

(REQUIRED BY LAW)

(b) An open-enrollment charter school is subject to: . . . high school graduation requirements under Section 28.025

Education Code 12.104(b)(2)(E).

POLICY

Graduation and Receipt of Diploma

A student may graduate and receive a diploma only if the student successfully completes:

1. The curriculum requirements identified by the State Board of Education and has performed satisfactorily on the exit-level assessments; or
2. An individualized education program (IEP) developed under Education Code 29.005.

Education Code 28.025(c); 19 TAC 101.4001(a)

State Graduation Requirements

All credit for graduation must be earned no later than grade 12. 19 TAC 74.51(b), .61(b).

Minimum High School Program

The School shall ensure that each student enrolls in the courses necessary to complete the Recommended or Advanced/Distinguished Achievement High School Program unless the student, the student's parent or other person standing in parental relation to the student, and a school counselor or school administrator agree in writing signed by each party that the student should be permitted to take courses under the Minimum High School Program and the student:

1. Is at least 16 years of age;
2. Has completed two credits required for graduation in each subject of the foundation curriculum under Education Code 28.002(a)(1); or
3. Has failed to be promoted to the tenth grade one or more times as determined by the District.

Education Code 28.025(b).

A student agreeing to take courses under the Minimum High School Program may, upon request, resume taking courses under the Recommended High School Program. Education Code 28.025(b–8).

Credit for Graduation

A student must earn at least 22 credits to complete the Minimum High School Program. A student who entered grade 9 beginning in the 2004–2005, 2005–2006, or 2006–2007 school year must demonstrate proficiency in the course programs described in 19 TAC 74.52. A student who entered grade 9 in 2007–2008 or thereafter must demonstrate proficiency in the course programs described in 19 TAC 74.62.

Students with Disabilities

If an ARD committee makes decisions that place a student with a disability on a modified curriculum in a subject area, the student will be automatically placed in the Minimum High School Program. 19 TAC 74.61(e).

Notice to Parents

Before a student's parent or other person standing in parental relation to the student may agree that the student be permitted to take courses under the Minimum High School Program, the School shall provide written notice to the parent or person standing in parental relation explaining the benefits of the Recommended High School Program. Education Code 28.025(b–6).

Applicability

A student who was permitted to take courses under the Minimum High School Program prior to the 2009–2010 school year may remain in the Minimum High School Program. 19 TAC 74.61(d).

Recommended High School Program

A student who entered grade 9 in the 2004–2005, 2005–2006, or 2006–2007 school year must earn at least 24 credits to complete the Recommended High School Program, and must demonstrate proficiency in the course programs described in 19 TAC 74.53.

A student who entered grade 9 in the 2007–2008 school year or thereafter must earn at least 26 credits to complete the Recommended High School Program, and must demonstrate proficiency in the course programs described in 19 TAC 74.63.

Distinguished Achievement High School Program

A student who entered grade 9 in the 2004–2005, 2005–2006, or 2006–2007 school year must earn at least 24 credits to complete the Distinguished Achievement High School Program, and must demonstrate proficiency in the course programs described in 19 TAC 74.54.

A student who entered grade 9 in the 2007–2008 school year or thereafter must earn at least 26 credits to complete the Distinguished Achievement High School Program, and must demonstrate proficiency in the course programs described in 19 TAC 74.64.

Substitutions

No substitutions are allowed for high school graduation requirements in the Recommended and Distinguished Achievement High School Programs, except as provided by State Board rule. 19 TAC 74.53(d), .54(e), .63(d), .64(e).

Students with Physical Limitations

If a student entering grade 9 during the 2007–2008 school year or thereafter is unable to comply with all of the requirements for a physical education course due to a physical limitation certified by a licensed medical practitioner, a modification to a physical education course does not prohibit the student from earning a Recommended or Distinguished Achievement High School Program diploma. A student with a physical limitation must still demonstrate proficiency in the relevant knowledge and skills in a physical education course that do not require physical activity. 19 TAC 64.63(b)(7)(F), .64(b)(7)(F).

Students Transferring From Out-of-State or Nonpublic Schools

An out-of-state or out-of-country transfer student (including foreign exchange students) or a transfer student from a Texas nonpublic school is eligible to receive a Texas diploma, but must complete all applicable high school graduation requirements. Any course credits required for graduation that are not completed before enrollment may be satisfied through credit by examination, correspondence courses, distance learning, or completing the course, according to the provisions of 19 TAC 74.26. 19 TAC 74.51(f), .61(i).

