

**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.

**Course Requirements**

To obtain a high school diploma, students shall complete ~~at least~~ the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified:

1. Three courses in English (Education Code 51225.3)

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)

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

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)

5. One course 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.

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)

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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**

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 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 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)

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)

**Retroactive Diplomas**

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through the 2014-15 school year and met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination

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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

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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)

*State*

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

5 CCR 4600-4670: Uniform complaint procedures

Ed. Code 47612: Enrollment 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: Required notification at beginning of term

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: Former juvenile court school student defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course

Ed. Code 51225.3: High school graduation

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 students

Ed. Code 51225.6: Instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Ed. Code 51228: Graduation requirements

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

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Ed. Code 51430: Retroactive high school diplomas

Ed. Code 51440: Retroactive high school diplomas

Ed. Code 51450-51455: Golden State Seal Merit Diploma

Ed. Code 51745: Independent study

Ed. Code 56390-56392: Recognition for educational achievement, special education

Ed. Code 66204: Certification of high school courses as meeting university admission criteria

Ed. Code 67386: Student safety; affirmative consent standard

*Management Resources*

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

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

Website: California Department of Education, High School

Website: CSBA

Policy Adopted: 12/15/2021

ORCUTT UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Orcutt, California