

This brochure is designed for parents of students with disabilities. It provides information about types of diploma options available through the School District of Palm Beach County. Knowing about these options will ensure that your child participates in an educational program leading to the appropriate type of diploma. The diploma option selected will help your child achieve his or her desired post-school outcome for life after high school.

The decision to seek a standard or special diploma is made by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team at the IEP meeting during the student's eighth grade year or at age 14, whichever occurs first. The IEP team should review the diploma choice at least once a year at the annual IEP meeting after reviewing the student's post secondary school goals.

Students who have not received a standard diploma may continue to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) until the end of the school year in which the student turns 22 years of age.

STANDARD DIPLOMA

The student must:

1. Have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which states he/she is working toward a standard diploma
2. Earn the required 24 high school credits
3. Earn a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher
4. Pass the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). However, for some students with disabilities, a waiver may be considered under certain conditions
5. Provide documentation of 20 hours of community service work

SPECIAL DIPLOMA

- **OPTION 1**

The student must:

1. Have an IEP which states he/she is working toward a special diploma
2. Demonstrate mastery as specified in the *Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma*
3. Earn 24 credits in courses meeting the special diploma requirements
4. Earn a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher

- **OPTION 2**

The student must:

1. Be a minimum of 16 years old
2. Complete one semester in high school, master all prerequisite competencies, and successfully complete at least one course of a high school job preparatory course
3. Have an IEP stating Option 2 and demonstrate successful completion of the IEP goals and objectives
4. Demonstrate mastery of employment and community competencies as specified on the student's graduation plan
5. Maintain paid employment for at least 630 hours at minimum wage or higher

	Standard Diploma	ESE Special Diploma Option 1	ESE Special Diploma Option 2	Certificate of Completion
Is considered a High School Diploma	YES	YES	YES	NO
Students with disabilities may be eligible for FCAT waiver	YES	NA	NA	NA
Recognized by employers	YES	YES	YES	NO
May be accepted by military if age requirements and ASVAB requirements are met	YES	(YES)	(YES)	(YES)
May be accepted by some post-secondary adult vocational (PSAV) programs at state colleges	YES	YES	YES	YES
May be accepted by technical schools if admission requirements are met	YES	(YES)	(YES)	(YES)
May be accepted by community college degree-seeking programs if admission requirements are met	YES	NO	NO	NO
May be accepted by four-year colleges and universities if admission requirements are met	YES	NO	NO	NO

YES = accepts diploma type **NO** = will not accept diploma type **NA** = not applicable **(YES)** = contact source

Nothing contained in this document shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of a student with a disability solely to a special diploma. Students who have received a special diploma or a certificate of completion may attempt to earn a General Education Development (GED) diploma.

Revised: Jan. 2012

GRADUATION OPTIONS

for

Exceptional Education Students



School District of Palm Beach County
Department of Exceptional Student Education

Jeff Silverman

Director



For more information,
contact the ESE Coordinator
at your local high school.

E. Wayne Gent
Superintendent

School District of Palm Beach County
Department of Exceptional Student Education

3378 Forest Hill Boulevard, Suite A-203

West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

Transition Services

(561) 434-8367

<http://www.palmbeachschools.org/ease>