

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Board of Education desires to prepare all students to obtain a diploma of high school graduation to enable them to take advantage of opportunities for postsecondary education and/or employment.

(cf. 5127 - Graduation Ceremonies and Activities)

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)

(cf. 5149 - At-Risk Students)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.3 - Reciprocity of Academic Credit)

Graduation Requirements

1. A minimum of 210 semester units shall be required for graduation from high school. Ten units of credit shall be granted for the successful completion of a year's study of a particular course.
2. The following course requirements shall be met in grades 9-12 before a student is eligible for graduation:
 - a. Social studies, 40 units (including 10 in World History, five in Contemporary World History, five in government, 10 in U.S. History and five in economics)
 - b. English, 35 units Beginning with students in the Class of 2012, students must earn 40 English units.
 - c. Science, 20 units (10 units physical science and ten units biological science)
 - d. Math, 20 units, including Algebra 1 or its equivalent
 - e. Visual and Performing Arts, 10 units Beginning with students in the Class of 2012, these units must be earned in a single subject course.
 - f. Career/Vocational Education, 10 units
 - g. Physical Education, 20 units
 - h. Health/Living Skills, 5 units
3. Alternative means to complete the prescribed course of study, such as practical demonstration of skills and competencies, supervised work experience, other outside school experience, interdisciplinary study, independent study, and credit earned at a post-secondary institution shall be available to students.
4. Of the elected units required to meet the 210-unit graduation requirements, no more than 40 units may result from experience of a service nature or from off-campus credit-producing courses without the express approval of the building principal.
5. Subject to approval of principal or designee, a single course may satisfy more than one subject area requirement. However, no more than the designated number of units may be earned for each course, other than those courses offered for variable credit. (Education Code 51224)

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6142.3 - Civic Education)

(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

(cf. 6142.6 - Visual and Performing Arts Education)
(cf. 6142.7 - Physical Education)
(cf. 6142.91 - Reading/Language Arts Instruction)
(cf. 6142.92 - Mathematics Instruction)
(cf. 6142.93 - Science Instruction)

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)

High School Exit Examination

Each student completing grade 12 shall have successfully passed the state exit examination in language arts and mathematics as a condition of high school graduation. (Education Code 60851, 60859)

(cf. 6146.4 - Differential Graduation and Competency Standards for Students with Disabilities)
(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)
(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

Supplemental instruction shall be offered to any student in grade 7-12 who does not demonstrate "sufficient progress," as defined in Board policy, toward passing the exit exam. (Education Code 37252, 60851)

(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)
(cf. 6176 - Weekend/Saturday Classes)
(cf. 6177 - Summer School)
(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)

Students who have not passed one or both parts of the exit exam by the end of grade 12 shall have the opportunity to receive intensive instruction and services for up to two consecutive academic years after completion of grade 12 or until they have passed both parts of the exam, whichever comes first. (Education Code 37254)

(cf. 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)
(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)
(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)

Certificates of Completion

Students who have passed all the district's course requirements by the end of their senior year but are unable to pass the high school exit exam shall receive a certificate of completion.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly report to the Board regarding the number of students receiving a certificate of completion and the resources that have been offered to such students.

Retroactive Diplomas

The district may retroactively grant a high school diploma to a former student who was interned by order of the federal government during World War II or who is an honorably discharged veteran of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, provided that he/she was enrolled in a district school immediately preceding the internment or military service and he/she did not receive a diploma because his/her education was interrupted due to the internment or military service. (Education Code 51430)

In addition, the Board may retroactively grant a diploma to a deceased former student who satisfies the above conditions. The diploma shall be received by the deceased student's next of kin. (Education Code 51430)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

- 35186 *Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures*
- 37252 *Supplemental instructional programs*
- 37254 *Supplemental instruction based on failure to pass exit exam by end of grade 12*
- 37254.1 *Required student participation in supplemental instruction*
- 47612 *Enrollment in charter school*
- 48200 *Compulsory attendance*
- 48412 *Certificate of proficiency*
- 48430 *Continuation education schools and classes*
- 48645.5 *Acceptance of coursework*
- 51224 *Skills and knowledge required for adult life*
- 51224.5 *Algebra instruction*
- 51225.3 *Requirements for graduation*
- 51225.5 *Honorary diplomas; foreign exchange students*
- 51228 *Graduation requirements*
- 51240-51246 *Exemptions from requirements*
- 51250-51251 *Assistance to military dependents*
- 51410-51412 *Diplomas*
- 51420-51427 *High school equivalency certificates*
- 51450-51455 *Golden State Seal Merit Diploma*
- 51745 *Independent study restrictions*
- 52378 *Supplemental school counseling program*
- 56390-56392 *Recognition for educational achievement, special education*
- 60850-60859 *High school exit examination*
- 66204 *Certification of high school courses as meeting university admissions criteria*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

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

COURT DECISIONS

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

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Preparing for the High Stakes of the High School Exit Exam: An Examination of Certificates of Completion, Policy Advisory, September 2005

WEB SITES

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

California Department of Education, California High School Exit Examination:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs>

Policy
adopted:

PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Palo Alto, California