

Diploma Options At-A-Glance

OVERVIEW

Oregon offers three diploma options for students experiencing disabilities. Each has different requirements and implications for postsecondary opportunities.

| | Oregon Diploma | Modified Oregon Diploma | Extended Oregon Diploma |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Credit Requirements | 24 credits | 24 credits | 12 credits with no more than 6 credits earned in a self-contained special education classroom |
| Courses | Standard courses | Modified courses | Modified courses |
| Financial Aid Eligibility | Yes | Yes | Limited |
| Student's eligibility for FAPE | Ends with diploma | Continues to be eligible through age 21 | Continues to be eligible through age 21 |

OREGON DIPLOMA

All students should be considered for the Oregon Diploma first

Requirements:

- 24 total credits
- Standard coursework (not modified)
- Personalized learning requirements

Considerations:

- The goal for all students
- Provides the most postsecondary options
- Accommodations are allowed and encouraged
- Students should be supported with high expectations

MODIFIED OREGON DIPLOMA

For students who cannot meet full academic standards even with reasonable accommodations

Requirements:

- 24 total credits
- Modified coursework allowed
- Same subject areas as Oregon Diploma

Important Notes:

- Requires written parent/student consent
- Decision must be made no earlier than 6th grade and no later than 2 years before anticipated exit from high school
- Considered a "regular high school diploma" for federal financial aid
- Students retain FAPE eligibility until age 21 or until they achieve a regular diploma

Decision Timeline:

- Discussion should begin early (middle school)
- Team can revise decision if student progress warrants change
- Student can move from Modified to Oregon Diploma if they complete required courses without modifications

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EXTENDED OREGON DIPLOMA

For students with significant cognitive disabilities

Requirements:

- 12 total credits
- Maximum of 6 credits can be earned in self-contained special education classrooms
- Modified coursework based on student needs

Important Notes:

- Requires written parent/student consent
- For students who cannot meet standards even with reasonable modifications
- Schools must provide courses and resources for students to achieve extended diploma
- Students retain FAPE eligibility until age 21 or regular diploma

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

Effective July 1, 2024 (Replacing Alternative Certificate)

Requirements:

- Regular full-time attendance for at least 4 years beginning in grade 9
- Meeting other requirements established by the school district

Important Notes:

- Not counted as a high school graduate in state or district reporting
- Cannot indicate receipt of high school diploma on applications for employment, military, financial aid, or higher education
- Students who began 9th grade before July 1, 2020 may still receive an Alternative Certificate

DECISION-MAKING BEST PRACTICES

1. **Start Early:** Begin discussing diploma options in middle school
2. **Revisit Annually:** Review diploma path during each IEP meeting
3. **Aim High:** Always consider the most rigorous option first
4. **Document Decisions:** Obtain written consent for Modified/Extended options
5. **Understand Implications:** Discuss how each option affects postsecondary opportunities
6. **Remain Flexible:** Teams can change diploma decisions based on student progress

CHANGING DIPLOMA PATHS

- A student can move to a more rigorous option at any time
- Moving to a less rigorous option requires meeting eligibility criteria
- When changing from Modified to Oregon Diploma, required courses must be taken without modifications
- If all requirements for Oregon Diploma are met without modifications, the school district must award the Oregon Diploma

Remember: *Earning a diploma is an important rite of passage that all students should experience. Always start with the highest expectations possible.*