Prior Courses

High school courses successfully completed prior to grade 9 and the 2007–2008 school year shall count toward graduation in the manner established in 19 TAC Chapter 74 for credit in the year the course is successfully completed. 19 TAC 74.61(f).

Science and physical education graduation requirements successfully completed prior to the 2010–2011 school year shall count toward graduation in the manner established at the time the credit was earned. 19 TAC 74.61(m)(1).

Physical education graduation requirements successfully completed through a two- or three-credit career and technical education work-based training course prior to the 2011–2012 school year shall count toward graduation. 19 TAC 74.61(m)(2).

Graduation Requirements for Special Education Students

A student receiving special education services may graduate and be awarded a regular high school diploma if the student meets one of the following conditions:

1. The student has satisfactorily completed the state's or School's (whichever is greater) required standards in 19 TAC Chapters 110–128 and Chapter 130

- and credit requirements applicable to students in general education for graduation under the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement High School Programs, including satisfactory performance as established in Education Code Chapter 39 on the required state assessments.
2. The student has satisfactorily completed the state’s or School’s (whichever is greater) required standards in 19 TAC Chapters 110–128 and Chapter 130 and credit requirements applicable to students in general education for graduation under the Minimum High School Program, including participation in state assessments. The student’s ARD committee shall determine whether satisfactory performance on the required state assessments is necessary for graduation.
 3. The student has satisfactorily completed the state’s or School’s (whichever is greater) required standards in 19 TAC Chapters 110–128 and Chapter 130 through courses, one or more of which contain modified content that is aligned to the standards required under the Minimum High School Program, including participation in required state assessments. The student’s ARD committee shall determine whether satisfactory performance on the required state assessments is necessary for graduation. The student must also successfully complete the student’s IEP and meet one of the following conditions consistent with the IEP:
 - a. Full-time employment, based on the student’s abilities and local employment opportunities, in addition to sufficient self-help skills to enable the student to maintain the employment without direct and ongoing educational support of the School;
 - b. Demonstrated mastery of specific employability skills and self-help skills that do not require direct ongoing educational support of the School; or
 - c. Access to services that are not within the legal responsibility of public education, or employment or educational options for which the student has been prepared by the academic program.

Employability and self-help skills are those skills directly related to the preparation of students for employment, including general skills necessary to obtain or retain employment.

The ARD committee shall determine needed educational services upon the request of the student or parent to resume services, as long as the student meets the age eligibility requirements.

4. The Student no longer meets age eligibility requirements and has completed the requirements specified in the student’s IEP.

19 TAC 89.1070(b), (e)-(f).

Evaluation

Graduating special education students shall be provided with a summary of academic achievement and functional performance as described at 34 CFR 300.305(e)(3). The summary shall consider, as appropriate, the views of the parent and student and written recommendations from adult service agencies on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals. If the student is graduating based on completion of his or her IEP, the evaluation under 34 CFR 300.305(e) shall be included as part of the summary. Students who participate in graduation ceremonies but who are not graduating under 19 TAC 89.1070(b)(3) and who will remain in school to complete their education do not have to be evaluated. 19 TAC 89.1070(c)-(d).

Graduation of Military Dependents

Course Waiver

The School shall waive specific courses required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed by a military student in another district or shall provide reasonable justification for denial. Should a waiver not be granted to a student who would qualify to graduate from the sending school, the School shall provide an alternative means of acquiring required coursework so that graduation may occur on time.

Transfers During Senior Year

Should a military student transferring at the beginning or during the student's senior year be ineligible to graduate from the School after all alternatives have been considered, the sending district and the School shall ensure the receipt of a diploma from the sending district, if the student meets the graduation requirements of the sending district.

Substitute Passing Standard

The School may utilize a substitute passing standard adopted by the Commissioner on one or more national norm-referenced achievement tests for purposes of permitting a qualified military dependent to meet that standard as a substitute for completing a specific course otherwise required for graduation. The passing standard is available only for a student who enrolls in a public school in Texas for the first time after completing the ninth grade or who reenrolls in a Texas public school at or above the tenth grade level after an absence of at least two years from Texas public schools. Each passing standard in effect when a student first enrolls in a Texas public high school remains applicable to the student for the duration of the student's high school enrollment, regardless of any subsequent revision of the standard. Education Code 162.002 art. VII, §§ A, C.