**Introduction**

A Guide for Idaho   
Students with Disabilities   
and their Families

**Planning for Graduation**

Having high expectations is important when helping a student make a plan to reach their post-school goals for work or higher education. To make sure students have equal opportunity and access to education and to measure students’ educational outcomes, all students must participate in statewide assessments and work towards meeting graduation requirements.

The Idaho State Board of Education creates graduation requirements that are aligned to Idaho content and achievement standards and approved by the Idaho Legislature. Idaho has also aligned requirements to Common Core Standards that are being used at the national level. These requirements are meant to ensure all Idaho students are prepared to live, work, and succeed in the 21st century. The current minimum graduation requirements for all Idaho students are listed in the table on page 3. Individual school districts may have more requirements as well. It is important to check with your local school to find out about your district’s requirements.

Each year of high school the IEP Team considers if the student will meet regular graduation requirements. IEP teams should use this guide, and the guide developed for school staff, to develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), a plan for graduation, and the transition to post-school options.

There is one high school diploma awarded in Idaho. All students can earn this diploma by meeting state and district graduation requirements. For students with disabilities this can happen in different ways. This guide is meant to help students and their family members have the information they need to plan for graduation.

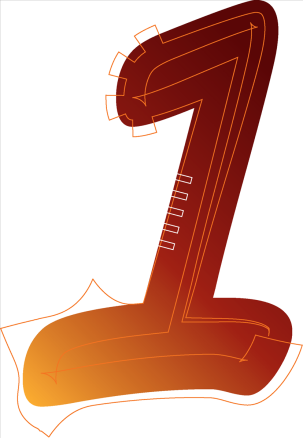
**Idaho Minimum Graduation Requirements**

(Idaho Law: IDAPA 08.02.03 104, 105, 106)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content Area** | **STATE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS (46)** |
| **Core of Instruction** | **29 credits** (minimum) |
| **Electives** | **17 credits** (minimum) |
| **Total Credits** | **46 credits** (minimum) |
| **Language Arts**  (English – 8 credits and Speech – 1 credit) | **9 credits**  (Speech credit can be obtained through other courses that meet the state speech requirement as approved by the local district) |
| **Mathematics** | **6 credits**  Including Algebra I and Geometry standards.  2 credits must be taken in last year of high school. |
| **Science** | **6 credits**  (4 credits in lab classes) |
| **Social Studies** (US History, Economics and American Government) | **5 credits** |
| **Humanities** (Interdisciplinary Humanities, Fine Arts or Foreign Language) | **2 credits** |
| **Health** | **1 credit** |
| **Postsecondary**  **Readiness Plan** | 4-Year Learning Plan at end of 8th grade |
| **Advanced Opportunities** | Districts must offer at least one Advanced Opportunity such as:  Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, Tech Prep, International Baccalaureate |
| **Senior Project** | Required to include an oral presentation and written report  by end of grade 12 |
| **College Entrance Exam** | Take either the ACT, SAT, COMPASS or ACCUPLACER exam  by the end of grade 11\* |
| **ISAT** | Pass the ISAT with a score of Proficient or Advanced in Reading,  Math, Language Usage |
| **Middle School** | Must take pre-algebra before entering 9th grade |

\*The state will pay for students to take the SAT or ACCUPLACER once. For more details on the statewide college entrance exam program, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/collegeEntranceExam.htm>

**There are three different ways a student can earn a high school diploma:**

**Regular Graduation Requirements**

Regular graduation requirements include earning state and district required credits in content areas and getting a proficient score in all areas of the grade 10 ISAT or ISAT-Alternative. Your local school district may have additional requirements.

