

**Instruction**

**High School Graduation Requirements**

The Governing Board desires to prepare all students to obtain a high school diploma so that they can take advantage of opportunities for postsecondary education and employment.

Course Requirements

To obtain a high school diploma, students 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 (Education Code 51225.3)
2. Two courses in mathematics (Education Code 51225.3)

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra I or Mathematics I. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra I or Mathematics I requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete two mathematics courses in grades 9-12. (Education Code 51224.5)

Students may be awarded up to one mathematics course credit for successful completion of an approved computer science course that is classified as a "category c" course based on the "a-g" course requirements for college admission. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences (Education Code 51225.3)
4. Three courses in social studies, including United States history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics (Education Code 51225.3)
5. One course in visual or performing arts; foreign language, including American Sign Language; or career technical education (CTE) (Education Code 51225.3)

To be counted towards meeting graduation requirements, a CTE course shall be aligned to the CTE model curriculum standards and framework adopted by the State Board of Education.

6. Two courses in physical education, unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (Education Code 51225.3)

Because the prescribed course of study may not accommodate the needs of some students, the Board shall provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law.

A summary of the graduation requirements for Mendocino High School is listed below:

**MHS Graduation Requirements**

**265 Credit Minimum  
(one semester = 5 units):**

English	40	
World History		10
U.S. History	10	
Civics (Econ/Govt.)	10	
Math (incl. Algebra I)	20	
Science (1 yr. physical/1 yr. life)	20	
World Languages/Career Technical Ed./Performing Arts	30	
P.E.	20	
Health/Life Choices	10	
Personal Success	16	
Responsible Citizenship	4	
Electives	75	

A summary of the graduation requirements for Mendocino Community High School is listed below:

**MCCHS Graduation Requirements**

**265 Credit Minimum  
(one semester = 5 units):**

Creative Design	20	
Science & CTE	30	
Personal Growth	20	
Senior Project		10
Language Arts	40	
P.E.	20	
Mathematics	20	
Culture (History)	30	
Community Service	5	
Electives/Language	70	

## Exemptions and Waivers

A foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, or newly arrived immigrant student participating in a newcomer program who transfers into the district any time after completing the second year of high school shall be required to complete all graduation requirements specified in Education Code 51225.3 but shall be exempt from any additional district-adopted graduation requirements, unless the Superintendent or designee makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate by the end of the fourth year of high school. Within 30 days of the transfer, any such student shall be notified of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for it. (Education Code 51225.1)

## 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, the district may retroactively grant high school diplomas to: (Education Code 48204.4, 51430, 51440)

1. 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 the district that are consistent with the purposes of Education Code 48204.4.

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

2. Former students who were interned by order of the federal government during World War II or who are honorably discharged veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, provided that they were enrolled in a district school immediately preceding the internment or military service and did not receive a diploma because their education was interrupted due to the internment or military service in those wars

Deceased former students who satisfy these conditions may be granted a retroactive diploma to be received by their next of kin.

3. Veterans who entered the military service of the United States while in grade 12 and who had satisfactorily completed the first half of the work required for grade 12 in a district school

## Honorary Diplomas

The Board may grant honorary high school diplomas to: (Education Code 51225.5)

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 the district
2. A student who is terminally ill

The honorary diploma shall be clearly distinguishable from the regular diploma of graduation awarded by the district. (Education Code 51225.5)

### Legal Reference:

#### EDUCATION CODE

47612 Enrollment in charter school

48200 Compulsory attendance

48204.4 Parents/guardians departing California against their will

48412 Certificate of proficiency

48430 Continuation education schools and classes

48645.5 Acceptance of coursework

48980 Required notification at beginning of term

49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

51224 Skills and knowledge required for adult life

51224.5 Algebra instruction

51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements

51225.2 Pupil in foster care defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course

51225.3 High school graduation

51225.35 Mathematics course requirements; computer science

51225.36 Instruction in sexual harassment and violence; districts that require health education for graduation

51225.5 Honorary diplomas

51225.6 Compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation

51228 Graduation requirements

51240-51246 Exemptions from requirements

51250-51251 Assistance to military dependents

51410-51413 Diplomas

51420-51427 High school equivalency certificates

51430 Retroactive high school diplomas

51440 Retroactive high school diplomas

51450-51455 Golden State Seal Merit Diploma

51745 Independent study restrictions

56390-56392 Recognition for educational achievement, special education

66204 Certification of high school courses as meeting university admissions criteria

67386 Student safety; affirmative consent standard

#### CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

1600-1651 Graduation of students from grade 12 and credit toward graduation

4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures

#### COURT DECISIONS

O'Connell v. Superior Court (Valenzuela), (2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 1452

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