



Georgia High School Graduation Requirements

Georgia Department of Education
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What are the diploma options?

- High School diploma
 - That meets all the attendance, testing and course requirements
 - Includes an options for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- High School Certificate
 - Indicating the student has not met all the course requirements or all the testing requirements
- Special Education Diploma
 - Indicating the student has met the requirements of his or her IEP.

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What are the diploma options?

- Students who earn a Certificate or a special education diploma may continue to complete testing requirements to earn the regular high school diploma
- Waivers and variances are also options for some students who have difficulty meeting the testing requirements

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What are the testing requirements?

- Students must participate and pass the high school tests in the following content areas: Writing, English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.
- Students must be assessed in any course they enroll in that has an EOCT.

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Math

- 4 units of Mathematics required, including:
 - 1 unit of Mathematics I or Accelerated Mathematics I
 - 1 unit of Mathematics II or Accelerated Mathematics II
 - 1 unit of Mathematics III or Accelerated Mathematics III or any higher level mathematics course, including AP/IB
 - 1 additional math unit
- Support classes, interventions for struggling students

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English/Language Arts

- 4 units of English/Language Arts required, including:
 - 1 unit of 9th Grade Literature and Composition
 - 1 unit of American Literature and Composition
 - 2 additional units

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Science

- 4 units of Science required, including:
 - 1 unit of Biology (can be AP/IB)
 - 1 unit of Physical Science or Physics (AP/IB)
 - 1 unit of Chemistry, Earth Systems, Environmental Science, or an AP/IB course
 - 1 unit of a 4th science, including any AP/IB, academic science, or career tech science (ex: Agricultural Science)
- 4th science unit may be used to meet both the science and elective requirements.

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Social Studies

- 3 units of Social Studies required, including:
 - 1 unit of World History
 - 1 unit of United States History
 - ½ unit of American Government/Civics
 - ½ unit of Economics

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Health/PE

Requirements for Health/PE

- All students must complete 1 unit
- 3 units of JROTC may substitute for the Health/PE requirement

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Electives

- 7 units required, including:
 - A total of 3 units required from: CTAE and/or Foreign Language and/or Fine Arts for all students (*students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution must take two units of the same foreign language*)
 - 4 additional elective units for all students

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Career, Technical & Agricultural Education programs

- CTAE courses and programs are available for every student
- Pathway options will be expanded to include not only CTAE courses, but also Fine Arts, Humanities and other academic concentrations
- Industry certification pathways will be expanded
- Dual enrollment opportunities and postsecondary credit will be available

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More information

- Graduation rule:
http://www.gadoe.org/_documents/doe/legalservices/160-4-2-.48.pdf
- Graduation Guidance: http://www.gadoe.org/ci_services.aspx
- Access course guidance:
http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx,

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Students with Disabilities

- Most students with disabilities, when provided the appropriate supports, will be able to meet the graduation requirements and earn the regular diploma
 - A small number of students will need special considerations while maintaining rigor as they work toward the high school diploma.

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The Role of the IEP Team

- IEP team assists the student and the family to identify desired post-secondary outcomes
 - Course of study should complement the desired outcomes
 - Transition plans must be in place prior to entry into 9th grade or age 16, whichever comes first
 - IEP, including the transition plan, should be the guide to graduation

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The Role of the IEP Team

- Parents and the student must be informed of all the requirements for the diploma and other high school credentials
 - They should be informed of the requirements for access to post-secondary colleges and universities, employment, the military and other activities.
 - Some students may need to consider that earning a diploma will take longer than four years
 - Support classes, balanced schedules and other strategies may be necessary

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Mathematics

- For a few students, mathematics is particularly challenging
 - Support classes may be needed for Math I and II, and III
 - After completing Math I and II with supports, the IEP team may determine that graduation requirements can be met with Math I-III, support classes and the testing requirements
 - This may not meet the entrance requirements for colleges or universities

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Supports and Other Content Areas

- Some supports will be needed for other content areas by students
 - Support classes may be offered for specific content area
 - Support classes can preview, review and practice skills and concepts
 - Tutoring, preview sessions, instruction in strategies
- The career pathway should be strongly encouraged and supported

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Testing Requirements

- Students must meet the testing requirements as defined in state testing rule
 - Includes EOCT and GHSGT
 - The IEP team develops accommodations
 - Plans are underway to develop an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards
 - Tentatively for CRCT in spring 2011 and for high school in 2012.

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Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- These are students whose access to GPS is at an entry or prerequisite level
 - Intended for a small portion of the population
- Must participate in the GAA no later than 8th grade
- Must be proficient on the GAA by graduation
 - Will be multiple retest opportunities

AND

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Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- Earn 23 units in an integrated curriculum
 - Aligns with the content areas and self-determination, independent living, and career development
- Remain in school until their 22nd birthday or successful transition to desired post-secondary activities with necessary supports

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Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- Must be assessed on GAA during middle school and high school
- Earn 23 units in course aligned to GPS, IEP goals with self-determination, independent living, employment skills
- Proficient on GAA
- Reach 22nd birthday, or transition to situation in which supports are provided by another agency

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What are Access Courses?

- Courses that are aligned to the regular courses required to earn a diploma
- Do not cover the GPS in the same depth/breadth
- Provide entry level or pre-requisite skills that align to the course standards
- Designated by a “5” in the fourth digit after the decimal to distinguish from a regular education course.

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Who is appropriate for Access Courses?

- Students who have been assessed on the GAA NO LATER THAN 8th grade
- Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities entering 9th grade for the first time in 2008 and thereafter
- Those who will need significant support in postsecondary settings
- Those who can access curriculum ONLY at an entry or prerequisite level

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Access courses are NOT for students who:

- receive instruction in the depth and breadth of the GPS for the regular education curriculum
- Are simply performing below grade level
- Need remedial work to achieve grade level skills.

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How does instruction for Access courses occur?

- IEPs are standards based, assuming that students will be provided access to instruction based on the grade level standards.
- The IEP will address the skills the student needs to access the standards and the skills the student needs that are not part of the core curriculum

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How does instruction for Access courses occur?

- Access courses are based upon selected standards selected from the course and taught in an integrated manner throughout the school day in a natural and relevant context.
- Instruction for these students is activity based and multiple skills and content areas may be taught within the context on one activity.

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How does instruction for Access courses occur?

- Instruction may occur in general education classes, special education classes, or vocational or community based settings.

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Local System Impact

- Students may take longer than traditional 4 years to complete requirements
- AYP will not be affected if student is not exited from system- does not count until they actually leave, not just participate in commencement exercises
- Special education diploma still in the state law and the rule so is an option for some students

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Local System Impact

- Based on OCR guidance, the special education diploma should not identify the student as a student with a disability
- Transcripts that are provided to nonK-12 agencies should not have course names or numbers that identify a student as a student with a disability

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Local System Impact

- Students that receive instruction, whether in a special education classroom or the general education classroom, should earn Carnegie credit as long as the course follows the GPS requirements.
 - The HQ status of the teacher does not impact credit
- Systems need to plan out courses of study early on with students and families to access the general diploma.

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Local System Impact

- Be creative to assist students in earning a meaningful document
- Consider the use of :
 - Virtual courses
 - Credit recovery
 - ExPreSS
 - ESY for preteaching, reteaching
 - Mastery learning

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Local System Impact

- All students should have a career pathway
 - With meaningful work experience through internships, employment, CBI, work based learning, etc
 - With goals toward further education and employment
- Summary of Performance can be used to provide the student that guidance and resources for the future.
- Do whatever it takes to assist the student

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