

## High School Graduation Requirements

### Instruction

The Governing Board desires to prepare all students to obtain a high school diploma so that they can take advantage of opportunities for postsecondary education and employment. Having rigorous graduation requirements for all students that match university admission expectations better prepares graduates for more opportunities. Providing options addresses many individual needs also allows individuals to develop their own pathway to their future.

(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)

The credit and course requirements for SUSD students are described in Section A below. There are three credit and course plans described in Section A. These include: Plan 1 (All Students); Plan 2 (Foreign Born Students Age 15 or Older); Plan 3 (Foster, Probation Involved, Homeless/Transitional Youth Transferring after their second year of high school or Students with Interrupted Formal Education entering SUSD at 16 or older); Section B below describes the requirement to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). (Note: The CAHSEE requirement is currently suspended under California law.) Section C below describes the Alternative to the High School Diploma. Section D describes retroactive diplomas. Section E describes the awarding of an additional honor, the Seal of College and Career Readiness.

### SECTION A: CREDIT AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete a minimum of the following numbers of courses in the subjects specified, each course having duration of one year, unless otherwise specified. These credits may be achieved through traditional classes or alternative means that have been approved such as dual enrollment in a community college, on-line courses, summer school, adult education, work experience, proficiency tests, or classes from other accredited institutions. The requirements to obtain approval to receive credit through these alternative means shall be outlined in an Administrative Regulation approved by the Superintendent. To ensure each graduate achieves UC/CSU eligibility, the specific grades that must be earned to receive credit for courses in each subject will also be contained in the Administrative Regulation approved by the Superintendent.

#### Plan 1 - ALL STUDENTS (FOR UC/CSU ELIGIBILITY)

COURSES	SEMESTERS	NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED
a. History/Social Science (including U.S. History, World History, American Government/Economics)	6	30

b. English	8	40
c. Mathematics (including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra 2 or other approved math courses)	6	30
d. Laboratory Science (one year of general science and one Lab Science each from biological and physical sciences.)	6	30
e. World Languages (Two years of the same language other than English required.) *See additional notes at the end of Section A.	4	20
f. Visual and Performing Arts	2	10
Physical Education *See additional notes at the end of this Section.	4	20
g. College Preparatory Electives	2	10
General electives	8	40
Total Credits Required (All courses in A-G categories must be courses approved by the University of California Office of the President)		230

**Students with disabilities** intending to earn a regular high school diploma must complete the District’s credit and course requirements. IEP Teams shall consider accommodations and/or supports in these required courses and/or credits, which shall be documented in the Individualized Education Program. 504 Teams shall consider accommodations in these required courses and/or credits, which shall be documented in the 504 Plan.

**Plan 2 – FOREIGN BORN STUDENTS 15 OR OLDER**

**Requirement to Sign a Waiver:** In order to utilize Plan 2, an eligible student (and, as appropriate, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil) must sign a written waiver to acknowledge that Plan 2 does not satisfy the UC/CSU Admission a-g requirements, and may affect the pupil’s ability to gain admission to a post- secondary institution. The student shall also receive information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. The counseling and waiver process for utilizing Plan 2 shall be further outlined in an Administrative Regulation approved by the Superintendent.

If the school district determines that the foster, probation involved, homeless/transitional youth or student with interrupted formal education is reasonably able to complete the school district’s graduation requirements within the student’s fifth year of high school, the district shall inform and counsel the student about this right, as further outlined in an Administrative Regulation approved by the Superintendent.

