

High School Graduation Requirements

I. PUBLICATION OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Prior to registering in high school and each year thereafter, each student and his or her parents or guardians will be provided with a copy of the graduation requirements in effect for that student (those in effect when the student enrolled in ninth grade). Graduation requirements may also be included in the student handbook.

II. CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Period of Eligibility to Earn Credits

Generally, credit towards high school graduation will be earned in grades nine through twelve. However, unless requested otherwise by the student and the student's family, the district will award high school credit towards fulfilling graduation requirements to a student who has completed high school courses while in seventh or eighth grade if one of the following applies:

- A. The course was taken with high school students, and the student successfully passed the same course requirements and examinations as the high school students enrolled in the class; or
- B. The course taught at the middle school level has been determined by the district to be similar or equivalent to a course taught at the high school level.

Students who have taken and successfully completed high school courses under the above circumstances shall not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform any other additional assignment to receive credit.

Awarding of High School Credit

The district will award high school credit for successful completion of a specified unit of study. A student successfully completes a specified unit of study by doing one of the following:

- A. Earning a passing grade according to the district's grading policy;
- B. Demonstrating proficiency or mastery of content standards as determined by the district (the district will establish a process for determining proficiency or mastery for credit bearing courses of study); or
- C. Successfully completing an established number of hours of planned instructional activities to be determined by the district.

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Credits from Other Programs

The principal or designee is responsible for determining which credits will be recognized by the district for students enrolling from another state approved learning program (public school, approved private school, or home school), or from out-of-state, or out-of-country. The district will accept credits from another Washington public school or accredited state private school or accredited out-of-state public or private school to the extent the credit matches a district graduation requirement or may be counted as an elective credit. The district will evaluate credits from unaccredited programs or home schools as described below for home school students. Decisions of the principal or designee may be appealed to the superintendent within fifteen school days of the initial decision.

Total Number of Credits Required

Subject Area	Class of 2026 and beyond
ELA	4
Math *	3
Science *	3
Social Studies *	3
Health *	0.5
Physical Education **	1.5
Arts **	2
CTE	1
World Language **	2
Electives	4
Credits Required	24

***Indicates that subject area has an intended progression and/or specific required courses for graduation.**

**** Indicates some or all of the credits in that subject area may be replaced by other coursework necessary for a student's Personalized pathway.**

Required courses, intended course progression, and waiver options have been established by the Washington State Board of Education and can be found on their website <https://www.sbe.wa.gov/our-work> requirements. Contact the appropriate school administrator or counselor for more information on eligibility and requirements.

Alternative Programs

The district may grant credit toward graduation requirements for planned learning experiences primarily conducted away from the facilities owned, operated, or supervised by the district.

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A proposal for approval of out-of-school learning activities will be submitted prior to the experience, will be at no additional cost to the district, and will include at least the following information:

- A. The name of the program or planned learning experience;
- B. The length of time for which approval is desired;
- C. The objective(s) of the program or planned learning experience;
- D. The state learning goals and related essential academic learning requirements are part of the program or planned learning experience;
- E. A description of how credits will be determined in accord with WAC 180-51-050(1);
- F. The content outline of the program and/or major learning activities and instructional materials to be used;
- G. A description of how student performance will be assessed;
- H. The qualifications of instructional personnel;
- I. The plans for evaluation of program; and
- J. How and by whom the student will be supervised.

The school will keep appropriate records for each program and the principal or designee will communicate the reasons for approval or disapproval to those making the request.

Running Start

The Running Start program allows high school juniors and seniors to attend community college classes (100 level or above) for part or all of their schedule. Students must be of junior standing or above to be eligible for the program. Rising juniors, those who have completed their sophomore year and have yet to begin their junior year, may enroll for up to ten quarter credits, or the semester equivalent, during the summer academic term.

Student earn college credit, which is also converted and applied to their high school transcript.

