2028

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 (40 credits in English (Education Code 51225.3)
    - English Language Development (ELD) courses that are aligned to state academic content standards for English language arts and approved by the district as equivalent may count toward this requirement. (Education Code 51225.3(b))
2. Two courses (20 credits) in Mathematics (Education Code 51225.3)
    - Students shall complete at least one mathematics course that meets the state academic content standards for Algebra I or Mathematics I. Students may complete such coursework prior to grade 9 provided that they also complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224.5)
    - 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 toward the satisfaction of additional graduation requirements in mathematics. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)
3. Two courses (20 credits) in Science, including biological and physical sciences (Education Code 51225.3)
4. Three courses (30 credits) in Social Studies, including U.S. 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. Three courses (30 credits) in Visual or Performing Arts, World Language, 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. Five courses (50 credits) in College Prep electives.
7. Two courses (20 credits) in Physical Education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (Education Code 51225.3)
8. One semester course (5 credits) in 21st Century Seminar Skills.
9. One semester course (5 credits) in Health.

Total number of credits required for graduation: 220 credits.

Course Requirements: Graduating Class of 2029 and beyond
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 (40 credits in English (Education Code 51225.3)
    - English Language Development (ELD) courses that are aligned to state academic content standards for English language arts and approved by the district as equivalent may count toward this requirement. (Education Code 51225.3(b))
2. Three courses (30 credits) in Mathematics (Education Code 51225.3)
    - Students shall complete at least one mathematics course that meets the state academic content standards for Algebra I or Mathematics I. Students may complete such coursework prior to grade 9 provided that they also complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224.5)
    - 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 toward the satisfaction of additional graduation requirements in mathematics. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)
3. Two courses (20 credits) in Science, including biological and physical sciences (Education Code 51225.3)
4. Three courses (30 credits) in Social Studies, including U.S. 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. One course (10 credits) in Visual or Performing Arts (VAPA) (Education Code 51225.3)
6. Two courses (20 credits) in World Languages. For purposes of this requirement, a course in American Sign Language shall be deemed a course in World Language. (Education Code 51225.3)
7. Four courses (40 credits) in College Preparatory and/or Career Technical Education (CTE).
    - College Preparatory course are defined as those approved to meet UC/CSU A-G admission requirements.
    - 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)
8. Two courses (20 credits) in Physical Education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (Education Code 51225.3)
9. One semester course (5 credits) in Ethnic Studies (Education Code 51225.3)
10. One semester course (5 credits) in Health.

Total number of credits required for graduation: 220 credits.

Alternative Means for Completing Prescribed Courses
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:
A foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student who transfers into the district or between district schools any time after completing the second year of high school, or newcomer student who is in the third or fourth year of high school 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 additional requirements in time to graduate by the end of the fourth year of high school.
Within 30 days of the transfer into a school by the foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newcomer student, 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)
The Superintendent or designee shall not require or request the foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student,

or newcomer student who is exempted from district-established graduation requirements and who completes the statewide coursework requirements before the end of the fourth year of high school, and would otherwise be entitled to remain in school, to graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school. (Education Code 51225.1)
If the foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newcomer student was not properly notified of an exemption, declined the exemption, or was not previously exempted, the student or the student's educational rights holder may request the exemption and the Superintendent or designee shall exempt the student within 30 days of the request. Any such student who at one time qualified for the exemption may request the exemption even if the student is no longer eligible. (Education Code 51225.1)
Additionally, a student with disabilities shall be eligible for an exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the Board in addition to the statewide course requirements for high school graduation, if the student's individualized education program (IEP) provides for both of the following requirements: (Education Code 51225.31)

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

The district's responsibility to provide a free appropriate public education shall not terminate when a student with a disability who is exempted from district- adopted graduation requirements participates in graduation activities unless the IEP team, which includes the parent/guardian and student, has determined that the student has completed the high school experience. (Education Code 51225.31)
Annually, the Superintendent or designee shall report to the California Department of Education, in accordance with Education Code 51225.1, the number of student's graduating from the fourth or fifth year of high school who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from district-established graduation requirements that are in addition to statewide coursework requirements.

