



## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

CATEGORY: **Instruction, Academic Achievement**

SUBJECT: **Graduation from Senior High School**

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### **A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

1. To outline administrative policies and procedures governing high school graduation requirements and eligibility to participate in commencement ceremonies.

2. **Related Procedures:**

Instructional Programs, General .....	4000
Length of 7-12 School Day .....	4026
Uniform Course Names and Numbers .....	4100
K-12 Physical Education .....	4179
Independent Study .....	4316
Enrollment in College/University Coursework .....	4322
Adult Education Programs .....	4400
High School Diploma Program (HSDP) .....	4410
Progress Reporting, 7-12 .....	4705
Citizenship Grading and Evaluation and Academic History .....	4710
Placement/Articulation, 9-12 .....	4766
Alternative Means of Satisfying the Course of Study .....	4771
Diploma with Academic Distinction .....	4772
California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE) .....	4790
California Physical Fitness Assessment .....	4835
Printing of Graduation Lists and Programs, Diplomas, and Certificates .....	5609
Classroom Grouping Practices and Counseling Procedures .....	6020
Enrollment of Children from Active Duty Military Families .....	6050
Enrollment of Children and Youth in Transition (aka Homeless) .....	6129
Enrollment and Education of Students Residing in Foster Care .....	6131
Transfer and Withdrawal, 7-12 .....	6146
Cumulative Records Keeping, 7-12 .....	6510
Release of Directory Information .....	AR 5125.1

### **B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS**

1. **Reference:** Board policies A-5000, F-1300, F-2000, F-2050, F-2200, F-3100, F-3300, F-7000, F-7100, F-7105, F-7106, F-7107, F-7120, F-7410, F-7600, F-7800, F-7810, and F-8400, BP 5125.1; Education Code §46145-46147, 48200-48201, 48205, 48645.5, 48980-48984, 49700-49701, 51010-51017, 51041, 51050, 51054, 51220, 51224-51226, 51228, 51240-51245, 51251, 51410-51412, 51460-51464, 51747, 52378, 56026-56035, 60850-60852, and 66204; California Code of Regulations, Title 5, §1600, 1631-1635, 1650, and 1651; CA Assembly Bill 1012.
2. The Board of Education is the authority that prescribes graduation requirements in accordance with provisions of the California Education Code; compliance by all schools is mandatory.

**C. GENERAL**

1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions and questions regarding this procedure should be directed to the Office of Secondary Schools.
2. **Diplomas and Certificates of Completion** are issued as indicated below:
  - a. **Diplomas** are awarded to students who meet all general and course requirements for graduation specified in Section D, Implementation.
  - b. **Certificates of Completion** are presented to non-diploma-bound students receiving special education services who meet all the goals and objectives specified and consented to in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP). A Certificate of Completion is issued at the completion of the student's prescribed educational program. Students receiving Certificates of Completion are eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies.
  - c. No diploma, certificate or other document (except official transcripts), shall be conferred on a student as evidence of completion of a prescribed course of study or training, or of satisfactory attendance, unless the student has met the graduation requirements approved by the Board of Education as outlined in the district's *Course of Study, TK-12*.
3. **"Class of":** Students are assigned a "Class of..." designation based on the year that they first enter Grade 9. The "Class of..." designation reflects the student's expected year of graduation – four years from the year the student first entered Grade 9.
4. **Tracking Progress Toward Graduation/Credit-Based Grade Level:**
  - a. At the beginning of each semester, students with:
    - (1) Nine or fewer credits are Grade 9 students.
    - (2) Between 10 and 20 credits are Grade 10 students.
    - (3) Between 21 and 30 credits are Grade 11 students.
    - (4) 31 or more credits are Grade 12 students.
  - b. A student's credit-based grade level may not exceed the grade level associated with his/her "Class of" designation.
  - c. The grade level of students working toward a Certificate of Completion (non-diploma-bound students) receiving special education services will not be based on credits earned, but will be increased by one grade level each school year.
  - d. San Diego Unified Credit Value: 1.0 credit per semester or quarter. All credits received out-of-district will be converted to meet San Diego Unified credit value, as needed.

