

Graduation Options For Students with Disabilities

Technical Assistance Manual

State of New Mexico

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Governor State of New Mexico

Honorable Bill Richardson

New Mexico Public Education Department

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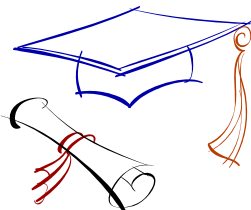
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Additional copies of this document can be downloaded from the Public Education Department Web-Site: <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/SEB/technical/index.html>

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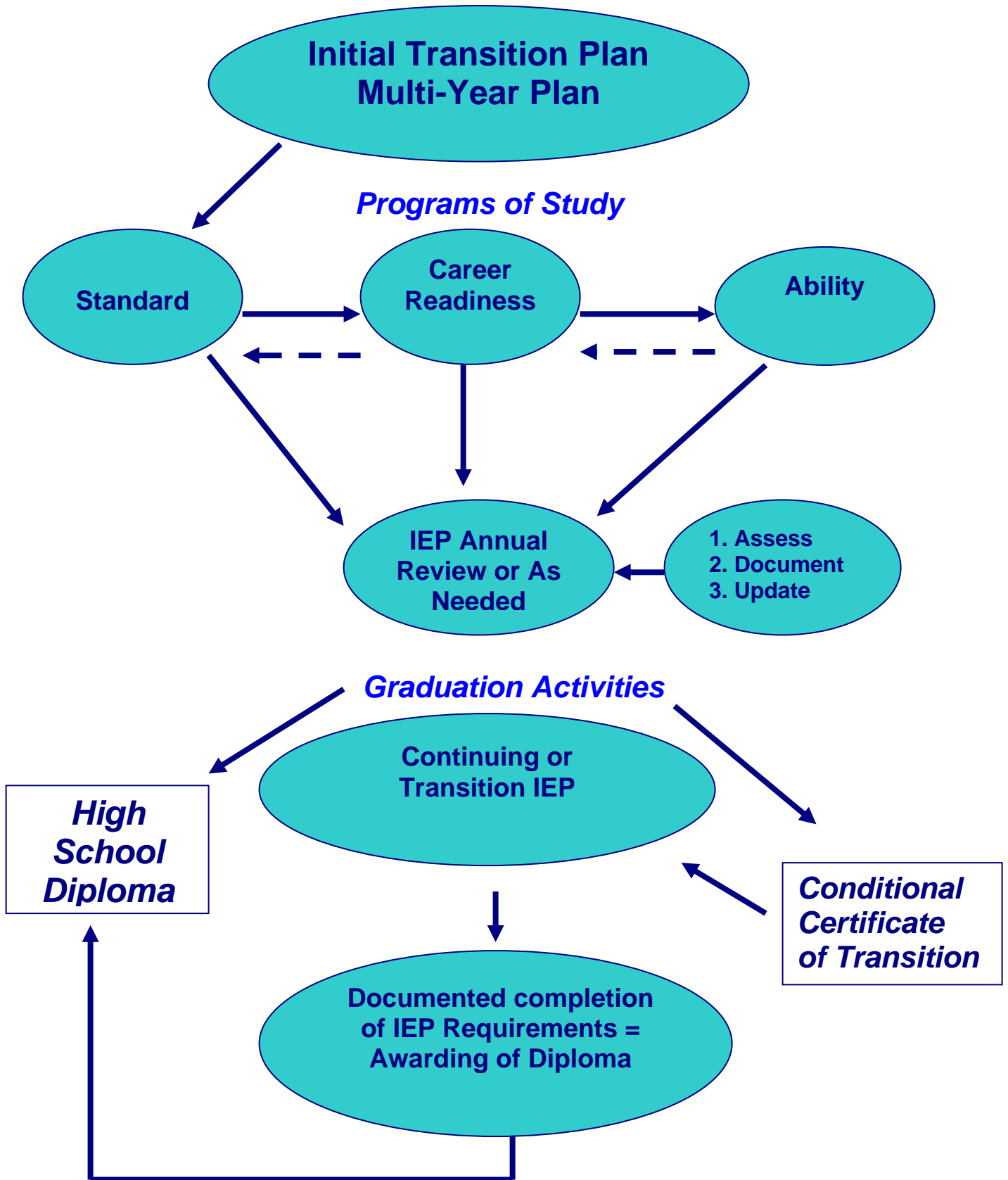
**Our task is to provide an education for the kinds of kids we have, not the kinds of kids we use to have, or want to have, or the kids that exist in our dreams.
K.P. Gerlach**

Introduction

The New Mexico Public Education Department's (the Department) Special Education Bureau (SEB) prepared this manual to assist Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams in planning a program of study based on a student's post-secondary goals and New Mexico's graduation requirements. New Mexico is one of many states with a high stakes graduation exam. However, New Mexico is the only state that provides options for students with disabilities to earn a regular diploma. A regular diploma is defined as being identical in appearance, content, and effect. These graduation options enable the IEP team to develop a program of study that is most conducive to preparing a student to achieve his or her post-secondary goals and maintain the integrity of the high school diploma.

The value of the high school diploma is currently under debate at state and national levels because of the gap between the skills required for graduation and the expectations of employers and higher education. In order to maintain the integrity of the diploma, it is important that all three graduation options promote high expectations, provide access to the general curriculum, and use evidence based practices that will assist students with disabilities to successfully meet graduation requirements that prepares them to achieve their post-secondary goals.

Identifying the Graduation Option



Graduation Options

For the purposes of this technical assistance manual, a graduation option is a planned program of study (courses, IEP goals, objectives, and benchmarks) designed to address the needs of individual students. The IEP team plays a key role in the IEP graduation process. The IEP team should consist of the student, parent, special educator, regular educator, vocational educator, building administrator or designee, transition specialist, related service provider(s), evaluation and/or diagnostic specialist, adult service provider(s), and others per the parent's request. The IEP team determines the most appropriate graduation options based upon student needs and wishes and impact of the disability. The IEP team must document the rationale for the selected program of study in the IEP, and review and update goals and objectives at least annually. The IEP team also has the responsibility of verifying that the student achieved all program goals and objectives leading to graduation and receipt of a high school diploma. The initial transition and graduation planning process begins at the 8th grade IEP meeting. The IEP team assists the student to define his or her course of study and develop the four-year plan. Students receiving special education services are able to earn their high school diploma by following one of three programs of study.

Standard Graduation Option- means a program of study based upon meeting or exceeding all requirements for graduation as identified in the New Mexico Statutes and Rules, with or without reasonable accommodations. In addition, a student must participate in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System and pass all sections of the current state graduation examination(s) administered under standard administration or with state approved accommodations and meet all other standard graduation requirements established by the district. (The administration of the College Readiness Assessment and the Workplace Readiness Assessment have been postponed until the 2011-2012 school year.) The IEP team selects required courses and electives based on the student's post-secondary goals, strengths, interests, and needs. If the IEP team chooses a graduation option other than the standard, the IEP team must provide documentation for selecting an alternative graduation option.

Career Readiness Graduation Option- means an alternative program of study meant to develop the student's career interest as it relates to the career clusters. The student's program of study must address the New Mexico Public Education Department's (NMPED) content standards with benchmarks and performance standards. The student must achieve competency in all areas of the NMPED employability and career development standards with benchmarks and performance standards as defined in the IEP, with or without reasonable accommodations. In addition, a student must participate in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System and take the current state graduation examination(s) under standard administration or with state-approved accommodations and achieve a level proficiency determined by the IEP team. (The administration of the College Readiness Assessment and the Workplace Readiness Assessment have been postponed until the 2011-2012 school year.) The student must earn at least the minimum number of credits required by the district for graduation through standard or alternative courses. The IEP team determines the course of study the student will complete. The course of study and the student's IEP goals must be designed to assist the student in achieving competency in all areas of the NMPED employability and career development standards with benchmarks and performance standards. The course work shall include a minimum of four units of career development opportunities and learning experiences. The experiences may include career readiness and vocational course work, work experience, community-based instruction, student service learning, job shadowing,

mentoring or entrepreneurship related to the student's occupational choices. The career readiness graduation option takes into account the individual student's strengths, interest, career preference, and needs and allows for the substitution of classes as appropriate. The IEP team uses the IEP to document mastery of those standards and benchmarks.

Ability Graduation Option- means an alternative program of study based upon meeting or surpassing IEP goals and objectives, with or without reasonable modification of delivery and assessment methods, referencing skill attainment at a student's ability level, which may lead to meaningful employment. The IEP team designs the ability program of study to meet the student's needs with IEP goals, objectives, and benchmarks developed to provide the most appropriate program for the student. The IEP goals and functional curriculum course work must be based on the State Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standard or the State Expanded Grade Band Expectations. Typically, IEP teams develop the ability program of study for students with severe cognitive and/or physical disabilities or students with severe mental health challenges. The ability program of study varies from the standard high school graduation requirements. Students on the ability program of study must participate in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System and take the current state graduation examination(s) or the State's Alternate Assessment and achieve a level of proficiency determined by the IEP team. (The administration of the College Readiness Assessment and the Workplace Readiness Assessment have been postponed until the 2011-2012 school year.) The IEP team must individualize the ability program of study for each student's needs.

Once the IEP team has identified a graduation option and developed an appropriate IEP, the team is required to assess and document student progress and to update goals, objectives, and benchmarks annually or as needed. The alternative graduation options may depart from the standard program of study only as far as necessary to meet the student's needs as determined by the IEP team. IEP teams cannot change a senior's option after the 20th school day of the final year of high school except in situations where seniors experience unusual medical emergencies. Waivers for special exceptions after the 20th school day must be sent to the PED for approval.

Successful completion of a selected graduation option earns the student a high school diploma and the right to participate equally in all graduation activities. The receipt of a regular high school diploma with the standard option terminates access to special education services. In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.102(a)(3)(iv) the term regular high school diploma does not include alternative degrees that do not align with the State's academic standards, such as a certificate or general educational development credential (GED), and the receipt of such alternative degrees may not end the student's right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Conditional Certificate of Transition- IEP teams may use a conditional certificate of transition in the form of a continuing and transition IEP when a student has completed the high school portion of his or her education, and is on track for graduation, but the student still has transition or academic needs that must be addressed by school staff and adult service providers. In these instances, a student may receive a conditional certificate of transition that allows him or her to participate in graduation activities and continue toward obtaining the high school diploma based on a plan to implement transition services. The certificate is not a graduation option for students with disabilities. A certificate of any type *does not end a student's right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE)*. The certificate with follow-up plan of action allows for assistance with accessing adult services, seeking and maintaining employment, or pursuing post secondary training with assistance. The follow-up plan of

action must be in the form of a continuing or transition IEP and it must identify responsibilities of the student, parents, and the school to ensure the student receives a diploma. The student receives the diploma upon successful completion of the updated and continuing IEP goals and transition outcomes.

Guidelines for All Graduation Options

The IEP is the overriding document of planning for a student receiving special education and related services to progress through the educational process. In accordance with 6.31.2.11 (G) NMAC, the IEP for each student receiving special education services in grades eight through twelve shall include graduation planning that is integrated into transition planning and services. The IEP should be coordinated and developed with a graduation/transition plan, which includes the multi-year program of study for each student who progresses through a high school program. By the end of the eighth grade, each student's IEP must contain a proposed individual program of study for the grades remaining until high school graduation. These multi-year plans are based on the student's post-secondary goals, thus personalizing learning and providing relevance. These programs of study must be reviewed and revised on an annual basis.

