

**High School Diploma / Certificate of Completion
Decision-making Guide**

1. What are the student's employment goals?

- Competitive Employment?** If the student's goal is employment, they **need** a high school diploma. Employers prioritize hiring youth with a diploma. If youth lack a diploma, most of the jobs available are low skill, low pay jobs highly subject to automation.

What are the student's diploma options?

Meet state diploma criteria for required courses

- Meet LEA defined requirements for a diploma
 - Transition to adult education to earn the standard high school diploma
 - Utilize CTE Pathway Course of Study to a diploma. The Career Pathway course of study defines the classes that lead to a diploma that focus on state diploma requirements and career technical classes.
 - Achieve a diploma using "alternative means" as defined by LEA Board policy
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- Students who are in foster care may be eligible for a diploma based on the state requirements.
 - Students who are in alternative education may be eligible for a standard diploma based on the alternative means to earning a standard diploma that are cited in California education code.
 - Has the use of waivers for Algebra I or other courses that are directly impacted by the student's disability been reviewed and utilized as appropriate?
 - Has the LEA established policies that utilize California Education Code "alternative means" to earning a diploma for any student population?
 - Has the student been offered the opportunity to learn?
Has the student been offered a course of study that includes standards-based instruction?
Has the student been offered effective accommodations?
Is the student offered instruction using effective universal design options and/or differentiated instruction?
 - Does the student qualify for alternative assessments? Is he/she coping with severe cognitive disabilities?
 - Does the student qualify for an Alternative Diploma? Qualifications are having a severe cognitive disability and participation in alternative assessments.
 - Is the certificate of completion being considered as an alternative to a diploma?
 - If Not: Other justification _____
 - Is the certificate of completion of value to the student?
(The certification of completion is not equivalent to the high school diploma)
 - Is the certificate of completion issued by the LEA meaningful in the next environment?
Students who earn certificates must demonstrate jobs skills that are meaningful.
(Some suggestions include industry certificates, stackable credentials, transition portfolio)

2. What are the Student's post-secondary education Goals?

Attend University directly out of high school	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Community College	<input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship/Internship
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- Apprenticeships and Internships frequently require a diploma. Check is the program of interest. The Community College does not require a diploma. However, diplomas are required to be eligible for financial aid (FASFA).

Students who are ID/DD who leave school with a certificate of completion may qualify for specific types of financial aid if they are enrolling on a college program specifically for ID/DD students. (Think College/ College2Careers)