5. A student who is severely credit deficient may work toward meeting all graduation requirements and shall be provided options for continuing his or her education. These options may include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
- a. Enroll in the San Diego Continuing Education and San Diego Unified School District Joint Adult High School Diploma Program.
  - b. Students at least 18 years of age may continue education through the district's Adult Education Program.
  - c. Continue enrollment in the school district.<sup>1</sup>
  - d. English Learners may continue in a fifth year of enrollment in the school district until graduation credits are earned.
  - e. Students with disabilities may continue at their school of attendance until age 22, as recommended by the student's IEP or 504 team.
  - f. Under the following Assembly Bills: AB 167/216, AB 1806, and AB 2306, students in transition (foster youth, students in homeless situations, and those transitioning from a juvenile court school) who transfer after their second year of high school may be eligible to graduate by completing the minimum California state graduation requirements if they are not reasonably able to complete all San Diego Unified School District graduation requirements by the end of their fourth year of high school. Completing a second year of high school is defined as either:
    - (1) Completing two year of high school; or
    - (2) Completing sufficient high school credits to be considered a high school junior or senior

Students who graduate under AB 167/216, AB 1806, or AB 2306 are not required to complete additional San Diego Unified School District requirements, which require a total of 44 credits.

## **D. IMPLEMENTATION**

1. **General Requirements for Graduation:**
- a. **GPA:** Attain a weighted grade-point average (WGPA) of 2.00 or higher in Grades 9-12 by the end of the spring semester of the senior year, or by the end of summer school (for summer school graduates) as reflected on final transcript.

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<sup>1</sup> Attendance of students 18 years of age or older is a privilege, not a requirement. The principal may use discretion to determine whether to permit the enrollment of students over 18 years of age. Factors to be considered include: the amount of credits a student needs to complete diploma requirements, student attendance record and citizenship. Students over age 18 who are not permitted to enroll in regular high schools will be referred to the Adult Education Program. The decision of the site principal is final.

b. **Credits:**

- (1) **Minimum of 44 semester credits earned in Grades 9-12:** Specific subject requirements are identified in Section D.2. Students on approved early graduation plans must meet the same requirements as referenced in Section D.15.
- (2) **Credits earned in Grades 7 and 8:** Mathematics (Integrated Math I A-B, Integrated I A-B ADV, Integrated Math II A-B, Integrated Math II A-B ADV) and Languages Other Than English courses taken in Grades 7 and 8 (except those taken at Independent World Language Schools [IWLS]) that meet high school graduation requirements are retained as permanent entries on students' high school transcripts and count towards the minimum 44 credits needed for graduation. Grades earned in such coursework are not included in the high school WGPA calculation. Note: Middle school IWLS credits will not be transcribed on San Diego Unified School District student transcripts (See Administrative Procedure 4771, Alternative Means of Satisfying the Prescribed Course of Study, Section D.4.c. Students must complete at least two years of mathematics courses while in Grades 9-12.

c. **Attendance:**

- (1) Eight semesters, or equivalent, in Grades 9-12. Students should be scheduled for a regular full instructional day of not less than 365 minutes. (See Administrative Procedure 4026)
- (2) California AB 1012 requires that all students be enrolled in a full day of academic work, regardless of whether students can meet graduation requirements during a shortened day. All courses in which students are enrolled must have academic content. Administrative Circular 33, issued June 12, 2017, provides information on the Principal's Certification of Compliance in meeting the California AB 1012 standards.
- (3) Fewer instructional minutes may be specified in a student's IEP or 504 Plan.

d. **Conduct:** A record of responsible behavior according to the site's published discipline policies and in accordance with district policies and procedures.

e. All graduation requirements specified above must be satisfied prior to participation in commencement ceremonies.

2. **Specific Subjects to be Completed and Credits Required for Graduation (All courses required for graduation must be University of California (UC) approved in the subject area specified, unless otherwise noted):**

a. **History/Social Science:** Six semester credits in the "a" subject area, as follows:

- (1) Two credits in a world history 1,2 course as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*

