

Da Vinci Schools

Policy and Procedures

High School Graduation Requirements

The Board of Trustees is committed to providing students with the instruction and life skills necessary to take advantage of opportunities for postsecondary education and employment. As a necessary component of this preparation, Da Vinci Schools works to ensure that its high school students strive to complete "a-g" course requirements for admission into the California State University, University of California, and other national college and university systems.

Requirements for graduation and specified alternative means for completing the prescribed course of study shall be made available to students, parents/guardians, and the public.

Course Requirements: Da Vinci Communications, Da Vinci Design, Da Vinci Science, and Da Vinci Connect High School

To obtain a regular high school diploma, students at Da Vinci Communications, Da Vinci Design, Da Vinci Science, and Da Vinci Connect High School shall complete at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified:

1. Four courses in English

2. Three courses in mathematics

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete three mathematics courses in grades 9-12.

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences

4. Three courses in social science, including world history, culture, and geography; United States history and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics

5. Two courses in the same world language, other than English

6. One course in visual or performing arts

7. One course in any college-preparatory subject

8. Any other coursework, as determined appropriate and/or necessary by the principal or designee, to ensure that each student is enrolled in a minimum of six courses each semester.

Course Requirements: Da Vinci RISE High

To obtain a regular high school diploma, students at Da Vinci RISE High shall complete at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified:

1. Four courses in English

2. Two courses in mathematics

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete three mathematics courses in grades 9-12.

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences

4. Three courses in social science, including world history, culture, and geography; United States history and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics

5. Two courses in world language and/or visual or performing arts

6. One course in a Career Development course

Exemptions from Da Vinci Schools Graduation Requirements

The Board of Trustees understands that the prescribed course of study above may not accommodate the needs of all students and shall provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law. Eligible students will be awarded a regular high school diploma based upon the California State Mandated Graduation requirements, as outlined below:

California State Mandated Graduation Requirements

To obtain a regular high school diploma that meets state mandated requirements, students shall complete at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified: ([Education Code 51225.3](#))

1. Three courses in English

2. Two courses in mathematics

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete three mathematics courses in grades 9-12.

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences

4. Three courses in social science, including world history, culture, and geography; United States history and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics

5. One course in visual or performing arts, world language, or career technical education

In order to obtain a regular high school diploma meeting the California State Mandated Graduation requirements, which is an exemption of Da Vinci Schools' high school graduation requirements, a student must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. The student is one of the following:
 - a. In foster care, as defined in [EDC Section 51225.1](#)
 - b. Is a homeless youth, as defined in Section 11434a(2) of Title 42 of the United States Code
 - c. A former juvenile court school student, as defined in [Education Code Section 51225.2](#)
 - d. A child of a military family, as defined in Section 49701 of the Education Code
 - e. A migratory child who meets the definition of "currently migratory child" under Section [54441](#) (a) of the Education Code
 - f. A newly arrived immigrant student participating in a newcomer program, which is a program designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived immigrant students that has as a primary objective the development of English language proficiency

2. The student transfers between schools any time after their second year of high school

Within thirty (30) days of transfer, any such student shall be notified of the availability of the exemption and whether he/she is qualified for it. The notification will include how the exemption will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a post-secondary educational institution and will provide information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. A qualified student may decline the exemption initially, and then choose to accept the exemption at a later date. Once exempted from Da Vinci Schools' graduation requirements, the exemption cannot be revoked even if the student transfers to another school. If the student meets the requirements under the State Minimum Diploma Path before the end of his/her fourth year of high school, he/she may remain in attendance to complete additional coursework. No student shall be denied enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which he/she is otherwise eligible, including courses necessary to attend an institution of higher education, regardless of whether those courses are required for the State Minimum Diploma Path. (Education Code [51225.1](#))

3. The student is not reasonably able to complete Da Vinci Schools' graduation requirements by the end of the student's fourth year of high school, due to circumstances outside of the student's control, such as
 - Transfer during the last two years of high school from a school with different graduation requirements
 - Disability, regardless of whether the student has an individualized education program or a Section 504 services plan
 - Limited English proficiency (e.g., student identified as an English language learner)
 - Hardship (e.g., emergency, natural disaster, trauma, personal or family crisis)

Alternative Pathways to Receiving a Diploma for Students Receiving Special Education Services

The Board of Trustees recognizes that students with disabilities are entitled to a course of study that provides them with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and that modifications to Da Vinci Schools' regular courses may be needed on an individualized basis to provide FAPE. In accordance with law, students with disabilities intending to earn a regular high school diploma may receive

accommodations and/or modifications to meet graduation requirements, as specified in their respective individualized education plan and/or Section 504 services plan.

