

High School Graduation Requirements

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

Course Requirements (Education Code 51225.3)

To obtain a high school diploma, students in the class of 2015 through the class of 2017 shall complete at least 210 credits in the prescribed course of study in grades 9-12. Beginning with the class of 2018, students shall complete at least 220 credits in the prescribed course of study in grades 9-12. Each course is considered as being a year in duration unless otherwise indicated.

1. Four courses in English (40 credits).
2. Two courses in mathematics (20 credits). Beginning with the class of 2018, students will be required to complete three courses in mathematics (30 credits) and beginning with the class of 2019 students will be required to complete four courses in mathematics (40 credits).

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses required for completion in grades 9-12, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1 to meet the state graduation requirement. (Education Code 41224.5).

Completion, prior to grade 9, of algebra coursework that meets or exceeds state academic content standards shall satisfy the algebra coursework requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224).

Students in the class of 2018 and beyond, while encouraged to take rigorous a-g courses in their junior and senior year, may take applied math courses aligned to a career pathway/industry need to meet the third and fourth year math requirement.

Students that are enrolled in an approved UC Advanced Mathematics course, such as Pre-Calculus, during their junior year do not have to take a fourth year of math.

Beginning with the Class of 2018, students may take any computer science or Project Lead the Way (PLTW) computer science course to meet their local math requirement for graduation.

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences (20 credits).
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 (30 credits).

5. One course in visual or performing arts or world language, including American Sign Language (10 credits).
6. Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (20 credits).
7. Six Courses in electives (60 credits).

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)

Exemptions and Waivers

A foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newly arrived immigrant student participating in a newcomer program who transfers into the district any time after completing the second year of high school shall be required to complete all graduation requirements specified in Education Code 51225.3 but shall be exempt from any additional district-adopted graduation requirements, unless 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, any such student shall be notified of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for it. (Education Code 51225.1).

Course Requirements (Exemption for foster youth, a homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newly arrived immigrant student participating in a newcomer program).

1. Three courses in English (30 credits).
2. Two courses in mathematics (20 credits). At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses required for completion in grades 9-12, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1 to meet the State graduation requirement. (Education Code 41224.5).

Completion, prior to grade 9, of algebra coursework that meets or exceeds state academic content standards shall satisfy the algebra coursework requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224).

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences (20 credits).

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 (30 credits).
5. One course in visual or performing arts or foreign language, including American Sign Language (10 credits).
6. Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (20 credits).

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)
(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)
(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)
(cf. 6173.2 - Education of Children of Military Families)
(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)

Students enrolled in the Long Beach School for Adults high school diploma program shall be required to complete the locally determined course of study as specified in Education Code 52509. At least ten of the required course credits must be completed while enrolled at the Long Beach School for Adults (residency requirement).

Course Requirements (Exemption for Long Beach School for Adults)

1. Four courses in English (40 credits).
2. Three courses in mathematics (30 credits). At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses required for completion in grades 9-12, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1 to meet the State graduation requirement. (Education Code 41224.5).

Completion, prior to grade 9, of algebra coursework that meets or exceeds state academic content standards shall satisfy the algebra coursework requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224).

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences (**20** credits).
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 (30 credits).
5. One course in visual or performing arts or foreign language, including American Sign Language (10 credits).
6. Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (20 credits).

Retroactive Diplomas

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through 2017-18 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. (Education Code 60851.6).

In addition, the district may retroactively grant high school diplomas to: (Education Code 48204.4, 51430, 51440)

1. Persons who 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. Former students who were interned by order of the federal government during World War II or who 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. 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.

The Board may grant honorary high school diplomas 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 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 References:

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 of beginning of term
49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities 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 requirements
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
51240-51246 Exemptions from requirements
51250-51251 Assistance to military dependents
51410-51412 Diplomas
51745 Independent study restrictions
60850-60859 High school exit examination
60851.5 Suspension of High School Exit Examination
60851.6 Retroactive diploma; completion of all graduation requirements except high school exit examination
66204 Certification of high school courses as meeting university admission 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/g/hs>

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

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

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LONG BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT