



## MODIFIED DIPLOMA

2012-2013

A modified diploma is a document that is awarded to a student who has earned 24 units of credit through a combination of general education courses, modified general education courses with or without accommodations and/or through modified courses. Most students can successfully meet the requirements of the high school diploma, however, the District recognizes that a small number of students are unable to master the regular curriculum even with reasonable modifications and accommodations.

### **Why consider a Modified Diploma?**

A modified diploma is awarded if a student has demonstrated the inability to meet the full set of academic standards, even with reasonable accommodations, but who fulfills all of the requirements for the modified diploma as described by the Oregon State Board of Education. The modified diploma allows for flexibility to change expectations to meet the student's individual needs and better prepare them for their transition to adult living. It allows for more career development, work experience, and life skills coursework. The decision to pursue a modified diploma can be made no earlier than the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade and no later than 2 years before the student's anticipated exit from high school.

A modified curriculum may be necessary when a student demonstrates the inability to meet the full set of academic content standards, even with reasonable accommodations and modifications. For one student, it may mean algebra with modifications that would allow the student to meet part of the algebra standards. For another student, it may mean completing all of the requirements of a consumer math course or completing a basic math course on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. The purpose is to push the student to work towards their potential, while providing them with any accommodations and/or modifications they require.

Not all modifications or accommodations affect the student's ability to master the objectives of the course. For example, a student with learning disabilities may have a 504 or IEP and need books on tape and to take tests orally to acquire sufficient knowledge of world history to master the objectives of the course. These modifications/accommodations do not, of themselves, imply that the course content has been modified or that the grading system needs to be modified for this student.

The consideration for a modified diploma may include, but is not limited to: historical and current school performance data and health information, attendance and grades, and parent, teacher and student input.

## Can the Student Still Get a High School Diploma?

The diploma information is reviewed annually after the decision is made to work towards a modified diploma. The student may change to a high school diploma program, but must meet all of the high school diploma requirements. The decision to pursue the modified diploma should be made only after careful consideration of the benefits and disadvantages it offers. Students may have a substantial deficit in credit areas if they start in a modified diploma and switch to a high school diploma. An example would be a deficit in science credits. Such a change may require the student to attend high school beyond the usual four years.

### Considerations:

- The recommendation to consider a student for a modified diploma program is made by a team that must include the parent and student, school administrator or designee, general education teacher, counselor (non-IEP student) or special educator (IEP student)
- Signed parent consent is REQUIRED for a student to pursue a modified diploma.
- A student pursuing a modified diploma is required to obtain 24 credits, in areas listed by the State Board of Education.
- The team recommending the modified diploma will design a schedule that assists the student with the attainment of the student's goals and addresses career and transition needs.
- A student working towards a modified diploma is expected to meet other Oregon diploma requirements, including: develop a **personal educational plan** and build an **educational profile**; build a collection of evidence to demonstrate **extended application** of the standards or include evidence in an existing collection; complete assessment of required essential skills which may be modified.
- The potential effects of attaining a modified diploma on college admission, military enlistment, or employment should be explored at the time that diploma options are considered. Higher education, the Military, and prospective employers may use high school completion as selection criteria. Financial assistance (FAFSA) may be limited or unavailable to students with a modified diploma.
- The **transcript** must clearly identify modified courses that count towards a modified diploma.
- A student engaging in the use of illegal drugs or alcohol is excluded if the significant learning and instructional barriers are **due** to the use of illegal drugs or alcohol. A student no longer engaging in the use of illegal drugs or alcohol may be considered for a modified diploma if the student:
  - Has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program and is no longer engaged in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol; or
  - Has been rehabilitated successfully and is no longer engaged in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol; or
  - Is participating in a supervised rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in the use of illegal drugs or alcohol.