Foreign-born students who enter the District and are at least 15 years of age by September 1st of their entering year will be placed in the 10th grade. Students in this category may obtain a diploma by meeting the following course and credit requirements:

CATEGORY DESCRIPTION	SEMESTERS	NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED
a. History/Social Science (including U.S. History, World History, American Government/Economics)	6	30
b. English	6	30
c. Mathematics (including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra 2 or other approved math courses)	6	30
d. Laboratory Science (one year each from biological and physical sciences.)	4	20
e. World Languages (Two years of the same language other than English required.)	4	20
f. Visual and Performing Arts	2	10
Physical Education *See additional notes at the end of Section	4	20
g. College Preparatory Electives Course	2	10
General electives	2	10
Total Credits Required (All courses in A-G categories must be courses approved by the University of California Office of the President)		180

Students who are 14 by September 1st of their entering year will be placed in 9th grade, and will be required to meet Plan 1 graduation requirements. Students with less than 8 years of schooling will be placed in the 9th grade.

**Plan 3 – Foster, Probation Involved, Homeless/Transitional Youth Transferring After Their Second Year of High School or Newcomer English Learner Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE)**

**Requirement to Sign a Waiver:** In order to utilize Plan 3, an eligible student (and, as appropriate, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil) must sign a written waiver to acknowledge that Plan 3 does not satisfy the UC/CSU Admission a-g requirements, and may affect the pupil’s ability to gain admission to a post- secondary institution. The student shall also receive information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. The counseling and waiver process for utilizing Plan 3 shall be further outlined in an Administrative Regulation approved by the Superintendent.

If the school district determines that the foster, probation involved, homeless/transitional youth or student with interrupted formal education is reasonably able to complete the school

district’s graduation requirements within the student’s fifth year of high school, the district shall inform and counsel the student about this right, as further outlined in an Administrative Regulation approved by the Superintendent.

Foster, probation involved, homeless/transitional youth that transfer between schools any time after their completion of their second year of high school or students with limited or interrupted formal education who have been enrolled in a U.S. high school for at least two years at the time of planned graduation and who will reach age 18 with fewer than 100 credits are not required to complete courses beyond state requirements, unless the district makes a finding that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the additional requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil’s fourth year of high school.

COURSES	SEMESTERS	NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED
a. History/Social Science (including U.S. History, World History, American Government/Economics)	6	30
b. English	6	30
c. Mathematics (including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra 2 or other approved math courses)	4	20
d. Laboratory Science (one year each from biological and physical sciences.)	4	20
e. Visual and Performing Arts or World Language *See notes at end of Section A	2	10
f. Physical Education *See additional notes at end of Section A	4	20
Total Credits Required (All courses in A-G categories must be courses approved by the University of California Office of the President)		130

**World Languages**

- An approved course in American Sign Language shall be deemed as meeting this requirement.
- Students studying a World Language in a private school at the same time they are enrolled in a district high school may qualify to receive high school course credit for their instruction. Up to 20 credits, at a maximum of 10 credits per year, will be granted to students who meet the criteria listed in the Administrative Regulation regarding alternative means for meeting credit and course requirements.
- English Learner (EL) students who can demonstrate proficiency in their primary language that is equal to or exceeding what is expected of students after two years

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of classroom World Language study may be exempted from the World Language requirement. The purpose of this exemption is to provide secondary EL students the opportunity to take additional ELD courses and to give recognition to the primary language skills that they have already acquired. In no way is the intent of

the exemption to discourage English Learner students from taking World Language courses. All students planning to attend college should investigate the foreign language requirement.

### **Physical Education**

- Students must pass 5 of 6 sections of the FitnessGram by the end of 10th grade to be eligible for a 2-year exemption from Physical Education. Students who fail to pass the FitnessGram by the end of 10th grade will be required to re-enroll in PE until s/he passes the FitnessGram or meets exemption criteria outlined in Board Policy. Failure to pass the FitnessGram is not grounds for withholding a diploma.
- At least two years of Physical Education are required to graduate unless otherwise exempted pursuant of Board Policy.

### **Children of Military Families**

The Superintendent or designee shall use best efforts to waive specific courses required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed in another district or shall provide reasonable justification for denial. Should a waiver not be granted to a student who would qualify to graduate from the sending school, the Superintendent or designee shall use best efforts to provide an alternative means of acquiring required coursework so that graduation may occur on time. (EC 49701).

