

## CHAPTER 11. WHEN STUDENTS EXIT SPECIAL EDUCATION

### **How long will my child be in special education?**

The answer to that question is as individual as is each child. While some students may need a program and/or related service for a short time, others will need services throughout their public school years. Many students fall somewhere in between.



### **When will my child exit special education?**

Special education programs and services are to be provided for eligible students between birth and 22 years of age who need them. Students who graduate with a diploma and/or complete their course of study will exit special education at the same time they exit the K-12 program and enter the adult world.

### **When does my child no longer need special education?**

Many students will exit special education when they are able to succeed in the general education program with passing grades, or they have acquired the skills that were lacking at one time, such as using intelligible speech/language skills. Other students will remain in special education as their base program and participate in selected general education classes such as electives and P.E. as appropriate or participate in most general education classes with support.

The question of whether the student continues to need special education services is asked each year at the annual IEP review meeting as well as at the 3-year reevaluation meeting, so your involvement as a team member is important. It is at the IEP review that the team must make recommendations regarding the student's continued need for services.

### **How are students transitioned from special to general education?**

If it is felt that the student will be able to continue being successful in the general education program without special education, the IEP team will develop an appropriate transition plan for the student. If the transition period is successful, prior to the student's formal exit, a reevaluation of his/her academic progress will be done and the results will be shared with you at, if not prior to, the exit IEP meeting.

### **When do students with IEPs receive a diploma?**

When a student with an IEP completes the district's prescribed course of study by earning the prescribed number of course credits and passes the district proficiency test of basic skills either with or without differential standards, he/she will be awarded a diploma and exit the K-12 program.

### **What does a Certificate of Completion mean for a student with an IEP?**

A Certificate of Completion is awarded upon exit of the K-12 program. Students who do not participate in the district's prescribed course of study and who do not take nor pass the High School Exit Exam may remain in the special education program as long as is appropriate up to age 22 to accomplish their individual goals and objectives.

### **Can students who receive a Certificate of Completion participate in a Graduation Ceremony and related graduation school activities?**

Yes, however the right to participate in graduation ceremonies does not imply a Certificate of Completion is equal to a regular High School diploma



**What services are available upon receipt of a Certificate of Completion?**

Students who receive a certificate of completion may still be eligible to receive special education transition services. The transition services are those needed to assist the child in reaching appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon transition assessment related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills. Services could be provided by the student’s school district, Solano County Transition Partnership program (TPP), Solano County Regional Occupational Program (ROP) and District or County Transition programs. Some students may be eligible for adult services through other agencies after receiving the certificate of completion. Connections to Solano County Mental Health, North Bay Regional Center and the California Department of Rehabilitation should be coordinated through the Individual Transition Program (ITP) process and monitored by the LEA.

**Transfer of parental rights at age of majority (age 18):**

Special education law requires IEP teams to give notice to students and their parents one year prior to their 18th birthday that upon turning 18, the student's educational rights will transfer to them. If the student is declared mentally incompetent to assume their rights by the court (conservation of rights), the parent, guardian, or a surrogate parent may be appointed to represent the educational interests of the student. Additionally, a student can designate his/her parent to continue to act on his/her behalf.