

Da Vinci Schools

Policy and Procedures

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Board of Trustees is committed to providing students with the instruction and life skills necessary to take advantage of opportunities for postsecondary education and employment. As a necessary component of this preparation, Da Vinci Schools works to ensure that its high school students strive to complete “a-g” requirements for admission into the California State University, University of California, and other national college and university systems.

Requirements for graduation and specified alternative means for completing the prescribed course of study shall be made available to students, parents/guardians, and the public.

Course Requirements: Da Vinci Communications, Design, and Science

To obtain a high school diploma, students at Da Vinci Communications, Design, and Science shall complete at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified:

1. Four courses in English

2. Three courses in mathematics

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete three mathematics courses in grades 9-12.

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences

4. Three courses in social science, including world history, culture, and geography; United States history and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics

5. Two courses in the same world language, other than English

6. One course in visual or performing arts

7. One course in any college-preparatory subject

8. Any other coursework, as determined appropriate and/or necessary by the principal or designee, to ensure that each student is enrolled in a minimum of six courses each semester.

Course Requirements: Da Vinci RISE High

To obtain a high school diploma, students at Da Vinci RISE High shall complete at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified:

1. Four courses in English
2. Two courses in mathematics

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete three mathematics courses in grades 9-12.

3. Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences
4. Three courses in social science, including world history, culture, and geography; United States history and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics
5. Two courses in world language and/or visual or performing arts
6. One course in a Career Development course

State Minimum Diploma Path

To obtain a high school diploma that meets state minimum requirements, students shall complete at least the following courses in grades 9-12, with each course being one year unless otherwise specified: (Education Code 51225.3)

1. Three courses in English
2. Two courses in mathematics

At least one mathematics course, or a combination of the two mathematics courses, shall meet or exceed state academic content standards for Algebra 1. Completion of such coursework prior to grade 9 shall satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement, but shall not exempt a student from the requirement to complete three mathematics courses in grades 9-12.

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

To be eligible for the State Minimum Diploma Path, which is an exemption of Da Vinci Schools' high school graduation requirements, a student must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. The student is one of the following:
 - a. In foster care, as defined in Section 51225.2(a)(1) of the Education Code

- b. Is a homeless youth, as defined in Section 11434a(2) of Title 42 of the United States Code
 - c. A former juvenile court school student, as defined in Section 51225.2(a)(3) of the Education Code
 - d. A child of a military family, as defined in Section 49701 of the Education Code
 - e. A migratory child who meets the definition of “currently migratory child” under Section 54441(a) of the Education Code
 - f. A newly arrived immigrant student participating in a newcomer program, which is a program designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived immigrant students that has as a primary objective the development of English language proficiency
2. The student transfers between schools any time after his/her second year of high school
 3. The student is not reasonably able to complete Da Vinci Schools’ graduation requirements by the end of the student’s fourth year of high school

Within thirty (30) days of transfer, any such student shall be notified of the availability of the exemption and whether he/she is qualified for it. The notification will include how the exemption will affect the student’s ability to gain admission to a post-secondary educational institution and will provide information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. A qualified student may decline the exemption initially, and then choose to accept the exemption at a later date. Once exempted from Da Vinci Schools’ graduation requirements, the exemption cannot be revoked even if the student transfers to another school. If the student meets the requirements under the State Minimum Diploma Path before the end of his/her fourth year of high school, he/she may remain in attendance to complete additional coursework. No student shall be denied enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which he/she is otherwise eligible, including courses necessary to attend an institution of higher education, regardless of whether those courses are required for the State Minimum Diploma Path. (Education Code 51225.1)

Waivers

The Board of Trustees recognizes that students with disabilities are entitled to a course of study that provides them with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and that modifications to Da Vinci Schools’ regular course may be needed on an individualized basis to provide FAPE. In accordance with law, students with disabilities intending to earn a Da Vinci high school diploma may receive accommodations and/or modifications to meet graduation requirements, as specified in their respective individualized education plan and/or Section 504 services plan.