- (2) Two credits in a U.S. history 1,2 course as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*
  - (3) One credit in an American government course and one credit in an economics course as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. Economics is a district and state requirement [CA Education Code §51225.3], and counts as one semester of UC "g".
- b. **English Language Arts:** Eight semester credits in the "b" subject area, as follows:
- (1) Two credits, English 1,2 or ESL/ELD 5,6 as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*
  - (2) Two credits, English 3,4 or English 3,4 Advanced as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*
  - (3) At least one credit in a course that emphasizes a range of American literature
  - (3) Three additional credits from the prescribed list of English courses as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* or ICC-approved San Diego Community College District courses (may include San Diego Community College District English 101 for 2 credits).
- c. **Mathematics:** Six semester credits in the "c" subject area. All students must complete a minimum of two year-long mathematics courses while enrolled in Grades 9-12, per California Education Code. The six credits are as follows:
- (1) Two credits in Integrated Math I A-B or Integrated Math I A-B ADV as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*
  - (2) Two credits in Integrated Math II A-B or Integrated Math II A-B ADV as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*
  - (3) Two credits in Integrated Math III A-B or Integrated Math III A-B ADV as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* or San Diego Community College District approved sequence of both Math 96 and Math 119
    - (a) Note: Students who complete Integrated Math courses with a grade of "C" or higher in middle school should continue the Integrated Math course sequence upon entering high school. Taking a course in statistics in place of Integrated Math III A-B does **not** satisfy the district's third year requirement. See Administrative Procedure 4771, Alternative Means of Satisfying the Prescribed Course of Study, Section D.4.b. regarding higher level mathematics validation.
- d. **Science:** Six semester credits, as follows:
- (1) Two credits (one year) in the same life science course approved in the "d" subject area, as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* (Must include: Biology 1,2 or an advanced level of Biology)

- (2) Two credits (one year) in the same physical science course approved in the “d” subject area, as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* (Chemistry 1,2, or Physics 1,2, or an advanced level of either)
- (3) Two additional credits (one year) in the same “d” (laboratory science) or same “g” (elective science) subject areas as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. See Administrative Procedure 4771, Attachment 2 for CCTE “a-g” approved courses which meet the third science requirement only.

Note: Students transferring into the district from out of state or out of country who have completed Integrated Science courses with a grade of “D” or higher in Grades 9-12 will be awarded science credit toward graduation as follows:

Course	Year	Credit
Integrated Science 1,2	1	Meets third year science graduation requirement
Integrated Science 3,4	2	Biology credit awarded
Integrated Science 5,6	3	Physics credit awarded

For specific details regarding third-year science requirements, reference Site Operations Circular 2001, Issuance of Third-Year Science Credit for Out-of-District, Out-of-State and Out-of-Country Transfer Students.

- e. **Languages Other Than English (LOTE):** Four semester credits of sequential courses in the “e” subject area in the same LOTE as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. See Administrative Procedure 4771, Alternative Means of Satisfying the Prescribed Course of Study regarding meeting the LOTE requirement including the validation of lower LOTE courses by the successful completion of a higher LOTE course in the same language. Students transferring into San Diego Unified who have completed a world language course outside of the current district *Course of Study, TK-12*, and earned a grade of “D” or higher in any Grade 7-12 will be awarded world language credit according to the guidelines referenced in Site Operations Circular 1034, Issuance of World Language Credit, Out-of-State and Out-of-Country Transfer Students.
  - f. **Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA):** One year (two semester credits) in the same course in the “f” subject area as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. See Administrative Procedure 4771, Attachment 2 for CCTE “a-g” approved courses for alternative means of meeting the VAPA requirement.
  - g. **College Preparatory Elective:** One year (two semesters) in the “g” subject area as outlined in the school site’s approved UC “a-g” list.
3. **Additional Requirements for Graduation:**
- a. **Physical Education:** Four semester credits (two years)
    - (1) Students must pass five of the six standards of the FITNESSGRAM® to receive a two-year waiver from the state mandated four-year physical education requirement.

- (2) Education Code 51241(b)(1) permits school district Boards of Education to grant students in Grades 10 through 12 who have satisfactorily met at least five of the six standards on the state-mandated physical fitness test, the option of waiving courses in physical education for two years. See Administrative Procedure 4179.
  - (3) Students must take physical education for all terms of Grade 9 and continue taking physical education until they pass five of the six standards of the California physical fitness assessment, FITNESSGRAM®.
  - (4) Students may take a maximum of two physical education courses per semester in a traditional school (six period) schedule and a maximum of two physical education courses per quarter in a school with a 4x4 schedule.
  - (5) Students who receive a two-year waiver from physical education by completing and receiving an approval on the FITNESSGRAM® Exemption Form must still earn four credits in physical education [Education Code §51241(b)(1)] and a minimum of 44 prescribed semester credits in order to graduate. Students who do not pass the FITNESSGRAM® at the end of four years may still receive a diploma.
- b. **Electives:** Eight elective credits must be earned by completing additional district courses as outlined in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. Courses do not need to be UC “a-g” approved.
4. **Credit for San Diego Unified School District Online Learning Coursework:**
- a. Graduation credit for district-approved online coursework is only granted as outlined in the district’s *Course of Study, TK-12*, Special Programs, from the online learning revision in iHigh.
5. **Computation of Weighted Grade-Point Average (WGPA):**
- a. “A,” “B,” and “C” grades in Advanced Placement, qualifying International Baccalaureate, approved dual credit college courses, and University of California-approved honors courses are weighted (see D.5.b.).
  - b. For weighted courses in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* the WGPA is computed on a scale of: A=5, B=4, C=3, D=1 and F=0.
  - c. For non-weighted courses, the WGPA is computed on a scale of: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1 and F=0.
  - d. For purposes of satisfying the 2.00 WGPA graduation requirement, the WGPA computation shall include courses taken in Grades 9-12.
  - e. For purposes of establishing senior class standing and/or determining senior awards, the WGPA shall include courses taken in Grades 10-12 only. The WGPA shall be computed using the grades awarded through the end of the fall semester or second quarter of the senior year.