The district will provide general information about the Running Start program to students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve and the parent and guardians of those students. The information will include information about the opportunity to enroll in the program through online courses available at community and technical colleges and other state institutions of higher education, enrollment opportunities during the summer academic term, and the college high school diploma options under RCW28B.50.535

In order to enroll in the Running Start program, students need to contact the college for application information. For more information about Running Start, review RCW 28A.600.300 through RCW 28A.600.402 and chapter 392-169 WAC.

Credit for Career and Technical Work-Based Learning

In accordance with WAC 392-410-315, the district may accept worksite learning in lieu of either required or elective credits.

College in the High School

The district may offer a college in the high school program in accordance with RCW 28A.600.287 and chapter 392-725 WAC. The college in the high school program is a dual credit program located on a high school campus or in a high school environment in which a high school student may earn both college credit and high school credit by achieving a passing grade in a college level course. A college in the high school program will be governed by a local contract which will include qualifications for students to enroll in the program.

National Guard High School Career Training

In accordance with WAC 392-410-320, WAC 392-410-325, and WAC 392-410-327, the district may grant credit for National Guard high school career training in lieu of either required or elective high school credits.

Home School Credit

Guidelines for granting high school credit for home schooling are as follows:

- A. To gain credit for a course of study, a student will provide the following:
 1. A journal that reflects the actual work completed during a home-study course of study;
 2. Exhibit(s) of any specific projects completed (e.g., themes, research papers, art and/or shop projects); or
 3. Any such other performance-based exhibits of specific course-related accomplishments.
- B. To gain credit for a course of study, a student must demonstrate proficiency at a minimum of 80 percent of the objectives of the course. Such testing will be available as an ancillary service of the district if it is regularly available to all students. If not, the

parent may engage district-approved personnel to conduct such an assessment at a cost determined by such personnel.

C. Credit is granted for the following approved schools:

1. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges, and universities, and approved private schools in the state of Washington; and
2. Other schools or institutions that are approved by the district after evaluation for a course offering.

III. HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND PLAN REQUIREMENT

Each student must have a high school and beyond plan to guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training and career after high school.

A. Plan Development

Beginning by the seventh grade, each student will be administered a career interest and skills inventory, which is intended to inform eighth grade course scheduling and the development of an initial high school and beyond plan.

No later than eighth grade, each student must have begun development of a high school and beyond plan that includes a proposed plan for first-year high school courses aligned with graduation requirements and secondary and postsecondary goals.

By ninth grade, each student who has not earned a score of level 3 or 4 on the middle school mathematics assessment identified in RCW 28A.655.070 must have the high school and beyond plan updated to ensure the student takes a mathematics course in both the ninth and tenth grades. These courses may include career and technical education equivalencies in mathematics adopted pursuant to 28A.230.097 and district policy.

With staff support, students must update their high school and beyond plan annually, at a minimum, to review academic progress and inform future course taking. The high school and beyond plan must be updated in 10th grade to reflect high school assessment results in RCW 28A.655.061, ensure student access to advanced course options per the district's academic acceleration policy, assess progress toward identified goals, and revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs.

For students who have not met the standard on state assessments or who are behind in completion of credits or graduation pathway options will be given the opportunity to access interventions and academic supports, courses, or both, designed to enable students to meet all high school graduation requirements. The parents or legal guardians shall be notified about these opportunities as included in the student's high school and beyond plan, preferably through a

student-led conference that includes the parents or legal guardians, at least annually until the student is on track to graduate.

For students with an individualized education program, the high school and beyond plan must be developed and updated in alignment with their school to postschool transition plan. The high school and beyond plan must be developed and updated in a similar manner and with similar school personnel as for all other students and integrated with the statewide online system for individualized education programs developed under RCW 28A.155.275, to the greatest extent possible, in order to relieve duplication between the two plans.

The district will involve parents and legal guardians to the greatest extent feasible in the process of developing and updating the high school and beyond plan. The plan will be provided to the student and students' parents or legal guardians in a language the student and students' parents or legal guardians understand and in accordance with the district's language access policy and procedures, which may require language assistance for students and parents or legal guardians with limited English proficiency.

The district will annually provide students in grades eight through twelve and their parents or legal guardians with comprehensive information about the graduation pathway options offered by the district. The district will provide this information in accordance with the district's language access policy and procedures.