- 1) The multi-year plan must:
 - be a part of all IEPs for students receiving special education support and services in grades 8 through 12 or to age 22;
 - identify by name all course options the student may take in the remaining years of the student's secondary program;
 - reflect the student's long-range measurable post-secondary goals; and
 - be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted to address the student's strengths, interests, preferences, and needs.
- 2) The IEP team is responsible for developing a multi-year plan that is most conducive to preparing a student to achieve his or her post-secondary goals.
 - The composition of the IEP team must meet federal and state requirements.
 - When a graduation program of study is proposed, an individual knowledgeable about high school curriculum should be included on the team.
 - The parent(s) and student should be members of this team, and sign to verify and accept graduation/transition plans. (Parent participation is not mandatory if the student is 18 years of age unless the parent has legally retained guardianship.)
 - A building administrator or designee who has knowledge about the student should be a member of the team when an alternative program of study is developed and be able to verify and accept completed plans for students receiving special education services on the career and ability graduation options.
- 3) Program of study selection is an IEP team decision. Parents and students must be a part of the decision-making process. The student's graduation needs and personal goals are the primary considerations for identifying and developing an alternative graduation plan. The IEP team must:
 - base all decisions on the student's strengths, needs, measurable post-secondary, transition service needs, goals, interest, and preferences; and
 - begin discussion on graduation/transition plans at the eighth grade IEP, including plans leading to earning a regular diploma.
 - Consider the graduation option in the order listed in regulation. If the IEP team chooses an alternative graduation option, the team must:
 - justify and document the reasons for doing so in the IEP;

- provide sufficient documentation as a basis for its initial decision to place a student on an alternative graduation option other than the standard;
 - notify parents and students of potential consequences of this decision; and
 - base all decisions on the needs of the student and **not** on the student's ability to earn required credits or pass the current exit exam.
- 4) Assessing and documenting student progress toward graduation is crucial to the overall process. IEP teams must document the following information on the student's IEP:
- Review and document progress toward graduation on an annual basis for all students in grades 8-12.
 - Document skill attainment and progress toward achieving competencies.
 - Document each student's progress toward earning required graduation credits and passing the current graduation examination(s).
 - Ensure and document that requirements of the student's program of study are met.
 - Revise the IEP to reflect any changes in the student's graduation needs and/or plans.
 - Identify supports and services that will help students achieve IEP goals and meet graduation requirements.
- 5) Transition planning is an important part of the IEP process beginning no later than the first IEP to be in effect when a student is in the eighth grade. The IEP team should address the following components of transition planning:
- Coach every student to think about goals for life after high school and develop a long range plan.
 - Ensure the IEP contains appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments, and that these are updated annually.
 - Develop a plan to ensure the high school experience relate to each student's post-secondary goals.
 - Ensure that each student gains the skills and competencies needed to achieve his or her desired post-secondary goals.
 - Identify and link students and families to needed post-secondary services, supports, or programs before the student exits the school system.
 - Ensure that the student has necessary evaluations, documents, or reports to facilitate a smooth transition to adult services and/or postsecondary institutions.
 - Ensure that all domain areas of transition (instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-secondary living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation) are considered and documented in the IEP, pursuant to federal regulations and state special education rules.
- 6) Students receiving special education services must participate in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System and take the current state graduation and/or exit exam or the state approved New Mexico Alternate Assessment. The IEP must specify:
- which assessment will be administered,
 - are accommodations necessary, if so
 - what State approved accommodations are needed.
- 7) IEP teams must determine if the student is eligible for participation in an alternate assessment according to the following criteria:
- The student's past and present levels of academic achievement and functional performance in multiple settings indicates that a significant cognitive disability is present;

- The student needs intensive, pervasive, or extensive levels of support in school, home, and community settings; and
 - The student's current cognitive and adaptive skills and performance levels require direct instruction to accomplish acquisition, maintenance, and generalization of skills in multiple settings.
- 8) As a best practice, IEP teams should identify strategies that will help the student master skills required to pass the assessment for students on the Standard graduation option or to achieve the level of proficiency determined by the IEP team for students graduating on the Career Readiness or Ability program of study. The team should also consider identifying who will be responsible for ensuring the completion of the above items.



Note: The NMPED strongly encourages IEP teams to review the most current New Mexico Statewide Assessment Program Procedures Manual for guidance on selecting appropriate accommodations. This guidance is updated annually.
<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/index.html>

- 9) Additional responsibilities for IEP teams include the following:
- Monitor and report student progress toward meeting IEP goals to parents with at least the same frequency as the reporting schedule for non-disabled students.
 - Verify that each student achieved program goals and objectives leading to graduation and receipt of a high school diploma.
 - Protect the integrity of the diploma for all students by complying fully with the requirements of the graduation options for students receiving special education services.
 - Ensure that the IEP and Prior Written Notice of Actions Proposed (PWN), given to the parents at the end of each IEP meeting, reflects the students progress toward his or her graduation plans as he or she transitions into high school, and at all points in the process.



Note: See the Public Education Department's *Technical Assistance Manual: Developing Quality IEP's* for assistance and forms.
<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/SEB/technical/index.html>

- 10) Pursuant to 34 CFR §§ 300.43 and 300.320 and State rules including 6.31.2 NMAC and 22-13-1.1 NMSA, IEP teams must provide each eligible student with a summary of the student's academic achievement, functional performance, and additional recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his or her post-secondary goals.
- 11) The Department strongly recommends that building administrators monitor progress of each student with a disability toward graduation plan requirements throughout high school.
- 12) When the exit IEP team meets to review the student's program of study and progress to determine if the student has fulfilled graduation plan requirements, the building administrator must be included on the team. The building administrator is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the graduation process. The LEA's Special Education Director is responsible for monitoring graduation data.
- 13) A student graduating under any option or receiving a certificate with a follow-up plan

of transition must participate equitably in all graduation ceremonies.

- 14) The least restrictive environment (LRE) principles apply to all graduation options, and IEP teams must ensure that the student has appropriate access to the general education curriculum.

Additional Guidelines for Standard Graduation Option

- 1) The student must:
 - meet or exceed the requirements for graduation based on the Standards for Excellence Section J of 6.29.1.9 NMAC and Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978;
 - participate in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System (the administration of the College Readiness Assessment and the Workplace Readiness Assessment have been postponed until the 2011-2012 school year)
 - meet all other standard graduation requirements of the district; and
 - pass the current New Mexico graduation and/or exit exam—with or without accommodations by obtaining the minimum level of proficiency and/or performance established by the Public Education Department.
- 2) Credits may include courses in which curriculum or instructional accommodations are applied as long as the student achieves the same competencies listed on the graduation requirements.
- 3) The IEP team should look closely at the student's results from grades nine and ten short-cycle diagnostic assessment and scores on the first attempt on the high school exit exam. The IEP team should treat those scores as baseline of performance from which the IEP team identifies strategies to improve a student's skills and enable him or her to pass the current state graduation and/or exit exam. **Steps for teams to follow are:**
 - Ensure progress in the general education curriculum so that a student can meet the same educational standards that apply to all students.
 - Align goals to the state standards with benchmarks and assessment and focus on helping the student attain the skills needed to achieve standards reflected in assessment.
 - Be sure the student takes practice assessments. A student may know the material but if not familiar with the test format, he or she may have difficulty passing the test.
 - Ensure the availability and implementation of allowable accommodations



The SEB strongly encourages the use of the *New Mexico High School Competency Examination Domain Specifications* to help prepare students for the exam question format. The Domain Specification document can be accessed on the NMPED website.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/index.html>

- 4) If the student passes the graduation exit exam on the first attempt, the IEP team should work to ensure that the student continues to meet all other requirements for graduation on the standard option.
- 5) If the student's transition plan includes accessing services such as special services at the post-secondary level or Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Services, the IEP team should determine whether the student requires updated evaluations, reports, or documents to support a smooth and effective transition to the post-secondary setting.



See Case Studies, *Luke's Story*, on page 24 for an example of the standard program of study.


Additional Guidelines for Career Readiness Graduation Option

- 1) The IEP team must consider the standard graduation option first. If the IEP team changes the student's program of study from the standard to the career readiness, the team must:
 - justify and document the reasons for rejecting the standard program of study on the IEP and PWN;
 - provide parents and students with a clear, concise definition of the career readiness program of study and explain the differences between it and the standard program of study;
 - notify parents and students of potential consequences of the choice that may limit the student's post-secondary options;
 - demonstrate that sufficient documentation and evidence exists to support its decision to place the student on the career readiness program of study; and
 - base all decisions on the needs of the student and **not** solely on the student's ability to earn required credits or pass the current exit exam.

- 2) To earn a diploma on the career readiness graduation option a student must:
 - earn at least the district's required number of credits (the IEP team determines the standard and alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study and ensure the student meets requirements identified in the Standards for Excellence);
 - participate in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System (the administration of the Statewide College Assessment and the Workplace Readiness Assessment have been postponed until the 2011-2012 school year);
 - achieve competency in all areas of the Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards ; and
 - take the current graduation exit exam and achieve a level of proficiency determined by the student's IEP team.

- 3) Completion of the career readiness program of study requires that a student **achieve** his or her IEP goals and objectives based on the Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards. These Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards are included in the CONTENT STANDARDS WITH BENCHMARKS AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, GRADES 7-12 in Subsection 2.29.3.8 NMAC:
 - Students will know and understand the importance of employability skills:
 - BENCHMARK 1: Identify and demonstrate the use of positive work behaviors and personal qualities needed to be employable.
 - BENCHMARK 2: Develop a personal career plan to meet career goals and objectives.

- BENCHMARK 3: Demonstrate skills related to seeking and applying for employment to find and obtain a desired job.
 - Students will explore, plan and effectively manage careers:
 - BENCHMARK 1: Maintain a career portfolio to document knowledge, skills and experience in a career field.
 - BENCHMARK 2: Demonstrate skills in evaluating and comparing employment opportunities in order to accept employment positions that match career goals.
 - BENCHMARK 3: Identify and exhibit traits for retaining employment to maintain employment once secured.
 - BENCHMARK 4: Identify and explore career opportunities in one or more career options to build an understanding of the opportunities available in the cluster.
 - BENCHMARK 5: Recognize and act upon requirements for career advancement to plan for continuing education and training.
 - BENCHMARK 6: Continue professional development to keep current on relevant trends and information within the industry.
 - BENCHMARK 7: Examine licensing, certification and credentialing requirements at the national, state and local levels to maintain compliance with industry requirements.
 - BENCHMARK 8: Examine employment opportunities in entrepreneurship to consider entrepreneurship as an option for career planning.
- 4) The IEP team should document the classes, courses, and/or experiences which will be used to assure that the student achieves standards as identified in the Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards in the Program of Study section of the student's IEP.
- 5) In the best interest of the student, a high school counselor should be included in the IEP meeting to assist the student and other team members in developing the program of study.

 See Case Studies, Angela's Story, on page 25, for an example of the career readiness program of study.

Additional Guidelines for Ability Graduation Option

- 1) While the standard option must be considered first, if the IEP team rejects both it and the career readiness option, the team must:
- justify and document the reasons for rejecting the standard and career readiness option on the PWN;
 - provide parents and students with a clear, concise definition of the ability graduation option and explain the differences between it and the standard and career readiness options;
 - notify parents and students of potential consequences of the choice that may limit the student's post-secondary options;
 - demonstrate that sufficient documentation and evidence exists to support its decision to place the student on the ability program of study; and

- base all decisions on the needs of the student and **not** on the student's ability to earn required credits or pass the current exit exam.
- 2) Under the Ability graduation program of study, the majority of the goals and objectives relate to functional life skills and community skills. The ability program of study was developed for students who have a significant cognitive disability or severe mental health issues.
 - 3) To graduate on this option, it must be the case that:
 - a student has been consistently working toward identified goals, objectives, and benchmarks, developed by the IEP team; and,
 - has achieved a level of success that the IEP team agrees is commensurate with the student's abilities
 - 4) The student must successfully complete the requirements of the ability graduation option and his or her IEP by participating in specially designed programs that meet his or her educational and transition service needs through community-based instruction, transportation, work experience, community participation, recreation and leisure, accessing adult services, independent living skills, etc.
 - 5) The IEP team must document student progress toward goals and objectives, referencing skill attainment.
 - 6) The student must take either the current state graduation examination(s) administered pursuant to NMSA 1978, Sec. 22-13-1.1(k) or (l) or the state-approved alternate assessment, achieving a level of proficiency to be determined by the student's IEP team, and meet all other graduation requirements established by the IEP team.

In order to establish goals and objectives for students with significant cognitive disabilities, educators will refer to the Expanded Grade Band Expectations (EGBEs). Information regarding the EGBEs may be found at:

http://www.ped.state.nm.us/div/acc.assess/assess/Expanded_Grade_Band_Expectations/egbe.html



See Case Studies, John's Story, on page 27 and Ramona's Story, on page 28 for examples of the ability program of study.

Establishing a Level of Proficiency for Career Readiness and Ability Options

- 1) "Target level of proficiency" is a score on the current graduation exam, determined by the IEP team as the proficiency level the student must reach to graduate.
- 2) To establish the target level of proficiency, the IEP team must review the student's results from grades nine and ten short-cycle diagnostic assessment and performance on the **first** attempt on the graduation exam.
- 3) The IEP team must establish a targeted proficiency level on all sections of the graduation exam where the student's score falls below the State's minimum requirement.
- 4) For the purposes of accountability and reporting, if the score determined by the IEP team falls short of the State's minimum requirement, the district must report the student as a **no pass** on the graduation examination.
- 5) The IEP must document the target levels of proficiency on the IEP and PWN and outline a plan of action to be taken by both the student and the district to assist the student in meeting the target level of proficiency.



Steps IEP teams must consider:

- The level of competency must be reasonable and based on the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance in a variety of settings.
- Progress in the general education curriculum so that a student can meet the educational standards that apply to all students.
- Goals and objectives to the state standards with benchmarks.
- Focus on helping the student attain the skills needed to achieve standards reflected in assessment.
- Allow for practice assessments. A student may know the material, but if he or she is not familiar with the test format, he or she may have difficulty passing the test.
- Ensure that the targeted proficiency score is higher than the score achieved by the student on the first attempt, in order to promote progress.

Additional Guidelines for Issuing a Conditional Certificate of Transition

- 1) The IEP team must:
 - review graduation plans on an annual basis for students in grades 8-12;
 - provide documentation and justification that the issuance of a conditional certificate of transition is warranted (See Case Studies on pages 39-42 and Frequently Ask Questions pages 94-97);
 - evaluate and document on the PWN the student's progress toward meeting diploma requirements for his or her identified program of study; and
 - provide PWN that a student will receive a conditional certificate of transition in the form of a continuing or transition IEP.
- 2) The conditional certificate of transition:
 - indicates the student has attended four years (or more) of high school;
 - does not terminate the student's right to FAPE;
 - is not reported as an "exit" in the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS);
 - is reported in the district's membership
 - allows the student to participate equally in all graduation activities;
 - does not end the students right to FAPE; and
 - allows the student to return to school for additional educational and transition needs.
- 3) Before awarding a conditional certificate of transition in the form of a continuing or transition IEP, the IEP team must agree to the following:
 - The student's program and instruction have been appropriate and implemented as written.
 - The student has attended four or more years of high school.
 - The student may participate equally in all graduation activities.
 - The student has a follow-up plan of action in the form of a continuing or transition IEP.

- 4) Districts must ensure that the student has a continuing or transition IEP that outlines measures, resources, and specific responsibilities for the district, the student, and the parent to ensure the student receives the high school diploma.
- 5) Upon satisfactory completion of a standard, career readiness, or ability program of study, the student will receive his or her diploma, and be reported as an exited student in STARS.
- 6) A student who does not return to complete the follow-up plan of action will be considered a dropout unless they are enrolled in another school district, private school, or State or district-approved education program (including a GED program), or temporary absence due to suspension or school-approved illness.



See Case Studies, Robert's Story, on page 29 Jerry's Story, on page 30, Tommy's Story, on page 31 and Mariah's Story, on page 32, for examples of using the continuing or transition IEP.

Changes to New Mexico's High School Graduation Calculation

New Mexico is implementing the first of a *4-year cohort* graduation rate in 2009. Prior to that, the State utilized a *senior completion* method that tracked 12th grade students to completion of graduation requirements by spring. The use of the senior completion method was discontinued after the class of 2007, as New Mexico undertook the transition to the National Governors Association (NGA) cohort computation.

The NGA cohort rate requires that students be given 4 full years to graduate, including the summer following their 12th grade year. In order to capture the outcomes of students continuing to fulfill graduation requirements during that final summer, the reporting of graduation must be lagged by one year. That is, the graduates of 2008 are reported in the spring of 2009. To shift to the one-year lagged schedule of reporting, the United States Department of Education allowed New Mexico to duplicate the graduation rates from 2007 in 2008. With the one-year lag now in place, New Mexico will publish in 2009 the first 4-year cohort representing students who were freshmen in 2004 and who graduated by September, 2008 (2008 Cohort).

The *Shared Accountability* method used to compute the 4-year cohort rate conforms to the NGA Compact on State High School Graduation Data. Because the calculation method produces significantly different rates from prior years, the interpretation of New Mexico's longitudinal data should be made with caution. Between years 2008 and 2009 a break in trend prohibits useful comparisons with prior graduation data.

This document serves as an overview of the processes currently in place for computing the 4 year rate. Recent legislation (2009) has mandated the inclusion of a 5-year rate as the standard for New Mexico schools and districts. However the longitudinal data system STARS (Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System) does not yet contain the necessary data to inform a 5-year rate, since New Mexico's unique student ID was not fully in place until school year 2005-06. Therefore, these business rules will be updated to reflect the needs of the 5 year rate in 2010. Both the 4-year and 5-year cohort graduation rates will be reported for each graduating class.

Additional information can be accessed on the NMPED website.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/ayp2009/index.html>

Changes to New Mexico's High School Graduation Assessment Requirement

The New Mexico High School Competency Examination (NMHSCE) has been the State's high school graduation assessment since 1988. This requirement was changed effective in May 2008 with the passage of High School Redesign, Senate Bill 460, Section 22-2C-4.1 NMSA 1978. One of the components of this legislation is the 'sunsetting' of the NMHSCE as the State's graduation assessment as of June 30, 2009. It also tasks the Assessment and Accountability Division of the PED to identify a new graduation assessment aligned to New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards.

Two important facts associated with this change are:

1. The new high school graduation assessment is scheduled to become effective in SY 2010-2011, for students in grade 11 at that time (class of 2012).
2. Students who are in grade 10 in the 2008-2009 school year (class of 2011) are the last cohort to take the existing NMHSCE as their graduation examination, and they will continue the usual Fall and January 'retake' schedule until all required subtests have been

passed. In addition, they are eligible to retake subtests not yet passed for up to five years after leaving school and receive a high school diploma, if they have passed all required coursework.

(Page 49, 2008-2009 New Mexico Statewide Assessment Program Procedures Manual)
http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AssessmentEvaluation/dl09/PM_2009_3.1.09.pdf

New Mexico's Expanded Grade Band Expectations

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) convened several panels of diverse expert university and district level educational stakeholders, in addition to soliciting the assistance of national advisors, to develop performance standards, called Expanded Grade Band Expectations (EGBEs) for students with significant cognitive disabilities in the spring and summer of 2006. Both general and special educators were involved throughout this process to ensure both the relevance of the EGBEs to the student population and the accuracy of the linkages to grade level content.

The EGBEs were developed in the content areas of mathematics and science in four grade bands and five grade bands in language arts: 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9 – 12 (9-10 & 11-12 in language arts). The EGBEs provide both assessment and instructional expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with the academic expectations established by the No Child Left Behind Act.

The academic expectations increase from grade band to grade band and as the student's level of cognitive and communication functioning increases. The new alternate assessment, the New Mexico Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA), was developed to align with the EGBEs that are part of the Assessment Framework. Thus, students with significant cognitive disabilities will be assessed with regard to how well they have mastered this specific set of knowledge and skills as outlined in the EGBEs.

Additional information can be accessed on the NMPED website. http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AssessmentEvaluation/egbe/docs/EGBE_Overview.pdf

High School Readiness Assessments at a Glance

Overview

Beginning with school year 2008-2009:

Grade 9 – Short Cycle Assessments 3 times a year

Grade 10- Short Cycle Assessments 3 times a year

Grade 11- College Readiness or Workforce Readiness Assessment or both plus SBA (AYP and Graduation)

High School Graduation Assessment Timeline

Year	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2007-2008		NMHSCE	NMHSCE retakes	NMHSCE retakes
2008-2009		Last group to start NMHSCE track	NMHSCE retakes	NMHSCE retakes
2009-2010			NMHSCE retakes	NMHSCE retakes
2010-2011			1 st year SBA with graduation cut scores	NMHSCE retakes
2011-2012				SBA retakes

Case Studies

1. Standard Program.....Luke
2. Career Readiness Program.....Angela
3. Ability Program.....John
4. Ability Program.....Ramona
5. Conditional Certificate.....Robert
6. Conditional Certificate.....Jerry
7. Conditional Certificate.....Tommy
8. Conditional Certificate.....Mariah

Standard Program of Study: Luke's Story

Luke is a 17 year-old boy with a specific learning disability (SLD) in the areas of reading and written language. He receives minimal special education services in the resource room for language skills. By the end of 10th grade, Luke was on schedule for graduation and stated an interest in wildlife management and forestry. Luke's mother supported and encouraged his interest in college and requested that he take an agriculture class. He is on a standard program of study with electives in agriculture, mechanics, animal science, and principles of technology. Principles of technology aligns with the State's mathematic content standards with benchmarks and performance standards for Algebra II and is taught by a highly qualified math instructor. The district has approved principles of technology as an alternative course for Algebra II. Luke passed all but the language arts and science subtests of the New Mexico High School Exit Exam. During his junior year, Luke was able to pass the language arts subtest but not the science subtest. At his annual review IEP meeting at the end of his junior year, the team review results from grades nine and ten short-cycle diagnostic assessment and discussed possible strategies for helping Luke to attain the skills he needed to pass the science subtest. Luke and his IEP team decided that Luke would attend summer school and complete a science course. The course content would assist Luke in attaining skills needed to pass the science subtest. Luke's teachers are using the *New Mexico High School Competency Exam Domains Specification* as a guide for developing tests questions so that Luke and his peers can become more familiar with the testing format of the State's exit exam and other Standards Based Assessments.

Luke's career interests and vocational skills are addressed through participation in elective classes and other school activities including the Transition Fair, College and Career Day at the high school, and the annual Job Fair at the branch college. Luke plans to volunteer in the New Mexico Rails-to-Trails project in the summer. Because he is a member of Future Farmers of America (FFA), Luke will volunteer to help at the county fair next fall. He will earn credits needed for graduation based on the standard program of study, develop his leadership skills, continue academic success in his classes, take the science subtest of the NMHSCE, and continue to advocate for himself with teachers, counselors, employers, and at annual IEP reviews.

Luke's Four-Year Plan

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Algebra Readiness	Algebra I	Geometry	Agriculture
Biology/ Environmental Science	Chemistry	Physics	Principles of Tech I
Health/ Geography	World History	U.S. History	NM History/ Financial Literacy (was Govt/Econ)
Woods I	Animal Science	Weight Training	Academic Career Ed (ACE) Class
Physical Ed	Small Engines	Auto Mechanics I	ACE Internship (with Youth Conservation Project)

Career Readiness Program of Study: Angela's Story

Angela is an 18 year-old student with a specific learning disability who dropped out of school the second semester of her junior year. She returned to school in what should have been her senior year but she had not earned the number of credits needed for senior status. The IEP team including Angela and her mother met to review and revise her IEP. Angela had received moderate support through special education services including support and services in general education classes. Her IEP indicated she did well in hands on interactive settings but struggled in courses involving lectures and note taking even when receiving appropriate supports and accommodations. She passed the language arts and reading subsections of the graduation exit exam. Discouraged with her school status Angela was on the verge of not returning to school. She discussed her interest in eventually working with children as an educational assistant but realized this would not be possible without a high school diploma.

The IEP team worked to develop a plan that would help Angela experience success in school and to prepare her for the transition from high school to the world of work and future training. Angela and her IEP team discussed and identified her career interests, academic needs, results of work force readiness assessment and transition outcomes. The IEP team determined that due to Angela's high levels of frustration with school, her lack of concentration in certain classes, and the possibility that she was considering not returning to school, the standard program of study was not appropriate to meet her needs. The team determined that Angela required a program of study that would address her interest and provide educational opportunities for her to be successful in school. The IEP team provided a clear and concise description of the career readiness program and identified both positive and negative consequence. Angela's IEP emphasized academics needed for further training after high school, vocational, and career readiness skills needed for eventual employment as an educational assistant. In addition, Angela participated in a summer Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program at an elementary school working as an educational assistant and in a co-op program at a kindergarten during the following school year. She also received work-study credit for working in a childcare center on weekends. The IEP team reviewed Angela's present level of academic achievement and functional performance, results from grades nine and ten short-cycle diagnostic assessment, and her scores on the high school exit exam. She passed the language arts and reading sections of the test. Her scores on the remaining subtests were as follows: written composition 2, science 130, math 150, and social studies 125. Based on Angela's previous score, her present levels of academic achievement and functional performance the team determined that Angela could achieve the following scores: written composition 3.5, science 145, math 165, and social studies 135. The team identified strategies that would help Angela achieve these scores. Some of the strategies included identifying academic classes that would help with the written composition and math scores, practice assessments to help Angela become familiar with the test format, and a self-paced computer software program for the science and social science areas.

Angela received a high school diploma based upon completion of a career readiness program of study comprised of the number of credits, through standard and alternative courses, required by her school district. Her summer co-op and work-study experience substituted for some of the high school graduation requirements. She met and/or exceeded the NMHSCE scores established by her IEP team, participated in all high school graduation ceremonies, received a high school diploma, and continued full-time employment with the school district as an educational assistant in a kindergarten program.

Angela's Four-Year Plan

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
General Math	Applied Math	Consumer Math	Parenting II
Life Science	Biology	Parenting I	Ceramics
Physical Education	US History	Chorus	Co-op
Health/Government	Communication Skills	Life Skills	Work Study
Keyboarding	Art	Co-op	Work Study

Ability Program of Study: John's Story

John is a 20 year-old student with a moderate intellectual disability receiving homebound services due to complex medical issues. The last time John attended school for a full day he was in 7th grade. Primary concerns expressed by the parent included John's lack of academic and social skills and opportunity for social interaction with peers. The IEP team convened to discuss the parent's concerns and to develop an appropriate program for John. Discussion centered on John's transition outcome needs including career interests, employability skills, functional academic development, and social contact with peers.