Modifications from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements:

Except as provided in Education Code 51225.31, students with disabilities shall be required to complete 220 credits to earn a high school diploma, as determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The required credits are not required to align with district course requirements in World Languages, Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA), or Career Technical Education (CTE). As determined by the IEP team, credits in these areas may be met through alternative elective coursework to satisfy the required elective credits.

Additionally, based on the student's identified needs, the IEP team may determine that modified core content courses are used to meet graduation requirements, provided such courses align with state academic content standards or otherwise meet statewide coursework requirements, unless the student qualifies for an exemption pursuant to Education Code 51225.3.

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. Departed California against their will while in grade 12 and did not receive a diploma because the departure interrupted their education, provided that they were in good academic standing at the time of the departure. Persons may be considered to have departed California against their will if they were in custody of a government agency and were transferred to another state, were subject to a lawful order from a court or government agency that authorized their removal from California, were subject to a lawful order and were permitted to depart California before being removed from California pursuant to the lawful order, were removed or were permitted to depart

voluntarily pursuant to the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, or departed due to other circumstances determined by the district that are consistent with the purposes of Education Code 48204.4. In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the Superintendent or designee shall consider any coursework that may have been completed outside of the U.S. or through online or virtual courses.

2. Were interned by order of the federal government during World War II or are honorably discharged veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, provided that they were enrolled in a district high school immediately preceding the internment or military service and did not receive a diploma because their education was interrupted due to the internment or military service in those wars. Deceased former students who satisfy these conditions may be granted a retroactive diploma to be received by their next of kin.
3. Are veterans who entered the military service of the U.S. while in grade 12 and who had satisfactorily completed the first half of the work required for grade 12 in a district school.
4. Are former members of the military, a resident of California, and received an honorable discharge, or, are current members of the military, a resident of California, and a resident of California when entering the military. In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the Superintendent or designee shall evaluate classes completed in any high school, community college, or state college, grant credit toward graduation for military service and training received while in the military, and if satisfied that the person has completed the equivalent of the requirements for graduation from high school, grant the person a diploma of graduation.
5. 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.

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)

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 Governing Board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State	Description
5 CCR 1600-1651	Graduation of students from grade 12 and credit toward graduation
5 CCR 4600-4670	Uniform complaint procedures
Ed Code 60900.2	Students with Disabilities Graduation Reporting
Ed. Code 220	Prohibition of discrimination
Ed. Code 47612	Average daily attendance in charter school
Ed. Code 48200	Compulsory attendance
Ed. Code 48204.4	Parents/guardians departing California against their will
Ed. Code 48412	Certificate of proficiency
Ed. Code 48430	Continuation education schools and classes
Ed. Code 48645.5	Former juvenile court school students; enrollment
Ed. Code 48980	Parent/Guardian notifications

Ed. Code 49701	Provisions of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children
Ed. Code 51224	Skills and knowledge required for adult life
Ed. Code 51224.5	Algebra in course of study for grades 7-12
Ed. Code 51225.1	Exemption from district graduation requirements
Ed. Code 51225.2	Course credits
Ed. Code 51225.3	High school graduation requirements
Ed. Code 51225.31	Graduation exemption for students with disabilities
Ed. Code 51225.35	Mathematics course requirements; computer science
Ed. Code 51225.36	Instruction in sexual harassment and violence; districts that require health education for graduation
Ed. Code 51225.5	Honorary diplomas; foreign exchange and terminally ill students
Ed. Code 51225.6	Instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation; districts that require health education for graduation
Ed. Code 51225.9	Courses of study, grades 7 to 12; career technical education
Ed. Code 51226.7	Model curriculum in ethnic studies
Ed. Code 51228	Course of study; offerings and timely opportunity
Ed. Code 51230	Credit for community emergency response training
Ed. Code 51240-51246	Exemptions from requirements
Ed. Code 51250-51251	Assistance to military dependents
Ed. Code 51410-51413	Diplomas
Ed. Code 51420-51427	High school equivalency certificates
Ed. Code 51430	Retroactive high school diplomas
Ed. Code 51440	Credit and granting of diploma to veterans and members of the military service
Ed. Code 51450-51455	Golden State Seal Merit Diploma
Ed. Code 51744-51749.6	Independent study
Ed. Code 56390-56392	Recognition for educational achievement; special education
Ed. Code 60640	California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress
Ed. Code 66204	Certification of high school courses as meeting university admission criteria
Ed. Code 67386	Student safety; affirmative consent standard
Federal	**Description**
20 USC 7011	Definition of newcomer student
34 CFR 300.1-300.818	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Management Resources	**Description**
Court Decision	O'Connell v. Superior Court (Valenzuela) (2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 1452
Website	CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services
Website	California Department of Education, High School
Website	University of California, List of Approved A-G Courses
Website	CSBA