The district may partner with student-serving, community-based organizations that support career and college exploration and preparation for postsecondary and career pathways. Partnerships may include high school and beyond plan coordination and planning, data sharing agreements, and safe and secure access to individual student's high school and beyond plans.

B. Components of the High School and Beyond Plan

All high school and beyond plans must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

1. Identification of career goals and interests, aided by a skills and interest assessment;
2. Identification of secondary and postsecondary education and training goals;
3. An academic plan for course taking that:
 - a. Informs students about course options for satisfying state and local graduation requirements;
 - b. Satisfies state and local graduation requirements;
 - c. Aligns with the student's secondary goals, which can include education, training, and career preparation;
 - d. Identifies available advanced course sequences per the District's academic acceleration policy, that include dual credit courses or other programs and are aligned with the student's postsecondary goals;

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- e. Informs students about the potential impact of their course selections on postsecondary opportunities;
 - f. Identifies available career and technical education equivalency courses that can satisfy core subject area graduation requirements under RCW 28A.230.097;
 - g. If applicable, identifies career and technical education and work-based learning opportunities that can lead to technical college certifications and apprenticeships; and
 - h. If applicable, identifies opportunities for credit recovery and acceleration, including partial and mastery-based credit accrual to eliminate barriers for on-time grade level progression and graduation per RCW 28A.320.192;
4. A postsecondary financial aid application element that includes:
- a. Identification of whether the student is enrolled in the college bound scholarship program established in RCW 28B.118
 - b. Evidence that the student has received information about completing postsecondary financial aid applications that are required for obtaining financial aid for which the student may be eligible;
 - c. Identification of whether the student has completed state or federal financial aid applications; and
 - d. Evidence that the student has received the following:
 - i. Information about the college bound scholarship program, the Washington college grant created in RCW 28B.92.200, the Washington opportunity scholarship established in chapter 28B.145 RCW, and other scholarship opportunities; Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, information provided to the student in accordance with this provision must be reviewed by the student and the appropriate staff, to the extent practicable, after the student has indicated completing an applicable postsecondary financial aid application. The purpose of the review is to determine whether the student is or may be eligible for the college bound scholarship program, the Washington college grant, the Washington opportunity scholarship, or other scholarship opportunities, and has completed an applicable postsecondary financial aid application.
 - ii. The documentation necessary for completing state and federal financial aid applications, including information about application timelines and submission deadlines; and importance of submitting applications early;
 - iii. Information specific to students who are or have been the subject of a dependency proceeding pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW, who are or are at risk of being homeless, and whose family member or legal guardian will be required to provide financial and tax information necessary to complete financial aid applications;
 - iv. Information about opportunities to participate in advising days and seminars that assist students and, when necessary, their parents or legal guardians, with filling out financial aid applications in accordance with RCW 28A.300.815; and
 - v. A sample financial aid letter and a link to the financial aid calculator created in RCW 28B.77.280; and

5. By the end of the twelfth grade, a current resume or activity log that provides a written compilation of the student's education, any work experience, extracurricular activities, and any community service including how the district has recognized the community service.

CREDIT RETRIEVAL BASED ON STATE EXAM PROFICIENCIES

Students who meet standard on the high school state exams identified below will be allowed to retrieve credit for previously failed courses in the following ways:

- A. **State Assessment:** Smarter Balanced ELA (passing at College & Career Readiness levels 3 or 4)
Previously Failed Course Eligible for Credit Retrieval: Any English credit taken Junior year or prior
Credit Retrieved: Up to 1.0
- B. **State Assessment:** Smarter Balanced ELA (passing at high school exit exam score) *or SAT/ACT (passing at high school exit exam score)*
Previously Failed Course Eligible for Credit Retrieval: English 9, or English 10
Credit Retrieved: Up to 1.0
- C. **State Assessment:** Smarter Balanced Math (passing at College & Career Readiness levels 3 or 4)
Previously Failed Course Eligible for Credit Retrieval: Any math credit in Algebra 2 or lower
Credit Retrieved: Up to 1.0
- D. **State Assessment:** Smarter Balanced Math (passing at high school exit exam score) *or SAT/ACT (passing at high school exit exam score)*
Previously Failed Course Eligible for Credit Retrieval: Algebra 1 or Geometry
Credit Retrieved: Up to 1.0
- E. **State Assessment:** Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (passing at levels 3 or 4)
Previously Failed Course Eligible for Credit Retrieval: Any science credit taken junior year or prior
Credit Retrieved: Up to 1.0
- F. Meeting standard at Level 2 (Basic) may apply for students with an IEP where proficiency is designated at the basic level, in which case the credits at the exit exam score shown above also apply.
- G. Previously failed courses remain on transcript and retain the grade of "F"
- H. Retrieved credit receives a "P" on the transcript and meets appropriate graduation requirement.

IV. GRADUATION PATHWAY OPTIONS

A student may choose to pursue one or more of the pathway options described below to demonstrate career and college readiness as long as the option chosen is in alignment with the student's high school and beyond plan.

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The district will provide annual notice, in a way that conforms with Board Policy 4218 – Language Access to students in grades eight through twelve and their parents or legal guardians with comprehensive information about the graduation pathway options offered by the district. At least annually, the district will examine data on student groups participating in and completing each graduation pathway option that the district offers. At a minimum, the data on graduation pathways participation and completion will be disaggregated by the student groups described in RCW 28A.300.042 (1) and (3), and by:

- Gender;
- Students who are the subject of a dependency proceeding pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW;
- Students who are experiencing homelessness as defined in RCW 26A.300.542(4); and
- Multilingual/English learners

If the results of the analysis required under the statute show disproportionate participation and completion rates by student groups, then the school district will identify reasons for the observed disproportionality and implement strategies as appropriate to ensure the graduation pathway options are equitably available to all students in the school district.

Statewide High School Assessment

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting or exceeding the graduation standard established by the State Board of Education on the statewide high school assessments in English language arts and mathematics.

Dual Credit Courses

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by completing and qualifying for college credit in dual credit courses in English language arts and mathematics. A dual credit course is a course in which a student qualifies for college and high school credit upon successfully completing the course.

Before course scheduling or course registration for the next school term, the district will provide the following information to students in grades nine through twelve and their parents: information about each available dual credit program and any financial assistance available to reduce dual credit course and exam costs for students and their families. The information will be provided by email and other communication methods. To the extent feasible, the information will be translated into the primary language of each parent or legal guardian.

High School Transition Courses

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by earning high school credit in a high school transition course in English language arts and mathematics. A high school transition course is a course offered in high school where successful completion by a high school student ensures the student college-level placement at participating institutions of higher education as

defined in RCW 28B.10.016. High school transition courses must satisfy core or elective credit graduation requirements established by the State Board of Education.

AP Courses

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting the requirement of A or B below in the AP, international baccalaureate, and Cambridge international courses in English language arts or mathematics that the state board of education designates as eligible to be used to meet this standard:

- A. Earning high school credit with a grade of C+ or higher in each term in the eligible AP, international baccalaureate, and Cambridge international courses in English language arts or mathematics course; or
- B. Earning at least the minimum score of three on advanced placement exams, four on standard-level and higher-level international baccalaureate exams, or scores of E(e) or higher on A and AS level Cambridge international exams for the corresponding courses.

SAT or ACT Scores

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting or exceeding the scores established by the state board of education for the mathematics portion and the reading, English, or writing portion of the SAT or ACT.

Performance-based Learning Experience

Complete a performance-based learning experience through which the student demonstrates knowledge and skills in a real-world context, providing evidence that the student meets or exceeds state learning standards in English language arts and mathematics. The performance-based learning experience may take a variety of forms, such as a project, practicum, work-related experience, community service, or cultural activity, and may result in a variety of products that can be evaluated, such as a performance, presentation, portfolio, report, film, or exhibit. The performance-based learning experience must conform to the graduation proficiency targets and associated rubrics established by the state board of education.

Combination of Options

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting any combination of at least one English language arts option and at least one mathematics option described above.