**Alternate Graduation Mechanism/Plan**

A school district or local school may have an alternate plan set up for students to be able to show they know the required content standards. This option is available for students who have not been able to get a proficient score on the grade 10 ISAT or ISAT-Alternative and…

…has an IEP, or

…has been in a Limited English Proficiency program (for 3 yrs or less), or

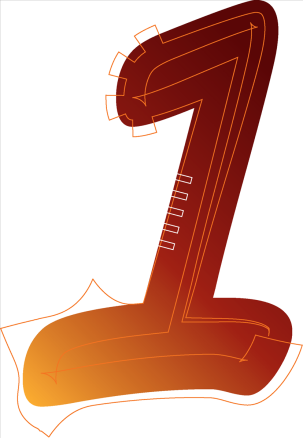
… is in the fall semester of his/her senior year

**Adapted Graduation Criteria Set by   
the IEP Team**

This individualized plan for graduation is set by the IEP Team and is part of the student’s IEP. The IEP team can address student needs to complete his/her program by:

* Adapting the course content, course objectives, instruction strategies, grading, and assessments, and/or
* Finding alternate ways for the student to show their competence.

On the following pages these different options are described in more detail.



**Regular Graduation Requirements**

**Regular graduation requirements include:**

**Earning Required Credits**

**Student Learning Plan**

**Senior Project**

**College Entrance Exam**

**ISAT and Statewide Assessment**

* **Accommodations**
* **Adaptations**
* **ISAT-Alt**

**Alternate Graduation Mechanism/Plan**

**Mechanism/Plan must include many different measures that   
may be:**

* **End of Course tests**
* **Portfolio of student work**
* **Performance**
* **Another state’s tests**
* **Other Idaho state tests**

**Student must be eligible.**

**Graduation Criteria   
Set by the IEP Team**

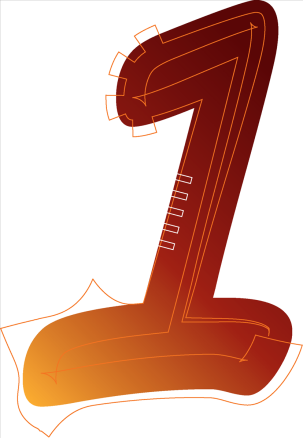
**This individualized plan for graduation is part of a student’s IEP and must include:**

**Evaluation in at least one academic area, and**

**A description of how the student will participate in tests, and**

**Other measures that might include:**

* **ISAT/ISAT-Alt growth rate**
* **Classroom participation**
* **Grade Point Average (GPA)**
* **Grades for classes**
* **Meeting IEP goals and objectives**
* **Attendance**

****

**Regular Graduation Requirements**

To meet Idaho graduation requirements, students must:

1. Meet all credit requirements in content standards,
2. Have a 4-year learning plan,
3. Complete a senior project,
4. Complete a college entrance exam, and
5. Achieve a proficient score on the 10th grade ISAT or ISAT-Alt.

**A. Credit Requirements in Content Standards**

The current minimum graduation requirements for all Idaho students are listed on page 3. Students can earn credits by completing:

* District-required general education classes with or without accommodation,
* Modified course curriculum for students participating in general education classes,
* Substitute course in the same content area, or
* Individually designed instruction aligned to content standards.

For students who have an IEP, teams should refer to the current Idaho Special Education Manual for help in planning for graduation requirements.

The Idaho Special Education Manual, Chapter 7, Section 2A explains that when planning for graduation for a student with an IEP, the IEP team is to:

* Determine if a student will meet regular graduation requirements,
* Develop the course of study in collaboration with the student learning plan,
* Beginning with 9th grade, review the course of study every year to decide if changes need to be made for the student to meet graduation requirements, and
* Document any accommodations and adaptations made to the district’s and state’s regular graduation requirements for the student. See more about accommodations and adaptations under part **E** of this section.

**B.** **Student Learning Plan**

By the end of 8th grade, every student in Idaho must have a parent-approved student learning plan. The learning plan is developed by the student with help from parents or guardians and with advice from school staff. It is reviewed each year and can be changed at any time. A student learning plan describes the list of classes and learning activities the student will complete to work toward meeting their district’s graduation standards and reach their post-high school goals.