The team considered the standard and career readiness programs of study and determined that an ability program of study would be the most appropriate for John based on the complexity of the medical issues, limited contact with peers, and his low functioning level. The team documented this decision in the IEP and prior written notice of actions proposed. Previous vocational assessment had revealed John's interest and ability in using computers. Computer usage was included in the transition plan as both an area for vocational training and means for communicating with peers while not at school. It was also determined that John would participate in the school resource program on a limited basis as health permitted. John's illness and homebound situation prevented him from participating in the Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System and taking the state exit exam in previous years. The IEP team recommended that the school petition the Department requesting permission for John to take the exams at home over an extended period if he was unable to attend school due to his illness.

John's IEP addressed functional academics, communication skills, personal health needs, realistic vocational training, and development of recreation and leisure skills. The homebound teacher helped John learn to use computer software for academic skill development and to access the Internet and e-mail for communication and recreation. The homebound teacher also helped John explore the possibility of performing work activities at home using the computer. John received high school credit toward graduation based on his completion of prescribed activities. John participated in the graduation exit exam with accommodations and obtained these scores on the exit exam: written composition 1.5, written language 65, math 90, social science 76, reading 55, and science 61.

As a result of the individually developed program, John was able to participate in limited activities with peers at school, explore career options for home computer usage, develop computer skills and establish a relationship with an appropriate adult service provider that would continue to serve his needs after graduation. John earned his high school diploma through an ability program of study developed for his unique needs. He participated in the high school graduation ceremony with his peers.

John's Four-Year Plan

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Reading for Meaning	Communication Skills	Applied Communications	Email/Internet Usage
Functional Math	Functional Math	Applied Math	Personal Health
Health	Life Skills	Social Skills I	Social Skills II
Keyboarding	Internet Access	Computer Graphics I	Computer Graphics II
Career Awareness	Career Exploration	Work Experience I	Work Experience II
Email Usage	Email Usage	Work Experience I	Work Experience II

Ability Program of Study: Ramona's Story

Ramona is a 15 year-old student with multiple disabilities. She has cerebral palsy, which significantly limits her motor functioning in all four limbs, and needs assistance with feeding, personal care, and getting around in her wheel chair. She has very limited cognitive ability and is non-verbal. Her IEP team completed a referral for an assistive technology evaluation to determine if she is able to use a simple communication device.

Ramona appears alert and responds by making sounds and moving her arms when other students talk to her. She enjoys listening to music and having the educational assistant escort her in the hallways when other students are changing classes. She is social and likes to interact with other students in the classroom. She can become frustrated when trying to make her needs known or if directed to do something she does not want to do.

Ramona requires a variety of related services to benefit from her program. She currently receives speech, physical and occupational therapy, and adapted physical education. She participates in a community-based instruction program in which students learn basic independent living skills and participate in a community outing once a week.

During an annual review the IEP team discuss Ramona's transition services needs. It was determined that she would benefit from a vocational evaluation to determine interests, abilities, and to help determine level of need and direction for vocational training and supported employment. The social worker reviewed Ramona's status on the Developmental Disability (DD) Waiver waiting list and made recommendations to the family on how to access respite care in the home.

The IEP team discussed high school graduation and agreed that because of Ramona's limited verbal skills and limited cognitive ability that both a standard and career readiness program of study would not be appropriate to meet Ramona's needs. Ramona's IEP team outlined an ability program of study that would provide instruction to develop independent living, communication, self-care, and social skills. She would be expected to participate as much as possible while being paired with others students as needed for certain activities. The instruction would occur both on the school campus and in the community. They recommended that Ramona's therapies occur individually or in small groups, and integrated into daily activities as much as possible. The IEP team completed the IEP addendum for determining eligibility for the New Mexico Alternate Assessment and determined that Ramona was eligible to take the alternate assessment.

Conditional Certificate of Transition: Robert's Story

Robert is a 19 year-old student with multiple disabilities. He has been receiving maximum special education services through full day participation in a program that focuses on the development of functional academics, employability, vocational training, and independent living skills. He has been in a high school setting for four years and has completed his outlined IEP goals, objectives, and benchmarks. He is on target for meeting his graduation requirements. However, he has not attained all functional and career development skills stated in his IEP transition plan. The IEP team met to discuss Robert's transition needs, the team recommended that Robert receive a conditional certificate of transition. The IEP team provided documentation showing that Robert needed additional career development opportunities to meet his post-secondary goals. The conditional certificate of transition does not end Robert's entitlement to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The IEP team recommended that Robert be allowed to participate in all graduation activities. The team developed a transitional IEP that included a action that focused on the attainment of transition outcomes in the appropriate domain areas. The team documented its projected date of completion in the IEP. Robert would earn his high school diploma upon completion of his transitional program.

Robert's Five-Year Plan

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	12+
Functional Academics I	Functional Academics II	Life Skills in the Community	Recreation and Leisure	Community Ed and Support Services
Independent Living	Life Skills	Employability Skills	Job Club	Accessing Adult Services
CBI Job Exploration I	CBI Job Exploration II	Transitional Work-Study	Work Study	Supported Employment

Conditional Certificate Transition: Jerry's Story

Jerry is a 17-year-old young man in the 12th grade with a specific learning disability and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). There have been four IEP meetings held in the past year to address his attendance. Without appropriate attendance, Jerry will not be able to graduate. Jerry's IEP does have the appropriate support and services identified to help him with his learning disability and ADHD while in class, and he was on track to graduate on a standard course of study. The IEP team determined the ADHD was the cause of the attendance problem and developed a behavior intervention plan (BIP) to address Jerry's needs. The school offered to have Jerry escorted to each class, but the parent and student declined the offer. The school offered to provide bus transportation that would pick Jerry up at his home and an educational assistant would meet Jerry at the bus stop; the parent and student also chose to decline this offer.

Because the student and parent refused to accept the school's accommodations for the ADHD-related attendance problem, the IEP team determined that Jerry was not eligible to receive a conditional certificate of transition and could not participate in the graduation ceremony. The team agreed that Jerry would continue the standard program of study, attend summer school, and return to school for the fall semester.

Jerry's Five-Year Plan

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	12+
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12	English 12
Basic Math	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II
Biology	Life Science	Vocational Agriculture I	Vocational Agriculture II	Communication Skills
Health/New Mexico History	World History	US History	Government	Team Sports
Study Skills	Study Skills	Study Skills	Weight Training	Auto Mechanics II
Physical Education	Introduction to Computers	CAD I	Auto Mechanics I	Woodshop

Conditional Certificate of Transition: Tommy's Story

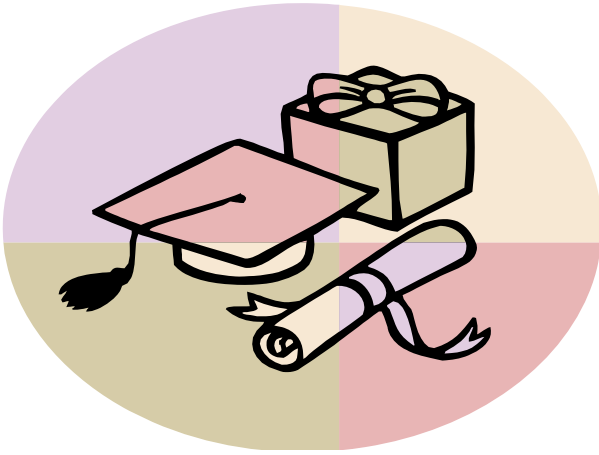
Tommy is a 17 year-old young man in the 12th grade with a specific learning disability and attention deficit disorder. An IEP meeting held 30 days prior to graduation found Tommy to be ineligible for graduation due to lack of credits and poor attendance. Tommy's IEP team conducted a manifestation determination and determined that the attendance problem was due to his ADHD. The team discovered that during the student's four years in high school the IEPs did not address his attendance difficulties. Tommy's IEP team determined that his program was not appropriate. The IEP team developed a plan to rectify the situation. With an appropriate follow-up plan of action, Tommy will receive a conditional certificate of transition, participate in all graduation ceremonies, and complete his credits through compensatory service over the summer. Tommy will not be returning to the high school in the fall because he will receive his diploma before the end of summer.

Tommy's Four-Year Plan

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	Summer
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12	English 12
Basic Math	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II
Biology	Life Science	Animal Science I	Voc agriculture II	
Health/New Mexico History	World History/ Geography	US History	Government/ Economics	
Study Skills I	Study Skills II	Study Skills III	Weight Training	
Physical Education	Computer I	CAD I	Auto Mechanics	

Conditional Certificate of Transition using Extended School Year: Mariah's Story

Mariah is a 21 year-old young woman with multiple disabilities receiving maximum special education services and related services in the areas of speech, occupational and physical therapy. She participated in some general education classes for the purpose of stimulation and social skill development. Mariah was due to complete her high school program because she was reaching maximum age for services under IDEA and had earned the required number of credits to graduate. Mariah was on an ability program of study that focused on developing skills in the areas of independent living, self-care, and community participation. Mariah has been on the waiting list for the DD waiver since age 16. She has a case manager from the Department of Health (DOH), receives social security, and Medicaid and Medicare benefits. The school provided resources to assist the parents in applying for guardianship; however, the parents did not complete the application process. The DOH case manager reported that the provision of related service from community agencies would not start for several months, creating a gap in needed services for Mariah. The IEP team reviewed documentation regarding regression/recoupment and progress toward goals and objectives, and determined eligibility for extended school year (ESY) in the areas of speech, occupational, and physical therapy. This would bridge the gap in related services between school and adult services. The team recommended that Mariah participate in the graduation activities and receive a certificate. The follow-up plan included receipt of the diploma at the end of her ESY program. The IEP team will continue to send parent information regarding community services and resource groups that may be able to assist in the purchase of equipment and identify special programs or opportunities available in the community.



Appendices

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Appendix A

Glossary of Terms

Ability Option:

Is a program of study for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to benefit from a standard or career readiness program of study. A student completing the ability program of study typically works toward goals, objectives, and benchmarks identified within the IEP that relate primarily to employability and independent living skills and/or community participation. The student will earn a high school diploma once he or she meets the goals, objectives, and transition outcomes plan outlined in the IEP.

Alternate Assessment:

An instrument used in gathering information on the standards based performance and progress of students whose disabilities preclude them from valid and reliable participation in general assessments. Alternate assessments measure the performance of a relatively small population of students who are unable to participate in the general assessment system, with or without accommodations as determined by the IEP team.

Diploma:

A student receives a high school diploma upon completion of any of the three programs of study as outlined. Wording and visual appearance shall be the same in all instances.

Career Readiness Option:

An alternative graduation option for students with disabilities. This option is based upon meeting the department's employability and career education standards with benchmarks and performance standards as identified in the student's IEP.

Continuing and Transition IEP

An IEP detailing actions or steps needed in order for a student to progress toward completion of graduation requirements based on the chosen option. This should include, at a minimum:

- Goals, objectives, or benchmarks;
- Other agency involvement;
- Time lines;
- Related services; and
- A plan for periodic assessment of the progress toward graduation.

High School Transcript

- This educational record remains on file for 90 years.
- This document should be clear to any reader.
- There should be no distinguishing titles such as “special education” on course names.
- Schools may need to develop course offerings (including title and number) that are broad enough to include New Mexico Standards and Benchmarks supporting the career readiness and ability programs of study.
- The Department recommends the Course Classification System published in the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System–Users Guide. The Department reviewed these course classifications for non-discriminatory language
- When evaluating educational activities for the purpose of awarding credit, one should utilize flexibility and creativity in terms of assessments and documentation. Many courses interchange with community-based or related service activities (i.e., speech therapy or journalism can be substituted for communication skills credit; a mentorship at a local news station might be used as a fine arts elective). Building administrators and high school counselors should be involved in this process.

- In addition to using the current New Mexico Standards and Benchmarks as a foundation, student performance on the New Mexico High School Exit Exam may serve as supporting validation of the student's skills. The IEP team needs to assess the application of the student's knowledge and skill base as it relates to life situations such as employability, community involvement, and independent living.

Original IEP/Graduation:

The first IEP that addresses the high school program of study will typically be a transitional IEP held prior to the student entering 9th grade.

Prior Written Notice of Actions Proposed (PWN):

One of two kinds of notices required in connection with an IEP meeting. The IEP team provides this type of notice to parents at the conclusion of an IEP meeting. The **PWN** identifies all actions proposed and if proposed items were accepted or rejected and the reasons for doing so.

Regular Diploma:

All diplomas awarded by a school district or charter school shall be identical in appearance, content and effect, except that symbols or notations may be added to individual student's diplomas to reflect official school honors or awards earned by students. 6.29.1(J)(13)(q) NMAC

Standard Option:

Is a program of study that is based upon the student's meeting or exceeding all requirements for graduation as specified in Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978.

Transfer of Rights:

Under New Mexico law, a person's age of majority begins on his or her 18th birthday. A person who has reached the age of majority is an adult for all purposes not otherwise limited by State law. A guardianship proceeding under the Probate Code is the only way an adult in New Mexico can legally be determined to be incompetent and have the right to make his or her own decisions taken away. Public agencies and their IEP teams are not empowered to make such determinations under New Mexico law. Accordingly, when a student with a disability reaches 18 and does not have a court-appointed guardian, all rights accorded to parents under IDEA and New Mexico laws and regulations transfer to the student.

Each annual IEP review for a student who is 14 or older must include a discussion of the rights that will transfer to the student upon the 18th birthday and, as appropriate, a discussion of the parents' plans for obtaining a guardian before that time. In addition, each student's IEP beginning not later than when the student turns 14 must include a statement that the student and parents have been informed of the rights that will transfer to the student at age 18 as required by 6.31.2.13(K) NMAC.

Appendix B

Graduation Options Requirements

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team is responsible for determining whether the student has completed a planned program of study making him or her eligible to receive a diploma. Upon completion of a planned program of study that meets the requirements, the student will be awarded a diploma. The initial transition planning process begins at age fourteen by helping students define their courses of study and develop their four-year plans. Students receiving special education services are able to earn their high school diploma in one of three programs of study

Graduation Option	Basis	HS Exit Exam	Graduation Requirements	Other
STANDARD	<p>Meeting or surpassing all district requirements for graduation based on New Mexico Standards for Excellence with or without reasonable modification of delivery and assessment methods.</p> <p>Graduation planning must be addressed in the student's IEP.</p>	<p>The student must pass all sections of the current exit exam under standard administration or with state-approved accommodations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of 23 units aligned to the State academic content and performance standards shall be required to graduate: • four units- English; • three units- Math: <i>at least one unit must be equivalent to algebra 1 or higher;</i> • three units- Science (one shall have lab component); • three and <u>one-half units</u>- Social Science (US history & geography, world history and geography, and <u>government and economics) one-half <u>New Mexico History for students entering 9th grade in 2005-2006;</u></u> • one unit- physical education or other physical activity; • one unit- communication skills or business education; and • nine elective units* <u><i>Students entering 9th grade in 2005 2006 will need 7.5 elective units.</i></u> <p><u>For Students Entering ninth grade in 2009-2010</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of 24 units aligned to the state academic content and performance standards shall be required to earn a diploma of excellence: • four units- English; • four units- Math, of which one shall be equivalent to or higher than the level of Algebra II; • three units- Science, two of which shall have a laboratory component • three and one-half units- Social Science, which shall include US History, geography, world history and 	<p>The IEP team must consider the program of study in the order of the options listed in the rule.</p> <p>If the IEP team chooses a graduation option other than the standard, the team must justify and document the reasons for doing so.</p> <p>Any modified program of study can depart from the standard program only as far as necessary to meet the individual student's needs.</p> <p>Graduation plans must be a part of all IEPs beginning with the 8th grade IEP and at all points thereafter.</p> <p>The IEP team will also determine whether additional evaluations, reports, or documents are necessary to support a smooth and effective transition to post-secondary services for a student who will graduate on the Standard program of study. The school will arrange for such information to be provided at no cost</p>

Graduation Option	Basis	HS Exit Exam	Graduation Requirements	Other
STANDARD			<p>geography, and government and economics, and one-half unit of New Mexico History;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one unit physical education; • one unit in a career cluster course, or workplace readiness or a language other than English, and • seven and one-half elective units that meet the department's content and performance standards. • The IEP team determines the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study. 	to the students or parents.
CAREER	<p>Meeting the NMPED's <u>Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards</u> as defined in the IEP with or without reasonable modifications of delivery and assessment methods.</p> <p>Graduation planning must be addressed in the student's IEP.</p>	<p>Must take the current high school exit exam achieving a level of competency or targeted proficiency as determined by the IEP team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IEP team determines the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study. • Earn the minimum number of credits required by the district for graduation. • Students must participate in Statewide College and Career Readiness Assessment System and District Short Cycle Assessment. • Achieve competency in all areas of the <u>Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards</u>. • Course work shall include a minimum of four units of career development opportunities and learning experiences that may include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career readiness and vocational course work; 2. Community based instruction; 3. Student Service Learning; 4. Job Shadowing or mentoring, and 5. Entrepreneurship. 	<p>Students must achieve competency in all areas of the <u>Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards</u> as determined by the IEP team.</p> <p>Course work must address the NM content standards with benchmarks and performance standards in other subject areas as appropriate.</p> <p>The IEP team shall determine whether additional evaluations, reports or documents are necessary to support a smooth and effective transition to post-secondary services for a student who will graduate on one of the three options. The school will arrange for such information to be provided at no cost to the students or parents.</p>

Graduation Option	Basis	HS Exit Exam	Graduation Requirements	Other
ABILITY	<p>Meeting or surpassing IEP goals and objectives, with or without reasonable modifications of delivery and assessment methods, referencing skill attainment at a student's ability level, which may lead to meaningful employment.</p> <p>Graduation planning must be addressed in the student's IEP.</p>	<p>Must take the current exit exam achieving a level of competency as determined by the IEP team, or the New Mexico Alternate Assessment if the student meets the participation criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must participate in Statewide College and Career Readiness Assessment System and District Short Cycle Assessment. • The IEP team determines the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study. • Earn the minimum number of credits required by the district for graduation or be provided equivalent educational opportunities required by the district or charter. • Meet all other graduation requirements established by the IEP team. • IEP goals and functional curriculum must be based on the State's content standards with benchmarks and performance standards or the Expanded Grade Band Expectations. 	<p>Under this graduation plan, the majority of the goals and objectives relate to life and community skills.</p> <p>The ability option was developed for students with significant cognitive disabilities or severe mental health issues who are unable to benefit from a standard or career option.</p> <p>The IEP team will also determine whether additional evaluations, reports, or documents are necessary to support a smooth and effective transition to post-secondary services for a student graduating on the Ability Program of Study. The school will arrange for such information to be provided at no cost to the students or parents.</p>

☞ **The Certificate is not a Program of Study and does not end the student’s rights to a Free Appropriate Public Education. It is a document awarded to a student who is continuing to work on IEP goals**

<p>CONDITIONAL CERTIFICATE OF TRANSITION</p>	<p>A district may issue a certificate when a student has maintained realistic efforts to meet IEP goals, attended 4 years of high school, and is able to participate equally in graduation activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IEP team is responsible for providing documentation and justification that supports the issuance of a conditional certificate of transition. • The IEP team must provide written documentation on the Prior Written Notice of Proposed Action stating that the student will receive a conditional certificate of transition. • The IEP team must develop a continuing or transitioning IEP that outlines measures, resources, and specific responsibilities for both the student and the district or charter to ensure the student receives a diploma. 	<p>A conditional certificate of transition does not end the student’s right to FAPE.</p> <p>The student is not reported as exited in STARS.</p> <p>The student should be counted in the district’s membership count.</p> <p>If a student does not return to complete the “follow-up plan of action,” the district must count the student as a dropout unless they are enrolled in another school district, private school, or State or district-approved education program (including a GED program), or temporarily absent due to suspension or school-approved illness.</p>
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Appendix C



The following Federal and New Mexico State laws and regulations are important sources for information regarding services available to students with special needs. It is strongly advised that the reader familiarize her or himself with the rights and privileges afforded them by the state of New Mexico and our national government.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Regulations

34 CFR § 300.43 Transition Services

The 2004 Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) outlines the responsibility of districts to provide transition services to students with disabilities.

34 CFR § 300.300 Parental Consent

Out lines some of the basic rights protecting the parent and child through the special education process

34 CFR § 300.306 Determination of eligibility

Helps define who can receive special services

34 CFR § 300.320 Individualized Education Programs (IEP)

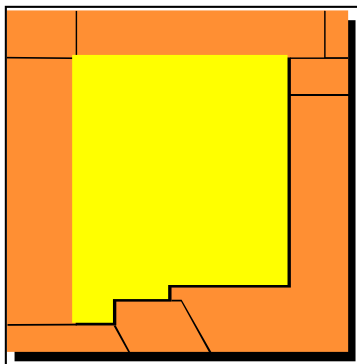
Includes a definition of the IEP and how the program must be structured.

34 CFR § 300.324 Development, review, and revision of IEP

Details much of the implementation of the IEP from inception to transition

34 CFR § 300.520 Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority

Discusses the legal issues related to a child reaching majority age.



New Mexico Statutes Annotated (NMSA)

Section 22-13-1.1 Graduation Requirements

Section 22-13-1.2 End of Year Course Test Alignment

Section 22-2C-4.1 Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System

(The administration of the College Readiness Assessment and the Workplace Readiness Assessment have been postponed until the 2011-2012 school year.)

New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC)

6.19.7: Public School Accountability: High School Readiness Assessment System for Career and College

6.29.1(J): Standards for Excellence: Graduation Requirements

(1) New Mexico Eleventh Grade SBA

(13) Graduation Requirements Students with IEPs

6.29.1(L): Statewide Assessment System

6.31.2.11: Special Education: Children with Disabilities

(E)- Participation in Statewide and District-wide Assessments

(G)- Graduation Planning and Post-Secondary Transitions

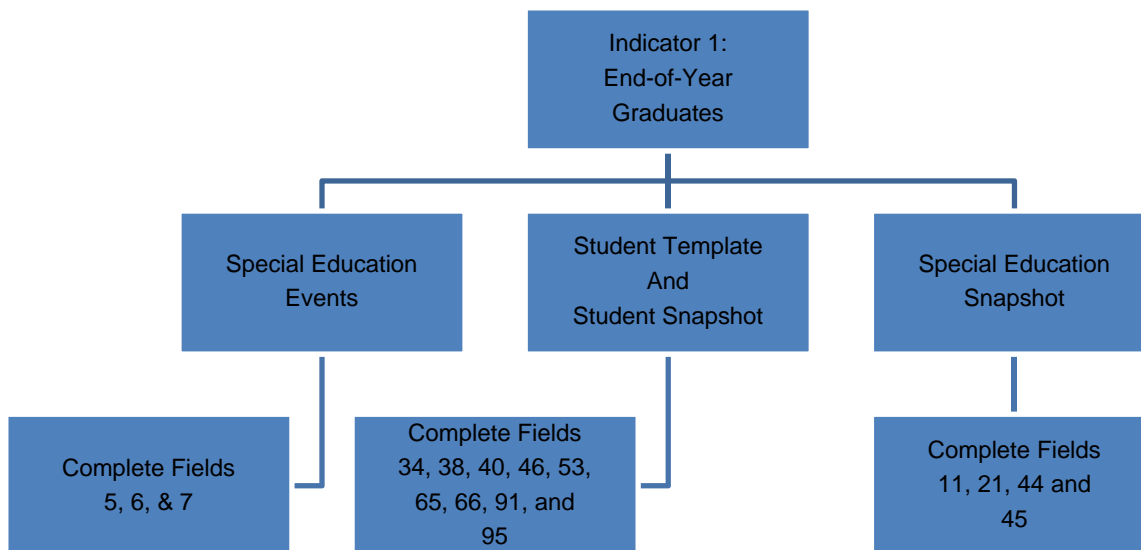
6.31.2.11: Educational Services for Students with Disabilities

(E)- Participation in statewide and district-wide assessments.

(G)- Graduation planning and post-secondary transitions.

State Performance Plan
Indicator One: Exiting Guidance

For Students Receiving Special Education Services Graduating at End-of-Year:



Special Education Events Template

Field 5 = Event type code = 1 = exiting special education (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Field 6 = Event date code = the date on which the event took place

Field 7 = Event reason code = reason for exiting special education (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Complete the demographic and other information included in the **Student and Student Snapshot Templates**. In order to ensure graduation data is accurate at the end-of-year, make sure the following fields are completed. The field numbers are the same on both the Student and Student Snapshot templates.

Field 34 = Challenge Type (must match Primary Disability Code entered under field 11 on the Special Education Snapshot)

Field 38 = Special Education must = "Y"

Field 40 = Level of Integration (level of special education services the student receives)

Field 46 = Repeating Last Year must = "N"

Field 53 = Expected Graduation Timeframe = leave blank if student is graduating

Field 65 = Graduation Status Code = 2

Field 66 = Post Graduate Activity (must = 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5)

Field 91 = Diploma Type Code (valid values: 1-Diploma; 2- Certificate. A special education student with a certificate must be on a "C" or "T" IEP)

Field 95 = LEP/ELL Eligibility (must = Y or N)

The **Special Education Snapshot Template** must be completed for students graduating at the end-of-year. To ensure accurate reporting of graduates, LEAs must populate the following fields on the Special Education Snapshot.