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting standard in the armed services vocational aptitude battery.

Career and Technical Education Courses

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by completing a sequence of career and technical education courses or apprenticeships that are relevant to a student's postsecondary pathway that meet either the curriculum requirements of core plus programs for aerospace, maritime, health care, information technology, or construction and manufacturing; or the minimum criteria identified in RCW 28A.700.030.

V. INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMME DIPLOMA

A student who fulfills the requirements for an International Baccalaureate Program diploma is considered to have satisfied at least one of the graduation pathway options and the minimum state requirements for graduation from high school, but the district may require the student to complete additional local graduation requirements.

To receive an international baccalaureate diploma, a student must complete and pass all required diploma program courses, as scored at the local level; pass all internal assessments, as scored at the local level; successfully complete all required projects and products, as scored at the local level; and complete the final exams administered by the international baccalaureate organization in each of the required subjects.

VI. STUDENT'S WITH AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

A student's IEP team must determine whether the graduation pathway options described above are appropriate for the student. If the IEP team determines that those options are not appropriate, then the student must earn a certificate of individual achievement to graduate. A certificate of individual achievement may be earned by using multiple measures to demonstrate skills and abilities commensurate with the student's IEP.

The following process will be followed to help a student with an IEP graduate:

- A. Before the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns sixteen, , or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, the IEP Team (including a special education teacher, general education teacher, parents, student (as appropriate), and other school personnel and agency representatives who will assist the student in achieving the goals of the IEP) will discuss transition service needs that focuses on the student's course of study.
- B. As an outcome of the discussion, the IEP will include appropriate graduation requirements based on the student's individual needs and abilities consistent with the student's transition plan. Modifications to the district's standard graduation requirements may include:

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1. Attainable alternate classwork or individualized activities substituted for standard requirements;
 2. A statement of waiver for any waived standard graduation requirements; or
 3. An extension of time for the student to remain in school to complete graduation requirements. The student may remain in school up to and including the school year in which the student reaches twenty-one years of age.

C. The IEP team will determine:

1. The projected date by which all graduation requirements will be met; and
2. The projected date and conditions under which the student will participate in the graduation ceremony.

D. The student will have an IEP that incorporates all issues and decisions from the above procedures. Any decision that modifies the district's standard graduation requirements will be made through the IEP process. Annually or as needed, the IEP will be reviewed or revised to accommodate the student's progress and development.

VII. SEAL OF BILITERACY

To be awarded the Washington Seal of Biliteracy, graduating high school students must meet the criteria described in WAC 392-410-350:

VIII. GRADUATION CEREMONIES

If students fulfill graduation requirements by the end of the last term of their senior year, they may participate in graduation ceremonies. Each student will be awarded a diploma after satisfactorily completing local and state requirements. Upon request, each graduating student will receive a final transcript. Each student will be notified of this opportunity at least one month prior to the close of the school term.

Any student receiving services under an IEP who will continue to receive such services between the ages of 18 and 21 will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies and activities after four years of high school attendance with his or her age-appropriate peers and receive a certificate of attendance.

The district will allow students to wear an item or object of cultural significance with or attached to their gown at high school commencements and other official graduation ceremonies and events. "An item or object of cultural significance" may include multiple items or objects if they are traditionally worn or used together. Items or objects worn in accordance with this Procedure must be befitting of the ceremony or event and adhere to the district's applicable decorum requirements. The district has discretion and authority to prohibit items or objects that are likely to cause a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, a high school commencement or other official graduation ceremony or event to determine the conduct for graduation ceremonies described below.

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The Board recognizes that there are alternative pathways to the attainment of a high school diploma and transition to careers that may make meeting the graduation requirements stated in this procedure unattainable. The Board also recognizes the significance of graduation ceremonies and would like to provide an opportunity for celebrating the accomplishments of students with strong connections to our schools. Students who will have completed a program resulting in a Washington State Diploma by the time of the graduation ceremony, but will not meet the school's graduation requirements, may submit a written appeal to the superintendent to allow for participation in graduation ceremonies. Considerations will be made based on the connection, contribution, and representation of the student throughout the school community while also protecting the integrity and legitimacy of the graduation ceremony. The superintendent's decision is final and under no circumstances will a diploma or Certificate of Attendance be awarded through the appeal process. Appeal requests must be received in writing by the Superintendent's Office no later than one month prior to the graduation ceremonies. Any requests made after that time will be automatically denied.

