

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
February 15, 2018

OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

06. Action: Begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise Standard 14.3 and establish Appendix A-11 of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2017: Requirements for a Certificate of Completion for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) effective school year 2018-2019* [Goal 1 – MBE Strategic Plan]

Background Information: The Offices of Accreditation, Secondary Education, and Special Education began the process of examining Mississippi diploma requirements in the fall of 2015, with the convening of a Graduation Task Force. Based on feedback from stakeholders and surveys, the State Board adopted changes to the graduation requirements on September 14, 2017 after the APA comment period closed. The requirements for issuing a certificate of completion were removed from the approval process after the APA comment period to allow for further review. A separate stakeholder group was convened to make new recommendations for the Certificate of Completion for students with an Individualized Education Program. Stakeholders who provided feedback included special education teachers, principals, special education directors, high school counselors, an assistant superintendent, and members of the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council. Recommendations focus on which students are eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion, the time frame in which they could be placed on this track for their exit option, and the requirements for completion.

These recommendations were presented to and approved by the Commission on School Accreditation during the regularly scheduled meeting on February 1, 2018.

This item references Goal 1 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2016-2020 Strategic Plan*.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

APPENDIX A-11

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS STANDARD 14

Certificate of Completion

Note: This option may be offered by districts for incoming freshmen beginning in school year 2018-2019.

A Certificate of Completion is not a high school diploma or an Alternate Diploma, but rather an acknowledgement of the student's participation in and completion of his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion must fall into one (1) the following categories:

1. Students without a Significant Cognitive Disability at the end of 8th grade who:
 - Are 16 years old or older; AND
 - At least 3 or more grade levels below their peers in reading and math; AND
 - Have a signed statement from the parent that they understand that the Certificate of Completion is not a standard diploma and will not meet the requirements for entry into any career or post-secondary opportunity that requires a diploma.
2. Students with a Significant Cognitive Disability at the end of 8th grade who:
 - Have extremely limited or no receptive and expressive communication skills AND
 - Have a signed statement from the parent that they understand that the Certificate of Completion is not a standard diploma and will not meet the requirements for entry into any career or post-secondary opportunity that requires a diploma.
3. Students with or without a Significant Cognitive Disability at the end of their third school year of high school (6 semesters) who:
 - Have not earned at minimum of 3 English credits, 3 math credits, 2 science credits, 2 social studies credits, and 5 electives; AND
 - Have a signed statement from the parent and student that they do not wish for the student to be given services through age 20 and understand that the Certificate of Completion is not a standard diploma and will not meet the requirements for entry into any career or post-secondary opportunity that requires a diploma; AND
 - Have evidence of 3 or more years of intensive intervention to earn Carnegie Unit bearing courses (Or Alternate Diploma Course Credits for students with a Significant Cognitive Disability). Evidence could include, but is not limited to:
 - Progress monitoring data from reading intervention programs or math intervention programs
 - Documentation of accommodations and modifications provided in the general education courses and assessments
 - Course schedules outlining dedicated time for intervention.

The student's IEP committee determines the course of study for the Certificate of Completion. Areas of instruction should be developed based on the needs of the individual student. Course work could include, as appropriate for the student:

- Intensive remediation in deficit area skills
- Career preparation courses
- Life skills courses

Students earning the certificate of completion must have completed at least four years of high school and/or be at least 19 years of age at the time of graduation.

All students are required to participate in the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program.

Certificate of Completion

Presentation to the State Board of Education

For Students in Special Education



Gretchen Cagle
State Director of Special Education
Office of Special Education

Mississippi Department of Education

VISION _____

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION _____

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community



State Board of Education Goals FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2016-2020

1. All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
2. Every Student Graduates From High School and is Ready for College and Career
3. Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
4. Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
5. Every Community Effectively Using a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
6. Every School and District is Rated "C" or Higher



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Definition

- A Certificate of Completion is not a high school diploma or an Alternate Diploma, but rather an acknowledgement of the student's participation in and completion of his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP).



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Eligibility

- Students eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion must fall into one (1) the following categories:
 1. Students without a Significant Cognitive Disability at the end of 8th grade who:
 - Are 16 years old or older; AND
 - At least 3 or more grade levels below their peers in reading and math; AND
 - Have a signed statement from the parent that they understand that the Certificate of Completion is not a standard diploma and will not meet the requirements for entry into any career or post-secondary opportunity that requires a diploma.



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Eligibility

2. Students with a Significant Cognitive Disability at the end of 8th grade who:
 - Have extremely limited or no receptive and expressive communication skills AND
 - Have a signed statement from the parent that they understand that the Certificate of Completion is not a standard diploma and will not meet the requirements for entry into any career or post-secondary opportunity that requires a diploma.



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Eligibility

3. Students with or without a Significant Cognitive Disability at the end of their third school year of high school (6 semesters) who:
- Have not earned at minimum of 3 English credits, 3 math credits, 2 science credits, 2 social studies credits, and 5 electives; AND
 - Have a signed statement from the parent and student that they do not wish for the student to be given services through age 20 and understand that the Certificate of Completion is not a standard diploma and will not meet the requirements for entry into any career or post-secondary opportunity that requires a diploma; AND
 - Have evidence of 3 or more years of intensive intervention to earn Carnegie Unit bearing courses (Or Alternate Diploma Course Credits for students with a Significant Cognitive Disability).



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Requirements

- The student's IEP committee determines the course of study for the Certificate of Completion. Areas of instruction should be developed based on the needs of the individual student. Course work could include, as appropriate for the student:
 - Intensive remediation in deficit area skills
 - Career preparation courses
 - Life skills courses
- Students earning the certificate of completion must have completed at least four years of high school and/or be at least 19 years of age at the time of graduation.
- All students are required to participate in the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program.



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Ensuring a bright future for every child

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