

## Pathways to the Diploma

### Requirements

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team is responsible for determining whether the student has completed a planned program of study making him or her eligible to receive a diploma or certificate. Upon completion of a planned program of study that meets the following requirements, the student will be awarded a diploma. The initial transition planning process begins at age fourteen by helping students define their courses of study and develop their four-year plans.

Students receiving special education services are able to earn their high school diploma or certificate in one of three programs of study (Subsection J of NMAC 6.30.2.10 Procedural Requirements for Graduation) GRADUATION PLANS MUST BE PART OF ALL IEP'S. (Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA Graduation Requirements Revised 2003)

<b>PATHWAY</b>	<b>Basis</b>	<b>HS Competency Exam</b>	<b>Graduation Requirements</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>STANDARD</b>	<p>Meeting or surpassing all requirements for graduation based on New Mexico Standards for Excellence with or without reasonable modification of delivery and assessment methods</p>	<p>Must pass all sections of the NMHSCE under standard administration or with state-approved accommodations.</p>	<p><b>Must earn the number of credits required by the district.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 units- English</li> <li>• 3 units- Math: <i>For students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2003-2004, at least 1 unit must be equivalent to algebra 1 or higher.</i></li> <li>• 2 units- Science (1 shall have lab component) <i>Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2005-2006 need 3 units</i></li> <li>• 3 units- Social Science (US history &amp; geography, world history and geography, and government and economics)</li> <li>• 1 unit- physical education or other physical activity</li> <li>• 1 unit- communication skills or business education</li> <li>• 9 elective units* <i>Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2005-2006 will need 8 elective units</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>The IEP team must consider the pathways in the order of the options listed in regulation.</i></p> <p><b>If the IEP team chooses a pathway other than the standard, the team must justify and document the reasons for doing so.</b></p> <p><b>Any modified pathway may depart from the standard path only as far as necessary to meet the individual student's needs.</b></p> <p><b>Graduation plans must be a part of all IEPs beginning at age 14 and at all points thereafter.</b></p>
<b>CAREER</b>	<p>Meeting the SBE's Career Readiness Standards with Benchmarks as defined in the IEP with or without reasonable modifications of delivery and assessment methods**</p>	<p>Must take the NMHSCE achieving a level of competency or targeted proficiency as determined by the IEP team.</p>	<p>Earn the number of credits required by the district for graduation. The IEP team determines the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study.</p>	<p><b>Must achieve competency in all areas of the Career Readiness Standards with Benchmarks as determined by the IEP team.</b></p>



<b>PATHWAY</b>	<b>Basis</b>	<b>HS Competency Exam</b>	<b>Graduation Requirements</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>ABILITY</b>	Meeting or surpassing IEP goals and objectives, with or without reasonable modifications of delivery and assessment methods, referencing skill attainment at a student's ability level, which may lead to meaningful employment.	Must take the NMHSCE achieving a level of competency or as determined by the IEP team, or the New Mexico Alternate Assessment if the student meets the participation criteria.	Meet all other graduation requirements established by the IEP team.	<p>Under this graduation plan, the majority of the goals and objectives relate to life and community skills.</p> <p>Typically, IEP teams design the ability pathway for those students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to benefit from a standard or career path.</p>

☞ **The Certificate is not a Pathway to a Diploma. It is awarded to a student who is continuing to work on IEP goals.**

<b>CERTIFICATE</b>	A district may issue a certificate when a student has maintained realistic efforts to meet IEP goals, attended 4 years of high school, and is able to participate equitably in graduation activities.		<p>At least one year before graduation ceremonies, the IEP team must provide PWN stating that a student will receive a certificate.</p> <p>Before awarding a certificate, districts must ensure that every student receiving a certificate has a "follow-up plan of action" as part of the transition plan.</p> <p>The IEP "follow up-plan of action" outlines the measures to be taken by both the student and the district to ensure the student receives his or her diploma.</p>	<p>A certificate does not end the student's right to FAPE.</p> <p>The student is not reported as exited on ADS.</p> <p>If a student does not return to complete the "follow-up plan of action," the district must count the student as a dropout.</p>
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\* Elective units counted toward graduation requirements include: fine arts (music, band, chorus, and art), practical arts, P.E., language other than English, speech, drama, vocational education, mathematics, science, English, R.O.T.C., social science, computer science, health education, American Sign Language, and other electives approved by the State. *School districts should offer Student Service Learning as an elective.*

\*\* The Career Readiness Standards and Benchmarks are available through the NM State Department of Education website.

Subsection J (e) of 6:30.2.10 NMAC The IEP team will also determine whether additional evaluations, reports or documents are necessary to support a smooth and effective transition to post-