The course of study in the learning plan should include core classes that challenge the student and electives in academic, professional-technical education (PTE), or humanities that align with the student’s goals for life after high school. To learn more about Student Learning Plans and see examples go to the State Department of Education, PTE website at:

[**http://www.pte.idaho.gov/Career\_Guidance/Program\_of\_Study\_Curriculum/Other\_Curricula/Mystery\_Out\_of\_IGP/IGP\_Packet.html**](http://www.pte.idaho.gov/Career_Guidance/Program_of_Study_Curriculum/Other_Curricula/Mystery_Out_of_IGP/IGP_Packet.html)

Federal and state law requires that the IEP in effect when the student turns 16 (or younger if the IEP Team decides it is appropriate) must include:

* Measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills;
* The transition services (including courses of study – learning plan mentioned above) the student needs to reach those post-secondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition service needs

and

* A statement (one year before the student is 18 years old) that the student and parents were told about the student’s rights under law that will transfer to the student when they turn 18.

**C. Senior Project**

A senior project is a comprehensive assignment that is designed as a way for each student to showcase his/her academic experiences from their high school career. Senior projects normally include a paper, a portfolio, a presentation, and a final product, activity, or event. Your local school may have additional requirements for the senior project. By the end of 12th grade all Idaho students are required to complete a senior project, which must include a written report and an oral presentation. To see examples of some district senior projects go to: [**http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs\_grad\_requirements/**](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs_grad_requirements/)

In order to meet the senior project requirement a student may:

* Use accommodations or adaptations that are written on the IEP,
* Use assistive technology/educational technology,
* Use different presentation settings and/or ways of presenting, or
* Complete an individually-designed senior project as determined by the IEP team.

**D. College Entrance Exam**

**A student may   
be excused from the college entrance exam requirement. If…**

A student must take one exam to meet this requirement. The approved college entrance exams are the COMPASS, ACCUPLACER, ACT, or SAT. A student may be excused from the college entrance exam requirement if he/she:

* …has an IEP that lists accommodations that would make their score on the SAT invalid (non-college reportable), or
* …has been enrolled in a Limited English Proficiency program for 3 academic years or less.

The state of Idaho will pay for a student to take the SAT or ACCUPLACER exam once. If a student chooses to take the COMPASS or ACT, it will meet graduation requirements, but the student will be required to pay for that exam. Students may want to contact the college of their choice to determine which college entrance or placement test is required for admission.

**Accommodations for College Entrance Exams**

Accommodations are changes made to a test format or procedure so that a student can take the test in a way that allows him/her to show his/her ability rather than disability. Testing entities have set guidelines for granting accommodations on college entrance exams.

Every student asking for accommodations on the SAT must submit a request to The College Board. In most cases, students work with their school and the accommodations request is sent from the school. An adult student or parent must complete a consent form before the school can provide confidential information about the student’s disability to The College Board. The Idaho Department of Education has set a specific spring date for the SAT examination and a **strict** deadline for requesting accommodations.

**The Idaho Department   
of Education has set a specific spring date for the SAT examination and a strict deadline for requesting accommodations.**

A student who asks for accommodations on an exam must provide documentation of his/her disability. This documentation is used to determine if the accommodations are appropriate and reasonable for the disability. Accommodations for the SAT or ACCUPLACER are determined on a case by case basis and may include, but are not limited to: extended time, alternate test formats, extra or extended breaks, and permission to take a test over multiple days. Examples of alternate test formats are audiocassettes or audio DVDs, readers, Braille, or large print.