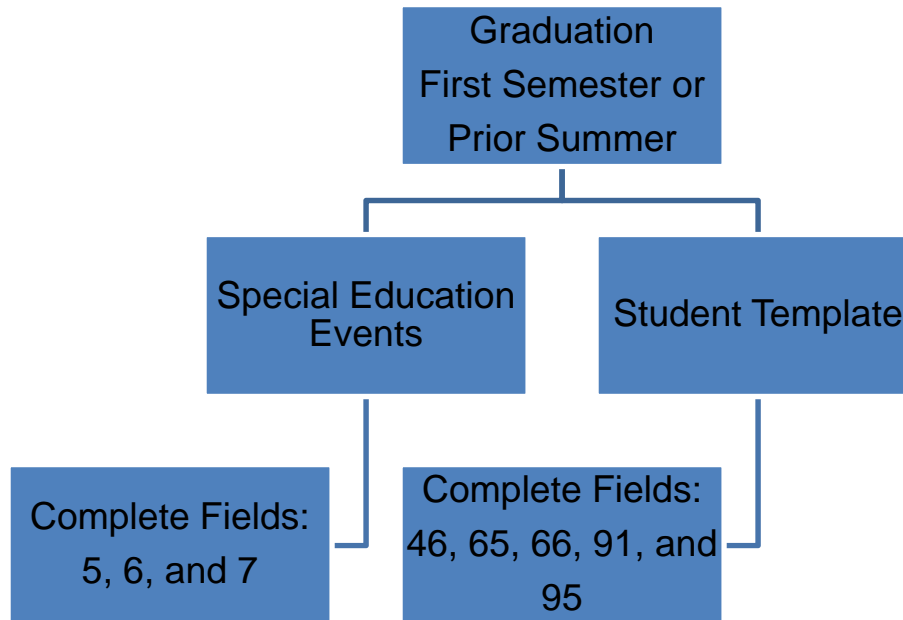
Field 11 = Primary Disability Code

Field 21 = Expected Diploma Type (Graduation Option: 3 = Career Readiness, 4 = Ability, 5 = Standard)

Field 44 = Primary Setting Code (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Field 45 = Transition IEP Status = leave blank

For Students Receiving Special Education Services who are First Semester or Prior Summer Graduates:



Special Education Events Template:

Field 5 = Event type code = 1 = exiting special education (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Field 6 = Event date code = the date on which the event took place

Field 7 = Event reason code = reason for exiting special education (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Complete the demographic and other information included in the **Student Template**. In order to ensure graduation data is accurate at the end-of-year, you must complete the following fields:

Field 34 = Challenge Type/Primary Disability Code

Field 38 = Special Education must = "Y"

Field 40 = Level of Integration (amount of special education services)

Field 46 = Repeating Last Year must = "N"

Field 53 = Expected Graduation Timeframe = leave blank if student is graduating

Field 65 = Graduation Status Code = 1 (first semester graduate) or 3 (prior summer graduate)

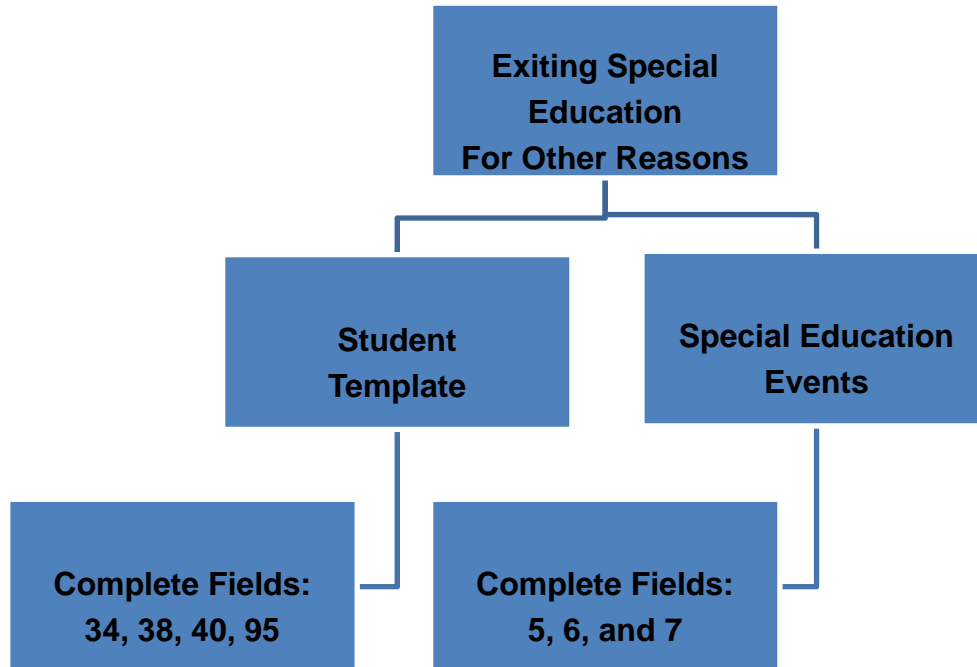
Field 66 = Post Graduate Activity (must = 1,2,3,4 or 5)

Field 91 = Diploma Type Code (valid values: 1- Diploma; 2- Certificate. A special education student with a certificate must be on a "C" or "T" IEP)

Field 95 = LEP/ELL Eligibility (must = Y or N)

The **Student Snapshot** and **Special Education Snapshot** templates **are not required** for students who graduated during the first semester, a prior summer graduate, or exited for other reasons.

For Students Exiting Special Education for Other Reasons:



Special Education Events Template

Field 5 = Event type code = 1 = exiting special education (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Field 6 = Event date code = the date on which the event took place

Field 7 = Event reason code = reason for exiting special education (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Complete the demographic and other information included in the **Student Template**. In order to ensure graduation data is accurate at the end-of-year, make sure the following fields are completed.

Field 34 = Challenge Type/Primary Disability Code

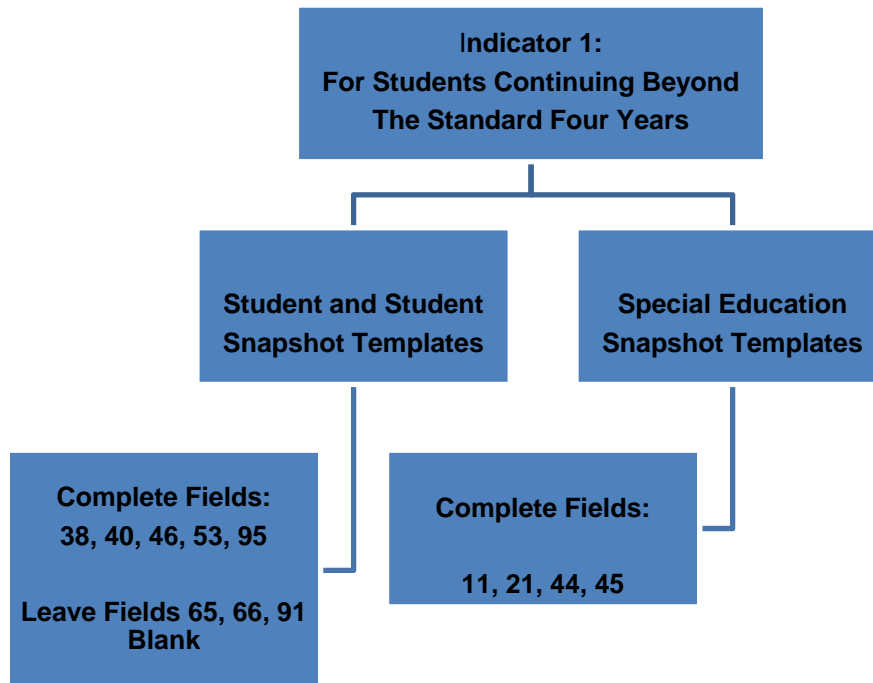
Field 38 = Special Education must = "Y"

Field 40 = Level of Integration (level of special education services the student is receiving)

Field 95 = LEP/ELL Eligibility (must = Y or N)

The **Student Snapshot** and **Special Education Snapshot** templates are **not required** for students who exited for other reasons.

For Students Receiving Special Education Services beyond the Standard Four Years of High School:



Complete the demographic and other information included in the **Student and Student Snapshot Templates**. In order to ensure graduation data is accurate at the end-of-year, the following fields are completed.

Field 34 = Challenge Type (must match Primary Disability Code entered under field 11 on the Special Education Snapshot)

Field 38 = Special Education must = “Y”

Field 40 = Level of Integration (amount of special education services)

Field 46 = Repeating Last Year must = “N”

Field 53 = Expected Graduation Timeframe = use MMY format

Field 65 = Graduation Status Code = **leave blank**

Field 66 = Post Graduate Activity = **leave blank**

Field 91 = Diploma Type Code = **leave blank**

Field 95 = LEP/ELL Eligibility

The **Special Education Snapshot Template** must be completed for students continuing beyond the standard four years of high school. To ensure accurate reporting of graduates, LEAs must populate the following fields on the Special Education Snapshot.

Field 11 = Primary Disability Code

Field 21 = Expected Diploma Type (Graduation Option: 3 = Career Readiness, 4 = Ability, 5 = Standard)

Field 44 = Primary Setting Code (See STARS Volume Two Reference Materials Manual)

Field 45 = Transition IEP Status

C = Continuing, meaning in-school or 18-22 program receiving special education, or

T = Transition, meaning NOT in school setting but receiving special education services

