

## Modified Diploma

(1) Definitions. As used in this policy:

(a) “Documented history” means evidence in the cumulative record and education plans of a student that demonstrates the inability over time to maintain grade level achievement even with appropriate modifications and accommodations.

(b) “Instructional barrier” means a significant physical, cognitive or emotional barrier that impairs a student’s ability to maintain grade level achievement.

(c) “Modified course” means a course that has been systematically changed or altered for a student only after reasonable alternative instructional strategies (e.g. accommodations, remediation) are exhausted.

(2) On or after July 1, 2009, the district shall award a modified diploma only to students who have demonstrated the inability to meet the full set of academic content standards for a high school diploma even with reasonable modifications and accommodations but who fulfill all state requirements as described in this rule and all applicable local school district requirements as described in district school board policies. On or after July 1, 2009, a district school board may only award a modified diploma to a student who meets the eligibility criteria specified in section 3 of this policy.

(3)(a) Except as provided in paragraph (c) or (d) of this section, the district shall grant eligibility for a modified diploma to a student who has:

(A) A documented history of an inability to maintain grade level achievement due to significant learning and instructional barriers; or

(B) A documented history of a medical condition that creates a barrier to achievement.

(b) The district may not deny a student who has the documented history described in paragraph (a) of this subsection the opportunity to pursue a diploma with more stringent requirements than a modified diploma for the sole reason that the student has the documented history.

(c) Students currently engaged in the use of illegal drugs are not eligible for a modified diploma if the significant learning and instructional barriers are due to the use of illegal drugs.

(d) Students currently engaged in the illegal use of alcohol are not eligible for a modified diploma if the significant learning and instructional barriers are due to the alcohol abuse, regardless of whether that student is disabled under Section 504 on the basis of alcoholism.

(e) Notwithstanding paragraph (c) and (d) of this section, a school district or public charter school may grant eligibility for a modified diploma to a student who is no longer engaging in illegal use of drugs or alcohol if the student:

(A) Has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program and are no longer engaged in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol; or

(B) Has been rehabilitated successfully and is no longer engaged in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol; or

(C) Is participating in a supervised rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol.

(4)(a) The district shall determine which school teams shall decide if a student will work toward obtaining a modified diploma. A student's school team must include a parent or guardian of the student. In the case of a student receiving special education and related services the resident school district of a public charter school student shall determine the school team for that student.

(b) The school district may award a modified diploma to a student only upon the consent of the parent or guardian of the student. The district or school must receive the consent in writing and during the school year in which the modified diploma is awarded. The requirement for obtaining the consent of a student's parent or guardian does not apply to a student who is emancipated or has reached the age of majority of 18 years of age or older at the time the modified diploma is awarded.

(c) Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, a student's school team shall decide that a student should work toward a modified diploma no earlier than the end of the 6th grade and no later than 2 years before the student's anticipated exit from high school.

(d) Beginning in grade five, the district shall annually provide information to the parents or guardians of a student taking an alternate assessment of the availability of a modified diploma and the requirements for the modified diploma.

(e) A student's school team may formally decide to revise a modified diploma decision.

(g) A student's school team may decide that a student who was not previously working towards a modified diploma should work toward a modified diploma when a student is less than 2 years from anticipated exit from high school if the documented history of the student described in section (3) of this rule has changed.

(5) Unit of credit requirements for students graduating with a modified diploma:

(a) To receive a modified diploma a student must earn 24 units of credit, between grade 9 and the end of their high school career with at least 12 of those credits to include:

(A) English Language Arts -- 3;

(B) Mathematics -- 2;

(C) Science -- 2;

(D) Social Sciences (which may include history, civics, geography and economics (including personal finance)) -- 2;

(E) Health Education -- 1;

(F) Physical Education -- 1; and

(G) Career Technical Education, The Arts or Second Languages (units may be earned in any one or a combination) -- 1.

(b) School districts and public charter schools shall be flexible in awarding the remaining 12 units of credit. These credits must be awarded to meet the needs of the individual student as specified in the education plan of the student with the expectations and standards aligned to the appropriate grade level academic content standards. These credits may include:

(A) Additional core credits described in paragraph (a) of this section;

(B) Professional technical education;

(C) Electives; and

(D) Career development.

(c) Students may earn units of credit through regular education with or without accommodations or modifications and through modified courses.

(d) Students shall have the option to earn credit for demonstrating proficiency. A student may be given credit for successful demonstration of knowledge and skills that meets or exceeds defined levels of performance. Students may demonstrate proficiency through classroom work or documentation of learning experiences outside of school, or through a combination of these means.

(e) The district shall ensure that students have access to the appropriate resources to achieve a modified diploma at each high school in the school district or at the public charter school.

(f) The district shall ensure that students have access to needed courses, modifications and supports to pursue a modified diploma and to progress in the general education curriculum.

(g) The district may not require a student to earn more than 24 units of credit to receive a modified diploma.

(6) The district shall grant credit toward a modified diploma only for courses that contain substantial academic content. A school district or public charter school shall grant credit for a modified diploma through a continuum of instruction beginning at basic skills and progressing through high level skills.

(7) The district shall award a regular diploma under OAR 581-022-1130 if all requirements for a regular diploma are met. Completion of one or more modified courses shall not prohibit a student from earning a regular diploma.

(8) The district shall grant credit toward a modified diploma according to individual student needs across academic content areas including applied, consumer, academic, or knowledge and skill development.

(9) Each student shall develop an education plan and build an education profile as provided under OAR 581-022-1130.

(10) The district shall inform the student and parent or guardian of the student if the courses in grades 9-12 have been modified for an individual student.

(11) The district shall provide transcripts which clearly identify modified courses that do not count toward the regular diploma but that do count toward a modified diploma.

(12) Each student shall build a collection of evidence, or include evidence in existing collections, to demonstrate extended application of the standards as defined in OAR 581-022-0102;

(13) Each student receiving a modified diploma shall have the option of participating in the high school graduation ceremony with the members of their class receiving a high school diploma.

(14)(a) The unit of credit requirements in section (5) of this policy for a modified diploma apply to all students who enter 9th grade on or after July 1, 2007.

(b) If a student entered 9th grade prior to July 1, 2007, the student's team shall decide whether the student must meet the unit of credit requirements in section (5) of this rule to receive a modified diploma or the unit of credit requirements specified by the school district or public charter school for a modified diploma when the student entered 9th grade. If a student's team decides that a student may receive a modified diploma by meeting the unit of credit requirements required by the district or school when the student entered 9th grade, the district may award a student who entered 9th grade prior to July 1, 2007 a modified diploma if the student meets the unit of credit requirements for a modified diploma specified by the district or school when the student entered 9th grade.

END OF POLICY

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**Legal Reference(s):**

[ORS 329.451](#)

[OAR 581-022-1134](#)