

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

### **Promotion, Retention, Grading, and Graduation Requirements**

#### **Issuance of an Advanced Studies Diploma, a Standard Diploma, a Modified Standard Diploma, or a Special Diploma to an Eligible Student With Disabilities**

This regulation supersedes Regulation 2466.2.

##### **I. PURPOSE**

To establish the procedures for informing eligible students with disabilities and their parents of the availability of, and requirements for, an advanced studies diploma, a standard diploma, a modified standard diploma, or a special diploma and for making required modifications in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

##### **II. ELIGIBILITY**

Students with disabilities who have IEPs shall be entitled to pursue any of the program completion options considered appropriate by their IEP teams. A student with an identified disability who completes the requirements as outlined below may receive an advanced studies diploma, a standard diploma, a modified standard diploma, or a special diploma.

##### **III. PARENT NOTIFICATION**

By the time the student enters the ninth grade, the availability of and the requirements for an advanced studies diploma, a standard diploma, a modified standard diploma, or a special diploma shall be fully explained to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) during the annual IEP meeting. The explanation shall include the following diploma information:

###### **A. Advanced Studies Diploma**

1. The requirements for a student to earn an advanced studies diploma shall be those that were in effect when the student entered ninth grade for the first time.
2. Twenty-four credits including those courses mandated by the commonwealth of Virginia are required for the advanced studies diploma.
3. The grade average requirements necessary to receive the governor's seal on the diploma will be provided with the option for accommodations available to students with disabilities.
4. For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2000-01 and later, specific verified units of credit are required. These are acquired by successfully completing designated courses and passing the end-of-course Standards of

Learning (SOL) tests. (See the current version of Regulation 2460.)

5. Receipt of an advanced studies diploma constitutes graduation from high school and terminates Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) obligation to provide free and appropriate public education to a special education student.

**B. Standard Diploma**

1. The requirements for a student to earn a standard diploma shall be those that were in effect when that student entered ninth grade for the first time.
2. Twenty-two credits, including those courses mandated by the commonwealth of Virginia, are required for the standard diploma.
3. The grade average requirements necessary to receive the Virginia Board of Education seal on the diploma will be provided with the option for accommodations available to students with disabilities.
4. For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2000-01 and later, verified units of credit are required. These are acquired by successfully completing designated courses and passing the end-of-course SOL tests. (See the current version of Regulation 2460.)
5. Receipt of a standard diploma constitutes graduation from high school and terminates FCPS' obligation to provide free and appropriate public education to a special education student.

**C. Modified Standard Diploma**

1. The requirements for a student to earn a modified standard diploma shall be those that were in effect when that student entered ninth grade for the first time.
2. The modified standard diploma program is intended for any student at the secondary level who has an identified disability and is unable to meet the credit requirements for a standard diploma. At any point after the student's eighth grade year, eligibility for and participation in the modified standard diploma program shall be determined by the student's IEP team including the student, where appropriate.
3. A student who has chosen to pursue a modified standard diploma shall also be allowed to pursue the standard or advanced studies diploma at any time throughout that student's high school career. The student must not be excluded from courses and tests required to earn a standard or advanced studies diploma.
4. Beginning with the ninth grade class of 2000-01, a student pursuing the modified standard diploma must meet the literacy requirement on the grade 8 English reading SOL test and the numeracy requirement on the grade 8 mathematics SOL test. Students may substitute a high school end-of-course SOL

mathematics test or other substitute tests approved by the Virginia Board of Education to fulfill the numeracy requirement. Students may substitute the English 11 reading test or other substitute tests approved by the Virginia Board of Education to fulfill the English literacy requirement.

5. A student receiving a modified standard diploma is eligible to receive educational services with emphasis on transition planning through age 21 as determined by the IEP team.

#### **D. Special Diploma**

1. In accordance with Virginia regulations, a student with an identified disability who does not meet the requirements for other diplomas may be awarded a special diploma upon completion of the course of study prescribed by the IEP team.
2. A student receiving a special diploma will be eligible to participate in commencement exercises or other appropriate culminating activities at his or her school.
3. A student receiving a special diploma is eligible to receive educational services with emphasis on transition planning through age 21 as determined by the IEP team.

#### **IV. IEP REQUIREMENTS**

An IEP for a student subsequent to the explanation to the parent about the availability of and requirements for an advanced studies diploma, a standard diploma, a modified standard diploma, and a special diploma contains the following:

- A. A statement indicating the status of statewide assessments.
- B. A statement that the parents have been notified orally and/or in writing of program completion options and graduation requirements.
- C. A statement on the transition plan for students in grade 8 or at age 14 (whichever occurs first) that indicates the type of diploma the student expects to earn. A modified standard diploma may be elected at any time after the student's eighth grade year.
- D. A statement on the transition plan for students in grade 8 or at age 14 (whichever occurs first) indicating the anticipated year of graduation.

See also the current version of: Regulation 2460, Requirements for Graduation