



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENCE GUIDE

TITLE: Issuance of Diplomas and Certificates of Completion for All Eligible Students with Disabilities

NUMBER: REF-6056.6

ISSUER: Beth Kauffman, Associate Superintendent
Division of Special Education

DATE: May 2, 2019

ROUTING
 Schools Serving Grade 12
 Students with Disabilities
 Local District
 Superintendents
 Local District Instructional
 Directors
 Local District Special
 Education Administrators
 Counseling Coordinators
 School Site Administrators
 Staff Working with Students
 with Disabilities
 Clerical Staff

PURPOSE: The purpose of this reference guide is to inform secondary school site staff working with students with disabilities of the requirements for the issuance of a high school diploma and certificate of completion to eligible students with disabilities.

MAJOR CHANGES: This Reference Guide replaces REF-6056.5: *Issuance of Diplomas and Certificates of Completion for All Eligible Students with Disabilities*, dated May 4, 2018. This update addresses changes in effect for the 2018-19 school year.

BACKGROUND: The Division of Special Education assists all District-operated schools serving Grade 12 students to identify and prepare certificates of completion for eligible students with disabilities. This support is part of a District-wide effort to increase high school graduation and completion rates for all students, and to improve the accuracy of student graduation and completion data in the District’s My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS) as well as student cumulative files.

All students with disabilities who have attended high school for at least four years (referred to as “grade 12 students” in this guide, although students may not have promoted to grade 12 status) are eligible for a certificate of completion unless the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines that a student has not met the applicable criteria. Per California Education Code, section 56390, students with an IEP can earn a certificate of completion by meeting any one of the following conditions:

- Satisfactory completion of credits of a prescribed alternative course of study as identified on the student’s IEP (210 credits); or
- Satisfactory achievement of their IEP goals and objectives during high school as determined by the IEP team; or



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BACKGROUND (Continued):

- Satisfactory high school attendance, participation in the instruction prescribed in their IEP and achievement of the transition goals and objectives.

The Division of Special Education will send schools preprinted Certificates of Completion for potentially eligible students.

Students with disabilities may also be eligible to earn a diploma. Per District policy, students with an IEP earn a diploma if all of the following requirements are met:

- Complete required coursework;
- Earn the minimum required number of credits for their graduation year; and
- Complete non-course requirements (e.g. select career pathway, service learning).

Schools are responsible for ordering diplomas for all eligible students, including those with IEPs. Students with disabilities who earn a diploma have completed their high school education and are no longer eligible for special education services.

PROCEDURES:

School sites are responsible to do all of the following:

1. Send the “Certificate of Completion Letter” (Attachment A) to the parents of eligible grade 12 students with an IEP. The letter informs families that:
 - a) Students with disabilities who qualify for a certificate of completion are eligible to participate in one graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which students of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate.
 - b) Students earning a certificate of completion may also qualify for a diploma if they have met diploma requirements.
2. Issue the preprinted certificates of completion to each eligible student based on the IEP team decision.
 - a) The District Office of Transition Services will mail preprinted certificates of completion for all eligible students. School sites may elect to print their own certificates at their cost.
 - b) If a student has earned the certificate but it is not preprinted, schools may use one of the blank certificates provided.
 - c) A certificate of completion (and diploma, if eligible) should be issued within the timeframe and guidelines of issuance as established by the District.
3. Ensure that IEP teams follow the appropriate IEP process (Attachment B) that must be completed for all grade 12 students eligible for a diploma or certificate of completion.
 - a) Students who meet diploma requirements this school year should be awarded a diploma and have a final IEP and Summary of Performance



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PROCEDURES (Continued):

- completed. For details regarding the Summary of Performance, please see BUL-5796.1: *Summary of Performance Requirement for Students with Disabilities Graduating or Reaching Maximum Age*.
- b) Students with disabilities who earn a certificate of completion are eligible to continue receiving special education services until they reach 22 years of age or until earning a diploma; whichever comes first.
 - If a student plans to continue in a District-operated program next school year, an IEP team meeting should be held to discuss the offer of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).
 - c) Students with disabilities who do not plan to return to school must have a Summary of Performance completed.
4. School sites must enter into MiSiS either a leave reason code for 12th grade students who will not be returning to an LAUSD school the next school year or a year-end flag for students who will be returning. For more information, see REF-6501.5: *2018-19 Year-End Coding for all 12th Grade Students*.

RELATED RESOURCES:

California Education Code

REF-6501.5: *2018-19 Year-End Coding for All 12th Grade Students*, April 19, 2019

BUL-6566.2: *Graduation Requirements for Classes of 2016-2019*, December 15, 2016

BUL-6778.0: *Graduation Requirements for Class of 2020*, December 15, 2016

BUL-045786.1: *Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2021*, February 23, 2018

BUL-6257.1: *High School “a-g” Graduation Requirements and Students with Disabilities*, March 27, 2017

BUL-5796.1: *Summary of Performance Requirement for Students with Disabilities Graduating or Reaching Maximum Age*, February 5, 2013

REF-5982.2: *Algebra I Waiver Procedures for Students with Disabilities*, August 21, 2017

BUL-2457.1: *Physical Education Exemptions*, June 19, 2009

REF-1303.3: *Commencement Guidelines*, March 23, 2018



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ASSISTANCE: For assistance or further information on issuing Certificates of Completion, please contact James Koontz, Coordinator, District Office of Transition Services, at (213) 241-8050, or via email at jck6411@lausd.net.

