

## **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

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.

*(cf. 5127 - Graduation Ceremonies and Activities)*

*(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)*

*(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)*

*(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)*

*(cf. 6146.3 - Reciprocity of Academic Credit)*

### **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)

*(cf. 6142.91 - Reading/Language Arts Instruction)*

2. Two courses 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)

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 "a-g" course requirements for college admission, which may be counted toward additional graduation requirements in mathematics. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)

*(cf. 6142.92 - Mathematics Instruction)*

*(cf. 6152.1 - Placement in Mathematics Courses)*

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences (Education Code 51225.3)

*(cf. 6142.93 - Science Instruction)*

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)

*(cf. 6142.3 - Civic Education)*  
*(cf. 6142.94 - History-Social Science Instruction)*

BP 6146.1(b)

## **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS** (continued)

5. Three 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)

*(cf. 6142.2 - World Language Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6142.6 - Visual and Performing Arts Education)*  
*(cf. 6178 - Career Technical Education)*  
*(cf. 6178.2 - Regional Occupational Center/Program)*

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)

*(cf. 6142.7 - Physical Education and Activity)*  
*(cf. 6142.1 - Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)*  
*(cf. 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education)*

7. One semester course in Health, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant

*(cf. 6142.1 - Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction)*  
*(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)*  
*(cf. 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education)*

8. One semester course in Technology

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.

*(cf. 6146.11 - Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)*  
*(cf. 6146.2 - Certificate of Proficiency/High School Equivalency)*  
*(cf. 6146.4 - Differential Graduation and Competency Standards for Students with Disabilities)*

BP 6146.1(c)

## **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)**

### **Exemptions from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements**

District students are required to complete graduation course requirements specified above, including the requirements imposed by Education Code 51225.3 and those adopted by the Board. However, 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 into a school or of the commencement of participation in a newcomer program, as applicable, the Superintendent or designee shall notify any eligible student of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for it. (Education Code 51225.1)

*(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)*

*(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)*

*(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)*

*(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)*

*(cf. 6173.2 - Education of Children of Military Families)*

*(cf. 6173.3 - Education for Juvenile Court School Students)*

*(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)*

If during the 2020-21 school year a student was in the third or fourth year of high school and is not on track to graduate in four years, the district shall exempt the student from any local graduation requirements adopted by the Board that are in addition to statewide course requirements specified in Education Code 51225.3. (Education Code 51225)

### **Additional Opportunities to Complete Required Coursework**

The Superintendent or designee shall provide a student who was enrolled in the third or fourth year of high school during the 2020-21 school year and is not on track to graduate in the 2020-21 or 2021-22 school years the opportunity to complete the statewide coursework required for graduation, which may include, but is not limited to, completion of the coursework through a fifth year of instruction, credit recovery, or other opportunity to complete the required coursework. (Education Code 51225)

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

### 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 United States 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 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 United States while in grade 12 and who had satisfactorily completed the first half of the work required for grade 12 in a district school
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

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

### 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

*(cf. 6145.6 - International Exchange)*

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)

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

47612 Enrollment in charter school

48200 Compulsory attendance

48204.4 Parents/guardians departing California against their will

48412 Certificate of proficiency

48430 Continuation education schools and classes

48645.5 Acceptance of coursework

48980 Required notification at beginning of term

49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

51224 Skills and knowledge required for adult life

51224.5 Algebra instruction

51225 2020-21 exemption from graduation requirements

51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements

51225.2 Student in foster care defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course

51225.3 High school graduation

51225.35 Mathematics course requirements; computer science

51225.36 Instruction in sexual harassment and violence; districts that require health education for graduation

51225.5 Honorary diplomas

51225.6 Compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation

51228 Graduation requirements

51230 Credit for community emergency response training

51240-51246 Exemptions from requirements

51250-51251 Assistance to military dependents

51410-51413 Diplomas

51420-51427 High school equivalency certificates

51430 Retroactive high school diplomas

51440 Retroactive high school diplomas

51450-51455 Golden State Seal Merit Diploma

51745 Independent study restrictions

56390-56392 Recognition for educational achievement, special education

66204 Certification of high school courses as meeting university admissions criteria

67386 Student safety; affirmative consent standard

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

1600-1651 Graduation of students from grade 12 and credit toward graduation

4600-4670 Uniform complaint procedures

COURT DECISIONS

O'Connell v. Superior Court (Valenzuela), (2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 1452

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)**

*Management Resources:*

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education, High School: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs>

University of California, List of Approved a-g Courses:

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/freshman-requirements>

North Monterey County Unified School District  
Board Policy updated and adopted: December 9, 2021