Appendix E

**Career Development and Employability
Standards Checklist**

Career Development and Employability Standards

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
STRAND 1: ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will achieve the academic knowledge and skills required to pursue the full range of career and postsecondary education opportunities common to all career clusters.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Complete required training, education and certification to prepare for employment in a particular career field.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Identify training, education and certification requirements for one’s occupational choice; (ii) Participate in career-related training or degree programs; (iii) Prepare for certification tests to qualify for licensure or certification in a chosen.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Demonstrate knowledge and skills in language arts required to pursue the full range of postsecondary education and career opportunities.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Model behaviors that demonstrate active listening; (ii) Adapt language for audience, purpose and situation (i.e., choice of diction, structure, style); (iii) Organize oral and written information; (iv) Compose well-organized copy for a variety of written documents such as: agendas, speeches and audio-visual presentations, bibliographies, drafts, forms/documents, notes, oral presentations, reports and explanations of technical terminology; (v) Edit copy to create well-organized written documents such as: agendas, speeches and audio-visual presentations, bibliographies, drafts, forms/documents, notes, oral presentations, reports and explanations of technical terminology; (vi) Demonstrate key elements of oral and written information such as: cause/effect, comparisons/contrasts, conclusions, context, purpose, charts/tables/graphs, evaluation/critiques, mood, persuasive text, sequence, summaries and technical subject matter; (vii) Evaluate oral and written information for: accuracy, adequacy/sufficiency, appropriateness, clarity, conclusions/solutions, fact/opinion, propaganda, relevance, validity and relationship of ideas; (viii) Identify assumptions, purposes, outcomes/solutions and propaganda techniques in oral and written information; (ix) Predict potential outcomes or solutions based on oral and written information regarding trends; (x) Present formal and informal speeches including: discussion, information requests, interpretation and persuasive arguments.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Demonstrate knowledge and skills of mathematics required to pursue the full range of postsecondary education and career opportunities.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Identify whole numbers, decimals and fractions;		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	(ii) Demonstrate knowledge of arithmetic operations such as: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division; (iii) Demonstrate use of relational expressions such as: equal to, not equal, greater than, less than, etc.; (iv) Apply data and measurements to solve problems; (v) Analyze mathematical problem statements for missing or irrelevant data; (vi) Construct charts/tables/graphs from functions and data; (vii) Analyze data when interpreting operational documents.		
	BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Demonstrate knowledge and skills of science required to pursue the full range of postsecondary and career education opportunities.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 4: (i) Evaluate scientific constructs including: conclusions, conflicting data, controls, data, inferences, limitations, questions, sources of error and variables; (ii) Apply scientific methods in qualitative and quantitative analysis, data gathering, direct and indirect observation, predictions and problem identification.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will develop specific language arts, math and science skills required to pursue pathway opportunities within a career cluster.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Demonstrate knowledge and skills of language arts specific to a career pathway opportunity.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Identify types of oral and written opportunities within a selected career cluster; (ii) Comprehend key elements of oral and written information relevant to a selected career pathway; (iii) Create oral and written representations of communications appropriate to a selected pathway.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Demonstrate knowledge and skills of mathematics specific to a career pathway opportunity.		
	Performance Standards Benchmarks 2: (i) Demonstrate knowledge of arithmetic operations needed to succeed within a selected career pathway; (ii) Analyze and summarize data appropriate to a selected pathway; (iii) Construct charts/tables/graphs from functions and data needed to advance a selected career pathway.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Demonstrate knowledge and skills of science specific to a career.		
	Performance Standards Benchmarks 3: (i) Apply appropriate scientific methods in qualitative and quantitative analysis, data gathering, direct and indirect observation, predictions and problem identification; (ii) Understand how scientific discoveries and technological advancements are continually evaluated, validated, revised or rejected in relation to a selected career pathway.		
STRAND 2: COMMUNICATIONS	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will use oral and written communication skills in creating, expressing and interpreting information and ideas, including technical terminology and information.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Select and employ appropriate reading and communication strategies to learn and use technical concepts and vocabulary.		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Determine the most appropriate reading strategy for identifying the overarching purpose of a text (e.g., skimming, reading for detail, reading for meaning or critical analysis); (ii) Demonstrate use of content, technical concepts and vocabulary when analyzing information and following directions; (iii) Select the reading strategy or strategies needed to fully comprehend the content within a written document (e.g., skimming, reading for detail, reading for meaning or critical analysis); (iv) Interpret information, data and observations to apply information learned from reading to actual practice; (v) Transcribe information, data and observations to apply information learned from reading to actual practice; (vi) Communicate information, data and observations to apply information learned from reading to actual practice; (vii) Evaluate the information, explanations or ideas of others by identifying and applying clear, reasonable criteria for evaluation. 		
	<p>BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Demonstrate use of the concepts, strategies and systems for obtaining and conveying ideas and information to enhance communication in the workplace.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Employ verbal skills when obtaining and conveying information; (ii) Record information needed to present a report on a given topic or problem; (iii) Write internal and external business correspondence that conveys or obtains information effectively; (iv) Communicate with others to clarify workplace objectives; (v) Communicate effectively with others to foster positive relationships. 		
	<p>BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Locate, organize and reference written information from various sources to communicate with co-workers and clients/participants.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standard 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Locate written information used to communicate with co-workers and customers; (ii) Organize information to use in written and oral communications; (iii) Reference the sources of information. 		
	<p>BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Evaluate and use information resources to accomplish specific occupational tasks.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmarks 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Use informational texts, Internet web sites and technical materials to review and apply information sources for occupational tasks; (ii) Evaluate the reliability of information from informational texts, Internet Web sites and technical materials and resources. 		
	<p>BENCHMARK 5: 7-12: Use correct grammar, punctuation and terminology to write and edit documents.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmarks 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Compose multi-paragraph documents clearly, succinctly and accurately; (ii) Use descriptions of audience and purpose when preparing and editing written documents; 		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	(iii) Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization when preparing written documents.		
	BENCHMARK 6: 7-12: Develop and deliver formal and informal presentations using appropriate media to engage and inform audiences.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmarks 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Prepare oral presentations to provide information for specific purposes and audiences; (i) Identify support materials that will enhance an oral presentation; (ii) Prepare support materials that will enhance an oral presentation; (iii) Deliver an oral presentation that sustains listeners' attention and interest; (iv) Align presentation strategies to the intended audience; (v) Implement multi-media strategies for presentations. 		
	BENCHMARK 7: 7-12: Interpret verbal and nonverbal cues/behaviors to enhance communication with co-workers and clients/participants.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmarks 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Interpret verbal behaviors when communicating with clients and co-workers; (ii) Interpret nonverbal behaviors when communicating with clients and co-workers; (iii) Interpret a given verbal message/information; (iv) Respond with restatement and clarification techniques to clarify information. 		
	BENCHMARK 8: 7-12: Develop and interpret tables, charts and figures to support written and oral communications.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Create tables, charts and figures to support written and oral communications; (ii) Interpret tables, charts and figures used to support written and oral communication. 		
	BENCHMARK 9: 7-12: Listen to and speak with diverse individuals to enhance communication skills.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Apply factors and strategies for communicating with a diverse work force; (ii) Demonstrate ability to communicate and resolve conflicts within a diverse work force. 		
	BENCHMARK 10: 7-12: Exhibit public relations skills to increase internal and external customer/client satisfaction.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Communicate effectively when developing positive customer/client relationships; (ii) Identify information related to customer needs. 		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will locate, organize and reference written information from various sources to compose and prepare oral and written communications to convey technical concepts and company information.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Use writing and organizational skills to construct reports, graphs and tables.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Compile and arrange information to communicate main facts; (ii) Document sources and references of data; 		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	(iii) Organize and arrange information for effective coherence; (iv) Use appropriate software to develop text, charts, graphs or figures to convey technical concepts.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Identify the main ideas of an informational text and determine the essential elements of the text.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Examine informational sources for ideas and concepts; (ii) Accurately interpret information from and detect inconsistencies in informational sources; (iii) Read informational and technical texts critically and independently; (iv) Analyze the validity of source information.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Identify and prepare support materials for an oral presentation.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Identify media and visual aids appropriate to understanding of topic; (ii) Operate efficiently the equipment associated with presentations; (iii) Prepare visual aids and support materials for easy viewing, without error.		
STRAND 3: PROBLEM SOLVING AND CRITICAL THINKING	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will solve problems using critical thinking skills (analyze, synthesize, and evaluate) independently and in teams, using creativity and innovation.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Employ critical thinking skills independently and in teams to solve problems and make decisions (e.g., analyze, synthesize and evaluate).		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Identify common tasks that require employees/team members to use problem-solving skills; (ii) Analyze elements of a problem to develop creative solutions; (iii) Describe the value of using problem-solving and critical thinking skills to improve a situation or process; (iv) Create ideas, proposals and solutions to problems; (v) Evaluate ideas, proposals and solutions to problems; (vi) Use structured problem-solving methods when developing proposals and solutions; (vii) Generate new and creative ideas to solve problems by brainstorming possible solutions; (viii) Critically analyze information to determine value to the problem-solving task; (ix) Guide individuals through the process of recognizing concerns and making informed decisions; (x) Identify alternatives using a variety of problem-solving and critical thinking skills; (xi) Evaluate alternatives using a variety of problem-solving and critical thinking skills.		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Employ critical thinking and interpersonal skills to resolve conflicts with staff or customers.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Analyze situations and behaviors that affect conflict management; (ii) Determine best options/outcomes for conflict resolution using critical thinking skills; (iii) Identify with others’ feelings, needs and concern; (iv) Implement stress management techniques; (v) Resolve conflicts with/for customers using conflict resolution skills; (vi) Implement conflict resolution skills to address staff issues/problems.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Identify, write and monitor workplace performance goals to guide progress in assigned areas of responsibility and accountability.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Write realistic performance goals, objectives and action plans; (ii) Monitor performance goals and adjust as necessary; (iii) Recognize goal achievement using appropriate rewards in the workplace; (iv) Communicate goal achievement with managers and co-workers.		
	BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Conduct technical research to gather information necessary for decision-making.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 4: (i) Align the information gathered to the needs of the audience; (ii) Gather technical information and data using a variety of resources; (iii) Analyze information and data for value to the research objectives; (iv) Evaluate information and data to determine value to research objectives.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate and verify the appropriateness of a solution to a problem.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Understand problem-solving techniques.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Identify potential problems with a given solution to a problem; (ii) Demonstrate knowledge of decision-making skills and techniques.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Study potential, real and perceived emergency situations to recognize and implement appropriate safety and security measures.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Observe people and surroundings to identify dangerous situations; (ii) Develop and role-play emergency situations, demonstrating caution and good judgment.		
STRAND 4: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will use information technology tools specific to the career cluster to access, manage, integrate and create information.		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Use personal information management (PIM) applications to increase workplace efficiency.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Manage personal schedule and contact information; (ii) Create memos and notes.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Employ technological tools to expedite workflow.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Use information technology tools to manage and perform work responsibilities; (ii) Use email to share files and documents; (iii) Identify the functions and purpose of email systems; (iv) Use email to communicate within and across organizations.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Operate Internet applications to perform workplace tasks.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Access and navigate Internet (e.g., use a web browser); (ii) Search for information and resources; (iii) Evaluate Internet resources for reliability and validity.		
	BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Operate writing and publishing applications to prepare business communications.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 4: (i) Prepare simple documents and other business communications; (ii) Prepare reports and other business communications by integrating graphics and other non-text elements; (iii) Prepare complex multi-media publications.		
	BENCHMARK 5: 7-12: Operate presentation applications to prepare and deliver presentations.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 5: (i) Prepare presentations for training, sales and information sharing; (ii) Deliver presentations with supporting materials.		
	BENCHMARK 6: 7-12: Employ spreadsheet applications to organize and manipulate data.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 6: (i) Create a spreadsheet; (ii) Perform calculations and analyses on data using a spreadsheet.		
	BENCHMARK 7: 7-12: Employ database applications to manage data.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 7: (i) Manipulate data elements; (ii) Manage interrelated data elements; (iii) Analyze interrelated data elements; (iv) Generate reports showing interrelated data elements.		
	BENCHMARK 8: 7-12: Employ computer operations applications to manage work tasks.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 8: (i) Manage computer operations;		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	(ii) Manage file storage; (iii) Compress or alter files.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Standard: Students will recognize and use information technology tools to access, manage, integrate, create and share information within a designated career pathway.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Use computer-based equipment (containing embedded computers or processors) to control devices.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Operate computer-driven equipment and machines; (ii) Use installation and operation manuals; (iii) Troubleshoot computer-driven equipment and machines; (iv) Access support as needed to maintain operation of computer-driven equipment and machines.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Employ collaborative/groupware applications to facilitate group work.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Facilitate group work through management of shared schedule and contact information; (ii) Facilitate group work through management of shared files and online information; (iii) Facilitate group work through instant messaging or virtual meetings.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Use installation and operating manuals.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Install a relevant program using appropriate documentation; (ii) Access available documentation to solve technology tool problems.		
STRAND SYSTEMS	5: CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will demonstrate understanding of roles within teams, work units, departments, organizations, inter-organizational systems and the larger environment.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Describe the nature and types of business organizations to build an understanding of the scope of organizations.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) List the types and functions of businesses; (ii) Describe the types and functions of businesses; (iii) Explain the functions and interactions of common departments within a business.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Implement quality control systems and practices to ensure quality products and services.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Describe quality control standards and practices common to the workplace; (ii) Describe the benefits of using a cross-functional team in policy and procedure development.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will identify how key organizational systems and government affect organizational performance and the quality of products and services.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Identify occupation-specific governmental regulations and national, state and local building codes to establish workplace/jobsite regulations and codes.		

Strand	Content Standard /Benchmark/Performance Standard	Achievement Date	Maintenance
	Performance Standards Benchmarks 1: (i) Read and discuss information on OSHA, EPA and other safety regulations; (ii) Apply information given in workplace/building regulations and codes correctly; (iii) Obtain, understand and follow Material Safety Data Sheets information.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Identify workplace/jobsite environmental hazards in order to promote workplace/jobsite safety.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Use hazardous materials safely; (ii) Follow safe practices relating to environmental hazards.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Understand global context of industries and careers.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Identify mission, organizational goals and objectives of a business; (ii) Understand the components of a business plan; (iii) Explain the role of risk-management in reducing risks and improving performance in business; (iv) Explain the approaches for managing organizational risks.		
STRAND 6: SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will demonstrate understanding of the importance of health, safety and environmental management systems in organizations and their importance to organizational performance and regulatory compliance.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Implement personal and jobsite safety rules and regulations to maintain safe and healthful working conditions and environments.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Assess workplace conditions with regard to safety and health; (ii) Align safety issues with appropriate safety standards to ensure a safe workplace/jobsite; (iii) Identify safety hazards common to workplaces; (iv) Identify safety precautions to maintain a safe worksite; (v) Select appropriate personal protective equipment as needed for a safe workplace/jobsite; (vi) Inspect personal protective equipment commonly used for a selected career pathway; (vii) Use personal protective equipment according to manufacturer’s rules and regulations; (viii) Employ a safety hierarchy and communication system within the workplace/jobsite; (ix) Implement safety precautions to maintain a safe worksite.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Complete work tasks in accordance with employee rights and responsibilities and employer’s obligations to maintain workplace safety and health.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Identify rules and laws designed to promote safety and health in the workplace; (ii) State the rationale of rules and laws designed to promote safety and health.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Employ emergency procedures as necessary to provide aid in workplace accidents.		