- f. Honor Roll distinction will be granted to graduating students who attain a cumulative WGPA of 3.33 or better in Grades 10-12, computed at the end of the fall semester or second quarter of the senior year.
  - g. The Diploma with Academic Distinction is outlined in Site Operations Circular 2013, Process for Determining Academic Distinction.
6. **Grade Suppression for Courses Taken Within the District:** The intent of grade suppression is to encourage a student who receives a "D" or "F" to repeat the same course to improve the mark and the cumulative GPA. Grade suppression does not affect grades displayed on student progress reports. Courses that have been suppressed are not counted in graduation credits and are excluded from cumulative GPA calculations within the district. Student transcripts list suppressed courses and retaken courses. A suppressed grade is indicated on a student's transcript with an "R." Additional suppression details and examples are found in Site Operations Circular 2002, Guidelines for Grade Suppression.
- a. In order for the grade suppression policy to apply, the mark in the original district course must be a "D" or "F," and the student must repeat the exact course within the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. For compliance with California AB 1012, students may not repeat courses in which a "C" or better grade has been earned. Refer to Administrative Circular 33, dated June 12, 2017.
  - b. For grade suppression purposes, a student may repeat a course only until he or she receives a grade of "C" or better.
  - c. Suppression does not apply to courses taken at schools outside the district, including charter schools. Out-of-district suppression rules do not apply when transcribing.
  - d. The original course and the repeat of the course must be taken in different terms.
  - e. If grade suppression applies, the course in which the lower grade is earned is suppressed, regardless of the order in which the courses are taken. If the grade is the same, the earlier grade is suppressed.
7. **Grade Replacement in Courses taken within a District Year-long Course:** (For additional grade replacement details and examples, reference Site Operations Circular 2004, Guidelines for Grade Replacement)
- a. Grade replacement is limited to year-long courses in the mathematics and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) subject areas. Year-long (as opposed to two semesters) courses are those in which the content of the second semester cannot be understood without the learning that occurred in the first semester. These courses have a dash in their course titles in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* (i.e., Spanish 1-2; Integrated Math I A-B).
  - b. When a student earns an "F" grade in the first semester of a district year-long course and a passing grade ("D" or better) in the second semester of the course, credit is earned for both semesters and a grade of "D" shall be recorded for the first semester. The grade replacement process is conducted manually at each school site by the registrar or site principal/administrator's designee.