The Board also recognizes that there are unusual circumstances that may result in a student’s inability to complete all the courses required for high school graduation. Such unusual circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

1. Transfer during the last two years of high school from a school with different graduation requirements
2. Disability, regardless of whether the student has an individualized education program or a Section 504 services plan
3. Limited English proficiency (*e.g.*, student identified as an English language learner)
4. Hardship (*e.g.*, emergency, natural disaster, trauma, personal or family crisis)

For students who are not eligible to receive a high school diploma through the completion of the State minimum graduation requirements, the Board delegates to the Chief Executive Officer or designee discretion to grant a waiver of any coursework that is not required under the “State Minimum Diploma Path”, as listed above, based on the findings and conclusions of a multidisciplinary team (*e.g.*, student success team) convened to review the student’s unusual circumstances. Factors to consider in the granting of a waiver include, but are not limited to:

1. Unique limitations affecting the student as a result of the unusual circumstances
2. Whether the circumstances were beyond the student’s control
3. Whether the circumstances compromised the student’s ability to learn
4. The student’s efforts to cope with the unusual circumstances
5. Documentation provided by the student and/or parent/guardian
6. Significant decline in the student’s academic performance following the occurrence of the unusual circumstances

Alternative Means of Completion

Because the prescribed course of study may not accommodate the needs of some students, Da Vinci Schools may provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law. Students may fulfill a course requirement for graduation through the following:

1. Practical demonstration of skills and competencies
2. Interdisciplinary study
3. Independent study
4. Credit earned at a postsecondary institution
5. Correspondence instruction from a California university or college
6. Private instruction

Upon receiving advance, written application by the student or his/her parent/guardian, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall determine whether completion of the proposed alternative means would satisfy course requirements for graduation and what documentation shall be required, if any, to verify the student's successful completion. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall make the final determination as to whether the student's completion of an alternative means is sufficient to satisfy Da Vinci Schools' graduation requirements.

As appropriate, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall determine the grade to be assigned to students for the completion of any of the above alternative means. When a grade is assigned by a private school, postsecondary institution, or other educational institution for completion of coursework, that same grade shall be awarded by Da Vinci Schools provided that the Chief Executive Officer or designee has determined the alternative course to be substantially equivalent to a Da Vinci Schools course.

Retroactive Diplomas

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through 2014-15 school year and met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma. (Education Code 51413)

In addition, Da Vinci Schools may retroactively grant a high school diploma to: (Education Code 48204.4, 51430, 51440)

1. A veteran who entered the military service of the United States while he/she was a district student in grade 12 and who had completed the first half of the work required for grade 12.
2. Persons who departed California against their will while in grade 12 and did not receive a diploma because the departure interrupted their education, provided that they were in good academic standing at the time of the departure.

Persons may be considered to have departed California against their will if they were in custody of a government agency and were transferred to another state, were subject to a lawful order from a court or government agency that authorized their removal from California, were subject to a lawful order and were permitted to depart California before being removed from California pursuant to the lawful order, were removed or were permitted to depart voluntarily pursuant to the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, or departed due to other circumstances determined by Da Vinci Schools that are consistent with the purposes of Section 48204.4 of the Education Code.

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

Honorary Diplomas

The Board may grant honorary high school diplomas to:

1. An international exchange student who has not completed the course of study ordinarily required for graduation, and who is returning to the home country following the completion of one academic school year in Da Vinci Schools.
2. A student who is terminally ill.

The honorary diploma shall be clearly distinguishable from the regular diploma of graduation awarded by Da Vinci Schools

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

46140 Minimum day attendance for high school
47605 Establishment of charter schools within a school district
47605.6 Establishment of county-wide charter school
47612 Enrollment in charter school
48980 Required notification at beginning of term
49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children
51224.5 Algebra instruction
51225.1 Exemption from state minimum graduation requirements
51225.2 Definition of subgroups; acceptance of coursework; complaint of noncompliance
51225.3 State minimum graduation requirements
51225.5 Honorary diplomas
51740-51741 Instruction by correspondence
51745-51749.6 Independent study
51760-51769.5 Work experience education
56390-56392 Recognition for educational achievement, individual with exceptional needs
66204 Certification of high school courses that meet university admissions criteria

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

1600-1651 Credits toward graduation
4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures
11500-11508 Regional occupational centers and programs
11700-11703 Independent study

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