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	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Use knowledge of First Aid procedures as necessary; (ii) Use knowledge of CPR procedures as necessary; (iii) Use safety equipment as necessary.		
	BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Employ knowledge of response techniques to create a disaster or emergency response plan.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 4: (i) Complete an assessment of an emergency or disaster situation; (ii) Create an emergency or disaster plan.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will follow organizational policies and procedures and contribute to continuous improvement in performance and compliance.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Understand health and safety standards and concepts in the workplace.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Demonstrate knowledge of the relationship between health, safety and productivity; (ii) Identify health and safety standards established by government agencies; (iii) Ensure maintenance of a clean work area; (iv) Demonstrate knowledge of ergonomics and repetitive strain injury.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Implement procedures to protect the health and safety of all individuals.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Use safety techniques in managing an emergency and ensuring a safe environment; (ii) Document and report emergency/crisis situations and outcomes to appropriate authorities.		
STRAND 7: LEADERSHIP AND TEAMWORK	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will use leadership and teamwork skills in collaborating with others to accomplish organizational goals and objectives.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Employ leadership skills to accomplish organizational goals and objectives.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Analyze the various roles of leaders within organizations (e.g. contribute ideas; share in building an organization; act as role models to employees by adhering to company policies, procedures and standards; promote the organization's vision; and mentor others); (ii) Exhibit traits such as empowerment, risk, communication, focusing on results, decision making, problem-solving and investment in individuals when leading a group in solving a problem; (iii) Exhibit traits such as compassion, service, listening, coaching, developing others, team development and understanding and appreciating others when acting as a manager of others in the workplace; (iv) Exhibit traits such as enthusiasm, creativity, conviction, mission, courage, concept, focus, principle-centered living and flexibility when interacting with others in general; (v) Consider issues related to self, team, community, diversity, environment and global awareness when leading others; (vi) Exhibit traits such as innovation, intuition, adaptation, life-long learning and coachability to develop leadership potential over time; (vii) Analyze leadership in relation to trust, positive attitude, integrity and willingness to accept key		

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	responsibilities in a work situation; (viii) Describe observations of outstanding leaders using effective management styles; (ix) Participate in civic and community leadership and teamwork opportunities to enhance skills.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Employ organizational and staff development skills to foster positive working relationships and accomplish organizational goals.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Implement organizational skills when facilitating others' work efforts; (ii) Explain how to manage a staff that satisfies work demands while adhering to budget constraints; (iii) Describe how staff growth and development increase productivity and employee satisfaction; (iv) Organize team involvement within a group environment; (v) Work with others to develop and gain commitment to team goals; (vi) Distribute responsibility and work load fairly; (vii) Model leadership and teamwork qualities to aid in employee morale; (viii) Identify best practices for successful team functioning; (ix) Explain best practices for successful team functioning.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Employ teamwork skills to achieve collective goals and use team members' talents effectively.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Work with others to achieve objectives in a timely manner; (ii) Promote the full involvement and use of team member's individual talents and skills; (iii) Employ conflict-management skills to facilitate solutions; (iv) Demonstrate teamwork skills though working cooperatively with co-workers, supervisory staff and others, both in and out of the organization, to achieve particular tasks; (v) Demonstrate teamwork processes that provide team building, consensus, continuous improvement, respect for the opinions of others, cooperation, adaptability and conflict resolution; (vi) Develop plans to improve team performance; (vii) Demonstrate commitment to and a positive attitude toward team goals; (viii) Take responsibility for shared group and individual work tasks; (ix) Assist team members in completing their work; (x) Adapt effectively to changes in projects and work activities; (xi) Negotiate effectively to arrive at decisions.		
	BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Establish and maintain effective working relationships with all levels of personnel and other departments in order to accomplish objectives and tasks.		

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	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 4: (i) Build effective working relationships using interpersonal skills; (ii) Use positive interpersonal skills to work cooperatively with co-workers representing different cultures, genders and backgrounds; (iii) Manage personal skills to accomplish assignments; (iv) Treat people with respect; (v) Provide constructive praise and criticism; (vi) Demonstrate sensitivity to and value for diversity; (vii) Manage stress and control emotions.</p>		
	<p>BENCHMARK 5: 7-12: Conduct and participate in meetings to accomplish work task.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 5: (i) Develop meeting goals, objectives and agenda; (ii) Assign responsibilities for preparing materials and leading discussions; (iii) Prepare materials for leading discussion; (iv) Assemble and distribute meeting materials; (v) Conduct meeting to achieve objectives within scheduled time; (vi) Demonstrate effective communication skills in meetings; (vii) Produce meeting minutes, including decisions and next steps; (viii) Use parliamentary procedure as needed to conduct meetings.</p>		
	<p>BENCHMARK 6: 7-12: Employ mentoring skills to inspire and teach others.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 6: (i) Use motivational techniques to enhance performance in others; (ii) Provide guidance to enhance performance in others.</p>		
	<p>CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will employ conflict identification and resolution to achieve organizational goals and objectives.</p>		
	<p>BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Use conflict resolution skills to maintain a smooth workflow.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Work collaboratively and cooperatively; (ii) Give and receive criticism in a diplomatic and constructive manner; (iii) Use diplomatic and constructive statements and responses.</p>		
	<p>BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Use human relations skills to work cooperatively with co-workers and foster good relations between different cultures, genders and backgrounds.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Work effectively with a variety of co-workers; (ii) Identify team member strengths and weaknesses; (iii) Practice motivational techniques.</p>		

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STRAND 8: ETHICS AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will know and understand the importance of professional ethics and legal responsibilities.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Apply ethical reasoning to a variety of workplace situations in order to make ethical decisions.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Evaluate alternative responses to workplace situations based on personal or professional ethical responsibilities; (ii) Identify personal and long-term workplace consequences of unethical or illegal behaviors; (iii) Explain personal and long-term workplace consequences of unethical or illegal behaviors; (iv) Determine the most appropriate response to workplace situations based on legal and ethical considerations; (v) Explain the most appropriate response to workplace situations based on legal and ethical considerations.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Interpret and explain written organizational policies and procedures to help employees perform their jobs according to employer rules and expectations.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Locate information on organizational policies in handbooks and manuals; (ii) Discuss how specific organizational policies and procedures influence a specific work situation.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will apply business laws and regulations to business situations.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Apply laws and regulations to personnel situations.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Explain major points and purpose of laws and regulations concerning sexual harassment, gender equity and disabilities; (ii) Identify resources that provide specific information regarding personnel laws and regulations; (iii) Apply major laws affected in given scenarios/situations.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Apply knowledge of copyright laws to business situations.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Analyze and interpret copyright laws and regulations; (ii) Demonstrate ability to apply copyright laws to specific situations; (iii) Identify procedures to avoid violation of copyright laws.		
STRAND 9: EMPLOYABILITY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT	CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will know and understand the importance of employability skills.		

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	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Identify and demonstrate the use of positive work behaviors and personal qualities needed to be employable.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Demonstrate self-discipline, self-worth, positive attitude and integrity in a work situation; (ii) Demonstrate flexibility and willingness to learn new knowledge and skills; (iii) Exhibit commitment to the organization; (iv) Identify how work varies with regard to site, from indoor confined spaces to outdoor areas, including aerial space and a variety of climatic and physical conditions; (v) Apply communication strategies when adapting to a culturally diverse environment; (vi) Manage resources in relation to the position (e.g., budget, supplies, computer, etc.); (vii) Identify positive work qualities typically desired in each of the career clusters pathways; (viii) Manage work roles and responsibilities to balance them with other life roles and responsibilities.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Develop a personal career plan to meet career goals and objectives.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Develop career goals and objectives as part of a plan for future career direction; (ii) Develop strategies to reach career objectives.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Demonstrate skills related to seeking and applying for employment to find and obtain a desired job.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 3: (i) Use multiple resources to locate job opportunities; (ii) Prepare a résumé; (iii) Prepare a letter of application; (iv) Complete an employment application; (v) Interview for employment; (vi) List the standards and qualifications that must be met in order to enter a given industry; (vii) Employ critical thinking and decision-making skills to exhibit qualifications to a potential employer.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will explore, plan and effectively manage careers.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Maintain a career portfolio to document knowledge, skills and experience in a career field.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Select educational and work history highlights to include in a career portfolio; (ii) Produce a record of work experiences, licenses, certifications and products; (iii) Organize electronic or physical portfolio for use in demonstrating knowledge, skills and experiences.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Demonstrate skills in evaluating and comparing employment opportunities in order to accept employment positions that match career goals.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Compare employment opportunities to individual needs and career plan objectives; (ii) Evaluate employment opportunities based upon individual needs and career plan objectives;		

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	(iii) Demonstrate appropriate methods for accepting or rejecting employment offers.		
	BENCHMARK 3: 7-12: Identify and exhibit traits for retaining employment to maintain employment once secured.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Model behaviors that demonstrate reliability and dependability; (ii) Maintain appropriate dress and behavior for the job to contribute to a safe and effective workplace/jobsite; (iii) Complete required employment forms and documentation such as I-9 form, work visa, W-4 and licensures to meet employment requirements; (iv) Summarize key activities necessary to retain a job in the industry; (v) Identify positive work behaviors and personal qualities necessary to retain employment. 		
	BENCHMARK 4: 7-12: Identify and explore career opportunities in one or more career pathways to build an understanding of the opportunities available in the cluster.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmarks 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Locate and identify career opportunities that appeal to personal career goals; (ii) Match personal interest and aptitudes to selected careers. 		
	BENCHMARK 5: 7-12: Recognize and act upon requirements for career advancement to plan for continuing education and training.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Identify opportunities for career advancement; (ii) Pursue education and training opportunities to acquire skills necessary for career advancement; (iii) Examine the organization and structure of various segments of the industry to prepare for career advancement; (iv) Research local and regional labor (work force) market and job growth information to project potential for advancement; (v) Manage employment relations to make career advancements. 		
	BENCHMARK 6: 7-12: Continue professional development to keep current on relevant trends and information within the industry.		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmarks 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Use self assessment, organizational priorities, journals, Internet sites, professional associations, peers and other resources to develop goals that address training, education and self-improvement issues; (ii) Read trade magazines and journals, manufacturers' catalogues, industry publications and Internet sites to keep current on industry trends; (iii) Participate in relevant conferences, workshops, mentoring activities and in-service training to stay current with recent changes in the field. 		
	BENCHMARK 7: 7-12: Examine licensing, certification and credentialing requirements at the national, state and local levels to maintain compliance with industry requirements.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 7:		

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	(i) Examine continuing education requirements related to licensing, certification and credentialing requirements at the local, state and national levels for one’s chosen occupation; (ii) Examine the procedures and paperwork involved in maintaining and updating licensure, certification and credentials for one’s chosen occupation; (iii) Align ongoing licensing, certification and credentialing requirements to career plans and goals.		
	BENCHMARK 8: 7-12: Examine employment opportunities in entrepreneurship to consider entrepreneurship as an option for career planning.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 8: (i) Describe the opportunities for entrepreneurship in a given industry; (ii) Identify and explore career opportunities in one or more career pathways.		
	BENCHMARK 9: 7-12: Understand the essential principles of an entrepreneurial organization.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 9: (i) Practice personal integrity and honesty; (ii) Interact appropriately and respectfully with diverse ethnic, age, cultural, religious and economic groups in various entrepreneurial and social situations; (iii) Exhibit respectful and empathetic behavior when interacting with customers in one-on-one and group situations.		
STRAND TECHNICAL SKILLS	10: CONTENT STANDARD 1: Students will demonstrate the use of technical knowledge and skills required to pursue careers in all career clusters, including knowledge of design, operation and maintenance of technological systems critical to the career cluster.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Employ information management techniques and strategies in the workplace to assist in decision-making.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Use information literacy skills when accessing, evaluating and disseminating information; (ii) Describe the nature and scope of information management; (iii) Maintain records to facilitate ongoing business operations.		
	BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Employ planning and time management skills and tools to enhance results and complete work tasks.		
	Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Develop goals and objectives; (ii) Prioritize tasks to be completed; (iii) Develop timelines using time management knowledge and skills; (iv) Use project management skills to improve workflow and minimize costs.		
	CONTENT STANDARD 2: Students will apply and demonstrate technical skills required for career specialties within a selected career pathway.		
	BENCHMARK 1: 7-12: Understand technical skill requirements within the career field’s techniques.		

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	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 1: (i) Obtain industry-recognized certifications where available and appropriate; (ii) Evaluate industry needs to explain the role and functions of critical industry-related technological systems; (iii) Measure and manage the reliability and performance of technological systems to establish use and maintenance guidelines.</p>		
	<p>BENCHMARK 2: 7-12: Establish criteria to identify technical skills needed to run an industry efficiently.</p>		
	<p>Performance Standards Benchmark 2: (i) Identify types of skills needed to succeed in a desired industry; (ii) Explore methods available to develop technical skills; (iii) Correctly operate the tools associated with a specific skill.</p>		