### **SECTION B: CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMINATION**

Senate Bill (SB) 172 suspended the administration of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) and the requirement that students completing grade twelve successfully pass the high school exit examination as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation from high school for the 2015–16, 2016–17, and 2017–18 school years. SB 172 also requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) to convene an advisory panel to provide recommendations to the SSPI on the continuation of the high school exit examination and on alternative pathways to satisfy the high school graduation requirements pursuant to California Education Code sections 51224.5 and 51225.3.

### **SECTION C: ALTERNATIVES TO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**

Certificate of Completion. Instead of a high school diploma, a student with disabilities may be awarded a certificate of completion if the student has met one of the following requirements: (i)

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satisfactorily completed a prescribed alternative course of study approved by the governing board of the District in which the student attended school or the District with jurisdiction over the student as identified in his/her IEP, (ii) satisfactorily met his/her goals and objectives during high school as identified in his/her IEP, (iii) satisfactorily attended high school, participated in the instruction as prescribed in his/her IEP, and met the objectives of the statement of transition services.

A student who obtains a Certificate of Completion shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which a graduating student of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate. The right to participate in graduation ceremonies does not equate a certificate of completion with a high school diploma.

This High School Graduation Requirements Policy replaces existing Board Policies P6105.2, P6105.3, and P6105.4.

#### **SECTION D: RETROACTIVE DIPLOMAS**

Until July 31, 2018, any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 school year or a subsequent school year and has met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma. This language shall be removed from this policy upon expiration of this requirement. (Education Code 60851.6)

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. A deceased former student who satisfies these conditions may be granted a retroactive diploma to be received by his/her next of kin. (Education Code 51430)

In addition, the district may grant a diploma to a veteran who entered the military service of the United States while he/she was a district student in grade 12 and who had completed the first half of the work required for grade 12. (Education Code 51440)

(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)

#### **SECTION E: THE SEAL OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS**

Beginning with the Class of 2019, the state of California indicates which students are designated College/Career “prepared” based on a variety of measurements. Students that are Prepared will have an addition seal attached to their diploma and the designation shall be added to their final official transcript. For more information on the College/Career Indicator, refer to:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/index.asp>.

The criteria is:

- Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: Score of Level 3 “Standard Met” or higher on both English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics

or

- Advanced Placement (AP) Exams: Score of 3 or higher on two AP exams

or

- International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams: Score of 4 or higher on two IB exams

or

- Completion of Dual Enrollment: Two semesters or three quarters of college coursework with a grade of C- or better in academic/CTE subjects where college credit is awarded

or

- University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) a-g requirements: Complete a-g course requirements with a grade of C- or better plus one of the Additional Criteria from the box below

or

- Career Technical Education (CTE) Pathway: Pathway completion with a C- or better in the capstone course plus one of the Additional Criteria from the box below

Additional Criteria

- Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment Scores:
  - Level 3 or higher on ELA and at least a Level 2 “Standard Nearly Met” in mathematics, or
  - Level 3 or higher on mathematics and at least a Level 2 in ELA

or

- One semester/two quarters of Dual Enrollment with a grade of C- or better in academic/CTE subjects

or

- Score of 3 on one AP exam or score of 4 on one IB Exam (for a-g requirement only)

or

- Completion of CTE Pathway (for a-g requirement only)

**Legal Reference:**

EDUCATION CODE

47612 Enrollment in charter school

48200 Compulsory attendance

48412 Certificate of proficiency

48430 Continuation education schools and classes

48645.5 Acceptance of coursework

48980 Required notification at beginning of term



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49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children  
51224 Skills and knowledge required for adult life  
51224.5 Algebra instruction  
51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements  
51225.2 Pupil 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; foreign exchange students  
51225.6 Compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation  
51228 Graduation requirements  
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  
4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures  
COURT DECISIONS  
O'Connell v. Superior Court (Valenzuela), (2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 1452

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:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/requirements>