- c. When a student earns a passing grade for the first semester of a year-long course and an "F" grade for the second semester of that course, the second semester "F" grade shall be recorded. The first semester of a year-long course can never grade replace an academic mark earned in the second semester of the same year-long course.
  8. **Repeated Courses:** In accordance with California AB 1012, effective with the 2016-17 school year students may not retake a course in which they have received a grade of "A," "B," or "C." Refer to Administrative Circular 33, issued June 12, 2017.
  9. **Transfer Credit for New Students Entering the District:**
    - a. **Transcripts from accredited high schools are transcribed using San Diego Unified School District policies and procedures.**
      - (1) Credits and grades recorded on the transcript are considered meeting subject requirements for high school graduation.
      - (2) Entry of grades and credits should be limited to approved courses comparable in content with the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. If a comparable district course is not available, the generic subject area course number (e.g., 6000 Science) should be used and awarded elective credit.
      - (3) Grades on transcripts will be accepted as recorded. If student earned academic letter grade of "A," "B," "C," "D" or "F," grades should be recorded as such. If grades are identified as "pass/fail" on their original transcript, grades should be entered as follows:
        - (a) Enter "pass" as "P" (credit); "fail" as "NP" (no pass); these grades are not included when computing grade point averages and may only be used when transcribing out of district students. Credit for graduation is allowed for a grade of "P."
    - b. **Transcripts from Non-accredited High Schools.**
      - (1) The site principal shall evaluate the recommended transcription of all such transcripts and course descriptions to approve the amount of credit to be given. Credits and grades approved for transfer credit by the principal are considered meeting the subject requirements for high school graduation. Entry of grades is described in Section D.9.a.
    - c. Credit will be granted for coursework satisfactorily completed by a student while attending a public school, juvenile court school, or non-public, nonsectarian school or agency. (Education Code §48645.5)
  10. **Credit for High School Coursework Taken Outside of the District (including all charter schools) by Current District Students:**
    - a. Beginning with the Class of 2016, to support students' progress toward earning a high school diploma, graduation credit may be granted for coursework taken by students at Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredited private institutions or

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non-district high schools outside the regular school day or school year (i.e., summer school) under the following conditions:

- (1) Repeating a “D” or “F”: If a student has already taken a core course requirement in a district school and earned a letter grade (i.e., English, Mathematics, History, Social Studies, Science, World Language, Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts) a repeat course with the same content may be taken outside the district. (Note: for students with disabilities, an IEP or 504 team may recommend that a student take courses for the first time outside of the district to meet graduation requirements if appropriate.)
  - (a) Grades earned in non-district coursework may not be used for grade suppression purposes.
  - (b) Courses first taken within the district that are repeated at an accredited California high school outside of the district will receive core graduation credit only if those courses are listed on the issuing school’s official UC “a-g” course list for the year in which the grade was earned.
  - (c) Grades earned in non-district high school coursework will be included on the student’s transcript and grades from both the district and non-district coursework will be used when calculating the student’s WGPA. Only letter grades (i.e., “A,” “B,” “C,” “D,” and “F”) may be used to record core coursework taken outside the district by district students. No “P” or “NP” grades should be recorded for repeat courses. Only courses taken for the first time or elective courses will earn a “P” or “NP.”
  - (d) When posting non-district coursework and grades for core courses that the student has already taken, the district course title and number listed in the district *Course of Study, TK-12* that most closely matches the non-district course will be used. It must be noted that the course was taken outside the district.
- (2) **First time elective credit** may be granted for coursework that does not meet core subject requirements taken by students at Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredited private institutions, non-district high schools, or industry online virtual high schools outside the regular school day or school year (e.g., summer school). This elective credit does **not** earn a letter grade and will **not** be used when calculating a student’s WGPA. Grades earned in non-district coursework may not be used for grade suppression purposes.
  - (a) Reference Site Operations Circular 1001, Courses Taken at Non-District Schools by Students Enrolled in the District, dated July 28, 2015. Effective August 25, 2015, no first time credits from out-of-district, including charter schools, will be accepted towards meeting San Diego Unified graduation requirements.
  - (b) Enter “P” (pass/credit) for passing grades; enter “NP” (no pass/student will not earn credits) for failing grades. Elective credit toward graduation is allowed for a grade of “P.”

- (c) When posting grades for these courses, the generic subject area course number (e.g., 4000 for Mathematics) should be used. **It must be noted that the course was taken outside the district.**
  - (d) Coursework that meets graduation requirements taken for the first time at a non-district or charter summer school program may only receive elective credit toward graduation with a grade of "P"/"NP." For the LOTE or mathematics graduation requirement, a non-district or charter school course, when taken in summer school, may be used to **progress** to the next level in a district school when evidence of successful completion is presented to the school counselor. Six credits of mathematics must be taken at a district secondary school (beginning in Grade 7), four of which must be completed in Grades 9-12. *Note: Advancing to a higher level by taking non-district or charter school courses may result in a gap in learning or diminished preparation.*
- (3) Out-of-District courses.
- (4) Graduation credit may be granted for district-approved coursework taken at **Independent World Language Schools (IWLS)** outside of the regular school day (e.g., Saturday classes) or school year (e.g., summer school) **by students enrolled in Grades 9-12 in district high schools.** A list of IWLS is available online at <https://www.sandiegounified.org/world-languages>.
- (a) High school grades and credit earned for district-approved coursework taken in IWLS schools are accepted at face value and should be recorded in the same manner as grades earned in district coursework, using the appropriate IWLS course title and number listed in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*. **It must be noted that the course was taken outside the district.** IWLS sites submit grade reports to the student's high school of record at the end of each semester. Grades are manually recorded by the site registrar using the appropriate IWLS course title and number listed in the district *Course of Study, TK-12*.
  - (b) IWLS courses taken in Grades 7 and 8 do not count toward meeting San Diego Unified LOTE graduation requirements and do not get transcribed onto San Diego Unified School District transcripts.
  - (c) Grades earned in district-approved coursework taken at IWLS schools may not be used for grade suppression purposes or grade replacement.
11. **High School Credit for College Coursework** is described in Administrative Procedure 4322.
12. **Alternative Means of Satisfying the Prescribed Course of Study:**