Cross References

Code	**Description**
0460	Local Control And Accountability Plan

0460	Local Control And Accountability Plan
1312.3	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1312.3	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1312.3-E PDF(1)	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1312.3-E PDF(2)	Uniform Complaint Procedures
4112.2	Certification
4112.2	Certification
5113.2	Work Permits
5113.2	Work Permits
5126	Awards For Achievement
5126	Awards For Achievement
5127	Graduation Ceremonies And Activities
5145.6	Parent/Guardian Notifications
5145.6-E PDF(1)	Parent/Guardian Notifications
5145.6-E(1)	Parent/Guardian Notifications
5147	Dropout Prevention
6000	Concepts And Roles
6011	Academic Standards
6141	Curriculum Development And Evaluation
6141	Curriculum Development And Evaluation
6142.1	Sexual Health And HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction
6142.1	Sexual Health And HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction
6142.3	Civic Education
6142.4	Service Learning/Community Service Classes
6142.6	Visual And Performing Arts Education
6142.7	Physical Education And Activity
6142.7	Physical Education And Activity
6142.8	Comprehensive Health Education
6142.8	Comprehensive Health Education
6142.91	Reading/Language Arts Instruction
6142.92	Mathematics Instruction
6142.93	Science Instruction
6142.94	History-Social Science Instruction
6143	Courses Of Study
6143	Courses Of Study
6145	Extracurricular And Cocurricular Activities
6145	Extracurricular And Cocurricular Activities
6145.2	Athletic Competition
6145.2	Athletic Competition
6145.6	International Exchange
6145.6	International Exchange
6146.11	Alternative Credits Toward Graduation
6146.11	Alternative Credits Toward Graduation
6146.2	Certificate Of Proficiency/High School Equivalency
6146.2	Certificate Of Proficiency/High School Equivalency
6146.2-E PDF(1)	Certificate Of Proficiency/High School Equivalency
6146.3	Reciprocity Of Academic Credit
6146.3	Reciprocity Of Academic Credit
6146.4	Differential Graduation And Competency Standards For Students With Disabilities
6151	Class Size

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6159.2	Nonpublic, Nonsectarian School And Agency Services For Special Education
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6161.1	Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials
6161.1	Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials
6161.1-E PDF(1)	Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials
6161.1-E(1)	Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials
6162.5	Student Assessment
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6173	Education For Homeless Children
6173	Education For Homeless Children
6173-E PDF(1)	Education For Homeless Children
6173.1	Education For Foster Youth
6173.1	Education For Foster Youth
6173.2	Education Of Children Of Military Families
6173.2	Education Of Children Of Military Families
6173.3	Education For Juvenile Court School Students
6175	Migrant Education Program
6175	Migrant Education Program
6176	Weekend/Saturday Classes
6177	Summer Learning Programs
6178	Career Technical Education
6178	Career Technical Education
6178.1	Work-Based Learning
6178.1	Work-Based Learning
6178.2	Regional Occupational Center/Program
6179	Supplemental Instruction
6181	Alternative Schools/Programs Of Choice
6181	Alternative Schools/Programs Of Choice
6184	Continuation Education
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