

FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**Instruction**
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The County Superintendent and County Board desire that students enrolled in schools established by the County Board or County Superintendent, and operated by the County Superintendent are prepared to obtain a high school diploma that represents their educational achievement and increases their opportunities for postsecondary education and employment.

County Superintendent/County Board students shall complete graduation course requirements as specified in Education Code 51225.3 and those adopted by the County Superintendent and County Board, except for students who are exempted as provided in "Exemptions from County Superintendent/County Board-Adopted Graduation Requirements," below. Students who are exempted from County Superintendent/County Board-adopted graduation requirements shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and school activity related to graduation in which other students are eligible to participate.

Course Requirements

To obtain a high school diploma, students shall complete 220 course credits and at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year and ten credits, unless otherwise specified:

1. Four 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)

3. Successful completion of an approved computer science course that is classified as a "category C" course based on the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) "A-G" admission requirements shall be counted toward the satisfaction of additional graduation requirements in mathematics. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)
4. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences. (Education Code 51225.3)
5. 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)

FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

6. 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. (Education Code 51225.3)

7. Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code. (Education Code 51225.3)
8. Beginning with the 2029-30 school year, a one-semester course in ethnic studies. (Education Code 51225.3)

Because the prescribed course of study may not accommodate the needs of some students, the County Superintendent and County Board shall provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law.

Exemptions from County Superintendent/County Board Graduation Requirements

A foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student who transfers into or between County Superintendent/County Board schools any time after completing the second year of high school, or newcomer student who is in the third or fourth year of high school shall be exempted from any graduation requirements adopted by the County Superintendent and County Board that are in addition to statewide course requirements. This exemption shall not apply if the County Superintendent or designee makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the additional requirements in time to graduate by the end of the fourth year of high school.

Within 30 days of the transfer into a school by the foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newcomer student, as applicable, the County Superintendent or designee shall notify any eligible student, and others as required by law, of the availability of the exemption from local graduation requirements and whether the student qualifies for it. (Education Code 51225.1)

The County Superintendent or designee shall not require or request that the student who is exempted from County Superintendent/County Board-established graduation requirements and who completes the statewide coursework requirements before the end of the fourth year of high school, and would otherwise be entitled to remain in school, to graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school. (Education Code 51225.1)

If the foster youth, student experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newcomer student was not properly notified of an exemption, declined the exemption, or was not previously exempted, the student or the student's educational rights holder may request the exemption and the County Superintendent or designee shall exempt the student within 30 days of the request. Any such student who at

**FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

one time qualified for the exemption may request the exemption even if the student is no longer eligible. (Education Code 51225.1)

Additionally, a student with a disability that entered the ninth grade in the 2022-23 school year or later shall be eligible for an exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the County Superintendent and County Board that are in addition to the statewide course requirements for high school graduation, if the student's individualized education program ("IEP") provides for both of the following requirements: (Education Code 51225.31)

1. That the student is eligible to take the alternate assessment as described in Education Code 60640
2. That the student complete state standards aligned coursework to meet the statewide coursework specified in Education Code 51225.3

The responsibility to provide a free appropriate public education shall not terminate when a student with a disability who is exempted from County Superintendent/County Board-adopted graduation requirements participates in graduation activities unless the IEP team, which includes the parent/guardian and student, has determined that the student has completed the high school experience. (Education Code 51225.31)

Annually, the County Superintendent or designee shall report to the California Department of Education, in accordance with Education Code 51225.1, the number of students graduating from the fourth or fifth year of high school who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from County Superintendent/County Board-established graduation requirements that are in addition to statewide coursework requirements.

Retroactive Diplomas

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through 2014-15 school year and met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma. (Education Code 51413)

In addition, high school diplomas may be retroactively granted 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

FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

departed due to other circumstances determined to be consistent with the purposes of Education Code 48204.4.

In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the County 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 who are honorably discharged veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, provided that they were enrolled in a County Superintendent/County Board 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 County Superintendent/County Board school.
4. Are former members of the military, a resident of California, and received an honorable discharge, or, are current members of the military, a resident of California, and a resident of California when entering the military.

In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the County Superintendent or designee shall evaluate classes completed in any high school, community college, or state college, grant credit toward graduation for military service and training received while in the military, and if satisfied that the person has completed the equivalent of the requirements for graduation from high school, grant the person a diploma of graduation.

5. 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.

Adopted: 04/15/2010

Amended: 10/16/2014, 03/17/2016, 01/19/2017, 11/19/2020, 06/15/2023, 03/21/2024

Legal ReferenceEducation Code

47612 Enrollment in charter school

48200 Compulsory attendance

48204.4 Parents/guardians departing California against their will

FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

- 48412 Certificate of proficiency
- 48430 Continuation education schools and classes
- 48645.5 Acceptance of coursework
- 48980 Required notification at beginning of term
- 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 Student in foster care defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course
- 51225.3 High school graduation
- 51225.31 Exemption for students with disabilities
- 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
- 51225.9 Courses of Study, Grades 7 to 12; Career Technical Education
- 51226.7 Model Curriculum in Ethnic Studies
- 51228 Course of study; offerings and timely opportunity
- 51230 Credit for community emergency response training
- 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 Credit and granting of diploma to veterans and members of the military service
- 51450-51455 Golden State Seal Merit Diploma
- 51744-51749.6 Independent study
- 56390-56392 Recognition for educational achievement, special education
- 60640 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress
- 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
- 4600-4670 Uniform complaint procedures

Court Decisions

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

Management Resources

Websites

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:

FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/freshman-requirements/>

6146.1, 12/2023; Doc#123679-3