For more information about specific policies and procedures for SAT and ACCUPLACER accommodations, visit: [**http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/**](http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/)or[**http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/ssd/accommodations**](http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/ssd/accommodations)

**E. Participation in ISAT and Statewide Assessment**

All students with disabilities will participate in the ISAT and other statewide assessments. A student must get a proficient or advanced score on the ISAT to meet this graduation requirement. A student is **not** required to get a proficient or advanced score on the ISAT if:

* The student received a proficient or advanced score on an exit exam from another state that meets certain requirements; or
* The student completes a measure set by a local school or district; or
* The student has an IEP that outlines adapted graduation requirements or adaptations are recommended on the test; or
* The student has Limited English Proficiency based on a language proficiency test and has been in an LEP program three years or less.

Students can participate in statewide tests in four ways. The IEP team may determine that:

1. The student will take the test in the same way as all other students;
2. The student will take the test with accommodations;
3. The student will take the test with adaptations; or
4. The student is eligible to take the ISAT-Alt.

The IEP team must determine how a student will participate in tests. This might include using accommodations or adaptations. All accommodations or adaptations should be based on strategies that have already been regularly used for each student in the classroom for other tests and are outlined on the student’s IEP. A student can help their IEP team decide whether or not to use accommodations or adaptations by thinking about and answering the following questions:

1. What helps me learn or perform better?
2. What gets in the way of showing my skills or knowledge?
3. What strategies have I used on tests or to do assignments that work well for me?

# Accommodations

**Adaptations are fundamental changes that make test results invalid.**

**Accommodations are changes that still allow the student’s score to count.**

Accommodations are changes made to a test format or procedure so that a student can take the test in a way that allows him/her to show his/her ability rather than disability. Accommodations do not invalidate results of a test (make the student’s score not count).

Changes can be made in…

* where the test is taken by the student,
* how it is presented,
* how much time the student has,
* how the student will answer test questions,
* when the test is scheduled

Students must be given a chance to practice and learn to use each selected accommodation before it is used on a test. Selected accommodations may not be provided for the first time on the day of the test.

Adaptations

Adaptations used in a test are **fundamental** changes that make test results invalid (score does not count), even though they may be used regularly by a student with a disability to do class work or take classroom assessments. Types of changes that make test results invalid include reading a reading test to a student, using a spell checker on a spelling test, taking a test that is meant for a grade level below the student’s current grade, or using a calculator when basic math calculation is being tested. Adaptations on statewide assessments should be used with caution because they cause the test results to be invalid.

# Idaho Standards Achievement Test-Alternate (ISAT-Alt)

# The ISAT-Alt is an alternative test that is allowed only for students with the most significant disabilities. Students who participate in the ISAT-Alt are working on the same Idaho Content Standards as their peers, but they are working on these standards in less complex ways. This assessment is based on alternative achievement standards which allow the use of a different scoring system.



**Alternate Graduation Mechanism**

A school district or local school has an alternate plan for students to be able to show they have learned the required content standards. Schools are required to tell all students who have not achieved a proficient or advanced score on the grade 10 ISAT/ISAT-Alt by the fall semester of the student’s junior year about the school’s alternate mechanism/plan.

**This option is available to any student who has not been able to pass the ISAT or ISAT-Alternative and…**

* **has an IEP, or**
* **has been in a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program for   
  3 years or less, or**
* **is enrolled in the fall semester of his/her senior year.**

The alternate mechanism/plan must include many different measures of student achievement. Examples of some measures that might be included in a school’s alternate plan:

* End of Course Tests – measures the student’s knowledge of a subject or content area at the end of course.
* Portfolio – a set of examples of student work that shows their knowledge and skills.
* Another state’s test – an exit exam from another state that has been approved by the Idaho State Board of Education.
* Performance –the student has to create an answer or product that shows their knowledge and skills taught in the curriculum and that align with achievement standards (for example writing a paper or giving a speech).
* Other Idaho State Tests

Check with your local school to see what plan your school district has in place.

**Adapted Graduation Criteria   
Set by the IEP Team**

Some students with disabilities may be able to meet all of the regular graduation requirements. Others may be able to meet those requirements by using the district’s alternate mechanism/plan. There may also be students who will meet graduation requirements through an individualized plan for graduation developed by the IEP team and included in the student’s IEP.