For assistance with MiSiS, call MiSiS Support at (213) 241-4850.

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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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BETH KAUFFMAN
Associate Superintendent

AUSTIN BEUTNER
Superintendent of Schools

[INSERT DATE]

PARENT OF: [FIRST, LAST]

[ADDRESS LINE]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

RE: CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Dear Parent:

I am pleased to inform you that your child, [FIRST, LAST], has earned a Certificate of Completion from Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Please note that your child may also be earning a diploma this year, if District requirements are met. All grade 12 students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion if they have met one or more of the following conditions: (a) satisfactory completion of credits; (b) satisfactory achievement of their IEP goals and objectives during high school as determined by the IEP team; or (c) satisfactory high school attendance, participation in the instruction prescribed in their IEP, and achievement of the transition goals and objectives.

Students with disabilities who qualify for a Certificate of Completion are eligible to participate in a graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which students of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate. All District students may participate in one graduation ceremony. Students who earn a Certificate of Completion are eligible to continue receiving special education services and may return to school through 22 years of age or until a Diploma is earned, whichever comes first.

Congratulations to your child for earning a Certificate of Completion. This is an accomplishment and an important first step in ensuring a successful future. The Certificate of Completion will be issued by your child's school within the timeframe and guidelines of issuance set by the school. Normally, this will take place at the end of the spring semester. If you have a question that cannot be addressed at the school, please contact the District Office of Transition Services at (213) 241-8050.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth Kauffman".

Beth Kauffman

BK: jk

c: Principal, [SCHOOL]

James Koontz, Coordinator, Transition Services

“The teachers, administrators, and staff of the Los Angeles Unified School District believe in the equal worth and dignity of all students and are committed to educate all students to their maximum potential.”

MIEMBROS DEL CONSEJO
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Superintendente de Escuelas



**DISTRITO ESCOLAR UNIFICADO DE LOS
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Los Angeles, California 90017
(213) 241-6701 Fax: (213) 241-6842

BETH KAUFFMAN
Superintendente Adjunto

[INTRODUCIR FECHA]

PADRE DE: [NOMBRE, APELLIDO]
[DIRECCIÓN]
[DIRECCIÓN 2]

Con respecto a: CERTIFICADO DE FINALIZACIÓN

Estimados padres,

Me complace informarle que su hijo, [NOMBRE, APELLIDO], ha obtenido un Certificado de Finalización del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Los Ángeles (LAUSD). Tenga en cuenta que su hijo también podría estar obteniendo un diploma este año, si reúne los requisitos necesarios del Distrito. Todos los estudiantes del duodécimo grado con un Programa de Educación Individualizado (IEP) reúnen los requisitos necesarios para recibir un Certificado de Finalización si cumplen con una o más de las siguientes condiciones: (a) cumplimiento satisfactorio de los créditos académicos; (b) logro satisfactorio de las metas y los objetivos del IEP durante la escuela secundaria según lo determine el comité del IEP; o (c) asistencia escolar satisfactoria en la escuela secundaria, participación en la instrucción prescrita en su IEP y el logro de las metas y los objetivos de transición.

Los estudiantes con discapacidades que reúnen los requisitos necesarios para recibir un Certificado de Finalización son elegibles para participar en una ceremonia de graduación y en cualquier actividad escolar relacionada con la graduación en la que los estudiantes de edad similar sin discapacidades serían elegibles para participar. Todos los estudiantes del Distrito pueden participar en una ceremonia de graduación. Los estudiantes que obtienen un Certificado de Finalización reúnen los requisitos necesarios para seguir recibiendo los servicios de educación especial y pueden regresar a la escuela hasta los 22 años de edad o hasta que se obtenga un Diploma, lo que ocurra primero.

Felicitaciones a su hijo por obtener un Certificado de Finalización. Este es un logro y un primer paso importante para asegurar su éxito en el futuro. El Certificado de Finalización será emitido por la escuela de su hijo dentro del plazo de tiempo y en cumplimiento con las pautas de emisión establecidas por la escuela. Normalmente, esto ocurrirá al final del semestre de primavera. Si tiene una pregunta que no se puede abordar en la escuela, comuníquese con el Departamento de Servicios de Transición del Distrito al (213) 241-8050.

Atentamente,

Beth Kauffman

BK: jk

C: Director, [ESCUELA]

James Koontz, Coordinador, Servicios de Transición

"Los maestros, administradores y personal del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Los Ángeles creemos en la igualdad y la dignidad de todos los estudiantes y estamos comprometidos a educar a todos los estudiantes hasta su máximo potencial."



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ATTACHMENT B

IEP TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO THE ISSUANCE OF A DIPLOMA OR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION TO ELIGIBLE GRADE 12 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

IEP teams are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate IEP process is completed for all grade 12 students with disabilities eligible for a diploma or certificate of completion. The table below provides additional information:

	Student Eligible for:	Student Plan	Final IEP And Summary of Performance (SOP)**
1	Diploma	Student must exit this school year	Yes, Required
2	Certificate of Completion	Student plans to voluntarily exit this school year	Yes, Required
3	Certificate of Completion	Student plans to continue in current program next school year	No, Not Required
4	Certificate of Completion	Student plans to continue in a different District program next school year (e.g., Independent Study, Community Day School, Continuation School, Career and Transition Center (including Center for Advanced Transition Skills))	No, Not Required*

*An IEP meeting should be held to discuss the offer of FAPE.

**See Bulletin 5796.1 for Summary of Performance information.