To meet individual student needs and encourage students to complete their high school education, alternative means to complete the prescribed course of study are available to students in accordance with law. Alternative means adopted by the Board of Education are described in Administrative Procedure 4771.

**13. Waivers and Certification of Graduates:**

State-mandated coursework as outlined in Education Code §51225.3(a)(1) may not be waived. Waivers to other requirements adopted by the governing board of the school district may be granted in specific cases with compelling circumstances. With the Area Superintendent's approval, the principal has the authority to grant waivers and will make the determination in each case. All such waivers must be documented on the *Principal's Waiver of Graduation Requirements* form (Attachment 2), the information filed in the student's permanent records folder at the school site, and the form retained at the school. The *Principal's Certification of Graduates* form (Attachment 1) must be completed and submitted within two weeks after each graduation event (mid-year, June, or end of summer school) to the Office of Secondary Schools.

**14. Commencement Ceremonies:**

a. **Responsibility.** As a representative of the Board of Education, the principal shall designate those individuals who may participate in a commencement ceremony, approve the content of the program, and make all related decisions. Student participation is not required, but every eligible graduate who wishes to participate must adhere to the principal's and school's commencement ceremony rules if participation is to be approved. Any student who agrees to be a participant and then fails to follow the principal's direction is subject to disciplinary action. If a member of a graduating class is subject to disciplinary action, a diploma shall not be awarded at the commencement ceremony and specific approval of the Board of Education may be required before a transcript of that student's academic record is released.

**b. Citizenship/Conduct Requirements:**

- (1) To satisfy the requirements for graduation specified in Section D (i.e., credits, WGPA) or the requirements for a Certificate of Completion specified in Section C.2.b., students must maintain a **minimum standard of 2.0 average in citizenship** (see Administrative Procedure 4710) based on first semester grades and the second semester 12 week grading period and/or quarter 4 progress report during their senior year in order to participate in commencement ceremonies. [For possible exceptions, see Section D.14.b.(3)].
- (2) Seniors **will be** denied participation in commencement ceremonies (and other senior activities) for zero tolerance infractions or activities resulting in a five-day suspension, and **may be** denied participation for suspensions of less than five days during their senior year.

**Note:** Students with disabilities receiving special education services who have received five-day suspensions may be exempt from this requirement if the student's Individualized Education Program or 504 team has conducted a Manifestation Determination meeting that resulted in the behavior being directly related to the student's disability, or the behavior resulting from a failure of the Local Educational Agency to implement the student's Individualized Education Program or 504 plan.

(3) **School Site Appeal Committee:** Each site must establish an Appeal Committee comprised of, at a minimum, an administrator, a teacher, and a school counselor. Students with a citizenship average below 2.0 or a suspension of **fewer** than five days during their senior year may petition to the school site appeal committee to determine his/her level of participation in commencement ceremonies. Decisions of the School Site Appeal Committee are final.