Graduation ceremonies will be conducted in the following manner:

- A. Each participating student must participate in the graduation ceremony rehearsal. Each student who participates will purchase or rent the proper cap and gown as designated by the school administration and the class advisor and officers.
- B. Caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner, as designated by the school administration and class advisor.
- C. Students who participate will use good taste in their choice of accessories for their attire.
- D. Each student who participates will cooperate with the class advisor and participate in all parts of the graduation ceremonies.
- E. Failure to comply with the above requirements may forfeit a student's privilege to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

The following criteria for student dress during the graduation ceremony has been established to ensure a balance of tradition, consistency, and individual expression:

- 1. **Tradition and Consistency:** One purpose of the graduation ceremony is to recognize the achievement of the graduating class as a whole. All graduating students wear the same robe and stole to represent their accomplishment as a class, and their affiliation with Lynden High School. Additional stoles and appropriate neckwear may be added according to "Individualized Expression" below.
- 2. **Achievement and Participation:** High academic achievement, as demonstrated by GPA, as well as affiliation and participation in official school or district recognized clubs, societies, or organizations may be recognized through cords or medallions. The choice of a unique color cord or medallion to represent the achievement or participation must be

done in consultation with the staff advisor and administration. The staff advisor shall provide a list of all students who are qualified to wear the respective item.

3. **Individual Expression:** Personalized decoration of the mortarboard and stoles or leis of personal significance are the student's opportunity to express their individuality, gratitude, or future plans. All personalized items must meet school appropriate expectations regarding language and content: no profanity or references to lewd behavior, criminal activity, drugs, alcohol, or violence, or would be considered offensive (at the discretion of administration). Additionally, mortarboard decoration must be flat and may not: extend beyond the plane of the mortarboard, include lights, moving parts, or other forms of distraction or excessive attention. Appropriateness shall be determined by the school administration.

Students enrolled in more than one school (Lynden Academy and Lynden High School) during their senior year, and satisfy graduation requirements of both schools, may participate in the graduation ceremony of their choice. Students may only participate in one graduation ceremony.

IX. AWARDING DIPLOMAS POSTHUMOUSLY

At the request of a parent, guardian, or custodian, the district may issue a high school diploma to a deceased student if the student:

- Was enrolled in a public school in the district at the time of death
- Was deemed on-track to graduation before the time of death; and
- Died after matriculating into high school.

The high school diploma will bear the inscription "honoris causa" and may not be issued before the graduation date of the class in which the student was enrolled. The district is not required to award the diploma at the same ceremony or event as other students. The district may retroactively issue high school diplomas posthumously at its discretion.

X. WITHHOLDING OF A DIPLOMA

The district may withhold a student's diploma based on the student's damage to property in accordance with Board Policy 3250 – Student Fees, Fines, or Charges.

Any student discipline will be in accordance with Board Policy 3241 - Student Discipline. Student discipline may include denying the student's participation in graduation ceremonies. Such exclusion from graduation ceremonies is regarded as a school suspension. In such instances, the district will grant the diploma.

XI. CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE (RCW 28A.155.170; also known as Kevin's Law)

Students between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-one (21) receiving special education or related services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may be eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony prior to the completion of all graduation requirements. At that

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time, any such student would receive a “Certificate of Attendance.” In order to qualify as eligible to participate in commencement exercises with their graduating class prior to meeting all graduation requirements the student must:

1. Have attended four (4) years of high school;
2. Have intentions of continuing to receive services in a 5th year or transition program.
3. Have such intentions and an anticipated graduation year documented in the student’s IEP no later than the IEP that is in effect during the year in which a student turns 16.
4. Met four years of attendance requirements including no more than 25% unexcused absences in any year.