

Executive Numbered Memo 003-2010-11 – Modified Diploma Clarification

December 15, 2010

TO: School District and ESD Superintendents

RE: Modified diploma clarification, extended assessment and Essential Skills implications

As the Essential Skills requirement for graduation rapidly approaches, some questions have been raised regarding the modified diploma and extended assessment options.

This memo is intended to clarify the uses of each of the high school exit options:

1. Oregon Diploma
2. Modified Diploma
3. Extended Diploma
4. Alternative Certificate

For the **Oregon Diploma**, students must successfully complete the credit requirements (24 credits), demonstrate proficiency in the required Essential Skills, and meet the personalized learning requirements.

The **Modified Diploma** is designed for those students who have not demonstrated the ability to meet the full set of academic content standards for an Oregon Diploma. For the Modified Diploma, the same requirements apply as those listed above for the Oregon Diploma, and there are different modification options based on whether or not a student is on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, listed below:

For students on IEPs or 504 Plans:

School districts and public charter schools may administer modified work samples or OAKS assessments consistent with the requirements of the student's IEP or 504 Plan. When modifying an OAKS assessment, the school district or public charter school must also ensure that the modifications are in compliance with section 4(d) of OAR 581-022-0610: Administration of State Tests. Modified OAKS assessments will remain invalid for purposes of school and district accountability.

For students who are not on an IEP or a 504 Plan:

School districts and public charter schools may only administer modifications to work samples that are consistent with the modifications the student has received during instruction. Students must have received those same modifications during instruction in the content area to be assessed and in the year in which the work sample is administered. These modifications must be approved in advance by the student's school team responsible for monitoring the student's progress. Students who are not on an IEP or a 504 Plan may not receive a modified OAKS assessment.

Consistent with the Oregon Diploma, students may also demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skills through other approved standardized assessments, which may not be modified (ACT, PLAN, Work Keys, Compass, ASSET, SAT, PSAT). Credits for the Modified Diploma may be earned through regular education courses (with or without accommodations or modifications) or through modified courses, and students must complete an education plan and profile and extended application to meet the personalized learning requirements.

In a recent review of diploma options, ODE has determined that students who receive a “meets” or “exceeds” on an alternate assessment (currently Oregon’s Extended Assessment and only available to students on IEPs) **can use that assessment** as a demonstration of proficiency in the Essential Skills in order to receive the **Modified Diploma**. However, Extended Assessments and the alternate achievement standards **may not** be modified at the local level for any reason.

It is important to remember that the **Modified Diploma** is NOT a “default” diploma. If a student fails to meet the requirements for an Oregon Diploma (i.e. earn all required 24 credits under standard conditions, demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skills, and/or complete the personalized learning requirements) he/she does not automatically qualify for a Modified Diploma. Students must meet the full set of eligibility criteria listed above in order to receive a Modified Diploma.

The **Extended Diploma** is designed for students who have a documented history of an inability to maintain grade level achievement due to significant learning barriers or a medical condition, and is only available to students who are on a current IEP. For this diploma, students must complete 12 credits and participate in an alternate assessment (currently Oregon’s Extended Assessment) beginning no later than grade 6 and lasting for at least two assessment cycles.

The **Alternative Certificate** is to be awarded to a student who does not satisfy the requirements for one of the diplomas above, but who meets criteria established by the local school board.

For more general information on diploma requirements, please visit the [diploma requirements website](#) or contact [Theresa Richards](#).

For more information on the Modified Diploma, Extended Diploma or Alternative Certificate, please visit the [Modified Diploma Q&A](#) on the [diploma requirements website](#) or contact [Jackie Burr](#).

For more information regarding the Extended Assessment, please visit the [Extended Assessment website](#) or contact [Brad Lenhardt](#).

For more information on the assessment of Essential Skills, including the approved assessment options, please visit the [Essential Skills website](#) or contact [Cristen McLean](#).