Students with significant exceptional needs, who entered ninth grade in the 2022–23 school year or later, attending a school district, county office of education, charter school, or state special school can graduate from high school through a newly defined diploma pathway by meeting the following criteria as referenced in the student’s individualized education program:

1. The student is eligible to take the California Alternate Assessment, and
2. The student is required to complete state standards-aligned coursework to meet statewide course requirements.

LEAs must exempt students who meet the above criteria from all local coursework and other requirements that are in addition to statewide coursework requirements, as defined in Education Code [51225.31](#)

Through the completion of the statewide coursework requirements, Da Vinci Schools must award the qualifying student a diploma of graduation from high school. Through this newly defined diploma pathway, the qualifying student may participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which a student of similar age would be eligible to participate. The award of the diploma of graduation via the alternative pathway under Education Code [51225.31](#) does not change or terminate an LEA’s obligation to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to an eligible special education student. This is consistent with Section 7801(23)(A)(ii)(I)(bb) of Title 20 of the United States Code and Section 300.102(a)(3) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Retroactive Diplomas

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through 2014-15 school year and met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma. (Education Code [51413](#))

In addition, Da Vinci Schools may retroactively grant a high school diploma to: (Education Code [48204.4](#), [51430](#), [51440](#))

1. A veteran who entered the military service of the United States while he/she was a district student in grade 12 and who had completed the first half of the work required for grade 12.
2. Persons who departed California against their will while in grade 12 and did not receive a diploma because the departure interrupted their education, provided that they were in good academic standing at the time of the departure.

Persons may be considered to have departed California against their will if they were in custody of a government agency and were transferred to another state, were subject to a lawful order from a court or government agency that authorized their removal from California, were subject to a lawful order and were permitted to depart California before being removed from California pursuant to the lawful order, were removed or were permitted to depart voluntarily pursuant to the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, or departed due to other circumstances determined by Da Vinci Schools that are consistent with the purposes of Section [48204.4](#) of the Education Code.

In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall consider any coursework that may have been completed outside of the United States or through online or virtual courses.

Honorary Diplomas

The Board may grant honorary high school diplomas to:

1. An international exchange student who has not completed the course of study ordinarily required for graduation, and who is returning to the home country following the completion of one academic school year in Da Vinci Schools.
2. A student who is terminally ill.

The honorary diploma shall be clearly distinguishable from the regular diploma of graduation awarded by Da Vinci Schools

Alternative Means of Completion

Because the prescribed course of study may not accommodate the needs of some students, Da Vinci Schools may provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law. Students may fulfill a course requirement for graduation through the following:

1. Practical demonstration of skills and competencies
2. Interdisciplinary study
3. Independent study
4. Credit earned at a postsecondary institution
5. Correspondence instruction from a California university or college
6. Private instruction

Upon receiving an advance, written application by the student or his/her parent/guardian, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall determine whether completion of the proposed alternative means would satisfy course requirements for graduation and what documentation shall be required, if any, to verify the student's successful completion. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall make the final determination as to whether the student's completion of an alternative means is sufficient to satisfy Da Vinci Schools' graduation requirements.

As appropriate, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall determine the grade to be assigned to students for the completion of any of the above alternative means. When a grade is assigned by a private school, postsecondary institution, or other educational institution for completion of coursework, that same grade shall be awarded by Da Vinci Schools provided that the Chief Executive Officer or designee has determined the alternative course to be substantially equivalent to a Da Vinci Schools course.

Legal References

EDUCATION CODE

- [46140](#) Minimum day attendance for high school
- [47605\(a\)](#) Establishment of charter schools within a school district
- [47605.6](#) Establishment of county-wide charter school
- [47612](#) Enrollment in charter school
- [48980](#) Required notification at beginning of term
- [49701](#) Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children
- [51224.5](#) Algebra instruction
- [51225.1](#) Exemption from state minimum graduation requirements
- [51225.2](#) Definition of subgroups; acceptance of coursework; complaint of noncompliance
- [51225.3](#) State minimum graduation requirements
- [51225.5](#) Honorary diplomas
- [51745- 51749.6](#) Independent study
- [51760- 51769.5](#) Work experience education
- [56390- 56392](#) Recognition for educational achievement, individual with exceptional needs
- [66204-](#) Certification of high school courses that meet university admissions criteria

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

- 1600-1651 Credits toward graduation
- 4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures
- 11500-11508 Regional occupational centers and programs
- 11700-11703 Independent study

Adopted: March 2017

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