- c. **Students receiving special education or 504 services who complete graduation requirements** while enrolled in special and/or alternative programs (i.e., non-public schools, Home and Hospital Instruction, Riley or New Dawn) may participate in commencement ceremonies at either their high school of residence (even if they have never attended that high school) or the high school they last attended. For additional information, reference Site Operations Circular 2006, Verification of High School Graduation Requirement Completion for Students Attending Alternative Sites.
- d. **Time and place.** Commencement ceremonies shall be held on the school campus on the final day of instruction. Exceptions must be approved by the appropriate Area Superintendent. All selected venues will be accessible. Stages, if needed, will have ramp access from both directions.
- e. **Programs.** Graduation ceremony programs must be labeled "Commencement Program" and should list names of students under "Class Roll." A class roll will not differentiate between students receiving diplomas and those receiving Certificates of Completion.
- f. **Ordering of diplomas and Certificates of Completion.** (See Administrative Procedure 5609)
- g. **Caps and gowns.** The principal of each high school may establish site protocols regarding wearing of caps and gowns at commencement ceremonies. The district shall provide a cap and gown at no cost for each student who wishes to participate in commencement ceremonies. Approved graduation attire beyond caps and gowns are referenced in Site Operations Circular 2005, Student Participation in Commencement and Other Senior Activities.
- h. **Invocations.** High school graduation must be secular. It is not permitted for students, clergy, or any other person to deliver an invocation as part of the commencement ceremony.
- i. **Baccalaureate services are prohibited.** Such religious services held on school grounds or sponsored by school authorities have been deemed to violate the federal and state constitutional provisions guaranteeing the separation of church and state.
- j. **Recognition at graduation.** All district high schools use the same criteria for selection of valedictorians and salutatorians for the current "*Class of*" students. The WGPA shall be computed using the grades awarded through the end of the Fall Semester/Quarter 2 of senior year, each school will designate the student with the highest cumulative weighted grade point average (WGPA) for Grades 10-12 who has met the district UC "a-g" requirements as graduating class valedictorian. The WGPA will be calculated to the nearest hundredth. Each school will designate the student with the second highest cumulative WGPA in Grades 10-12 as salutatorian. If two students are tied for

valedictorian, both students will receive this honor, and the student with the next highest cumulative WGPA will be designated as the salutatorian. In addition, each school will determine how to recognize students whose cumulative WGPA for Grades 10-12 is 4.0 or better. The Diploma with Academic Distinction is outlined in Site Operations Circular 2013, Process for Determining Academic Distinction.

**15. Mid-Year and Early Graduates:**

Students who have completed all district graduation requirements by the end of the fall semester or the second quarter of their senior year shall be termed "Mid-Year/Early Graduates." Early graduates are defined in Site Operations Circular 2007, Early Graduation from High School. These students' diplomas will be available for pickup beginning the last day of the spring semester. The students may participate in June commencement ceremonies. Refer to Site Operations Circular 2007 for information on the early graduation request process.

**16. Summer Graduates:**

- a. Students may not participate in June commencement ceremonies at their individual high schools if they have:
  - (1) earned fewer than 44 credits in required coursework, and/or
  - (2) attained less than a 2.0 WGPA in Grades 9-12 final transcript coursework outlined in Section D, Implementation.
- b. Students who complete district graduation requirements by the end of summer school following their senior year may also receive diplomas with their graduating class (i.e., "Class of"). A districtwide commencement ceremony may be offered in summer for students who wish to participate.
- c. Students who complete district graduation requirements after the end of summer school following their senior year will receive their diplomas with the following year's graduating class.

**E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES**

1. *Course of Study, TK-12*, available online at <https://www.sandiegounified.org/course-study>
2. Identification and Monitoring of At-Risk Students (See Administrative Procedure 4766)
3. UC 'a-g' Guide, available at <http://www.ucop.edu/agguide/> and UC Admissions website, <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/requirements/a-g-requirements/index.html>
4. List of Independent World Language Schools (IWLS), available online at <https://www.sandiegounified.org/world-languages>
5. Annual Administrative Circular: Procurement of Facilities, Equipment, and Services for High School Graduation and Middle-Level Promotion Ceremonies

6. Administrative Circular 33, issued June 12, 2017
7. Site Operations Circular 1001, issued July 25, 2015
8. Site Operations Circular 1034, issued May 17, 2017
9. Site Operations Circular 2001, issued August 24, 2017
10. Site Operations Circular 2002, issued August 24, 2017
11. Site Operations Circular 2004, issued August 24, 2017
12. Site Operations Circular 2005, issued August 31, 2017
13. Site Operations Circular 2006, issued August 31, 2017
14. Site Operations Circular 2007, issued August 31, 2017
15. Site Operations Circular 2013, issued September 20, 2017

**F. REPORTS AND RECORDS**

1. *Principal's Certification of Graduates (Attachment 1)*
2. *Principal's Waiver of Graduation Requirements (Attachment 2)*

**G. APPROVED BY**



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General Counsel, Legal Services  
As to form and legality

**H. ISSUED BY**



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Chief of Staff