The student’s plan for graduation must include at least one evaluation measure in each of the core academic areas on the student’s learning plan. The core areas are: reading, language, and math.

The plan must also describe how the student will participate in statewide assessments (refer to pages 10-12).

It may also include other measures’ decided on by the IEP team, which will show the student has completed their educational program. These may include things like:

* Individual ISAT/ISAT-Alt growth rate
* Classroom participation
* Cumulative Grade Point Average
* Grades for courses specific to the student
* Meeting IEP goals and objectives
* Attendance

An example plan for graduation is on the   
next 2 pages.

**Example Plan for Graduation**

Here is an example of how to document that a student has demonstrated proficiency on Idaho State Achievement Standards and met the graduation requirements that the IEP Team developed for a student. ***Your district’s forms may look different.***

**Evaluation Methods: (Must include at least one method in each core area)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reading: Method** | | **Expected Performance Level** |
|  | ISAT/ISAT-Alt (with or without accommodations) |  |
|  | ISAT/ISAT-Alt Individual Growth Rate\* |  |
|  | End of Course Assessment |  |
|  | Another State’s Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Performance Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Portfolio (describe) |  |
|  | Other: (describe) |  |
| **Language: Method** | | **Expected Performance Level** |
|  | ISAT/ISAT-Alt (with or without accommodations) |  |
|  | ISAT/ISAT-Alt Individual Growth Rate\* |  |
|  | End of Course Assessment |  |
|  | Another State’s Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Performance Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Portfolio (describe) |  |
|  | Other: (describe) |  |
| **Math: Method** | | **Expected Performance Level** |
|  | ISAT/ISAT-Alt (with or without accommodations) |  |
|  | ISAT /ISAT-Alt Individual Growth Rate\* |  |
|  | End of Course Assessment |  |
|  | Another State’s Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Performance Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Portfolio (describe) |  |
|  | Other: (describe) |  |
| **Science: Method** | | **Expected Performance Level** |
|  | ISAT/ISAT-Alt (with or without accommodations) |  |
|  | ISAT /ISAT-Alt Individual Growth Rate\* |  |
|  | End of Course Assessment |  |
|  | Another State’s Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Performance Assessment (list) |  |
|  | Portfolio (describe) |  |
|  | Other: (describe) |  |

**\*ISAT/ISAT-Alt Growth Rate Chart:**

**Math growth: Reading growth: Language Arts growth: Science growth**

Year 1: Year 1: Year 1: Year 1:

Year 2: Year 2: Year 2: Year 2:

Year 3: Year 3: Year 3: Year 2:

**Average: Average: Average: Average:**

# Other Graduation Indicators (Optional)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **✓if used** | **Indicator** | **Expected Performance Level** |
|  | Classroom Participation |  |
|  | Cumulative GPA |  |
|  | Individually-targeted Course Grades (list each): |  |
| **✓** | Meeting IEP Goals/Objectives | *Complete objectives to reach goals* |
|  | Attendance |  |
|  | Other: (describe) |  |

**Four-Year Student Course of Study to meet graduation requirements:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade 9** | **Grade 10** | **Grade 11** | **Grade 12** |
| *Math* | *Math* | *Math* | *Workplace Math* |
| *English* | *English/Speech* | *Writing* | *Journalism* |
| *World History* | *US History* | *Am. Government* | *Economics* |
| *Earth Science* | *Biology* | *Horticulture* | *Work-based learning* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Electives: | Electives: | Electives: | Electives: |
| *Spanish* | *Spanish 2* | *Photography I* | *Photography II* |
| *Study Skills* | *Study Skills* | *Yearbook* |  |
|  |  |  |  |

Graduation

A student graduates when they have met district and state requirements for a high school diploma. If the student does not meet these requirements, or if the student earns a high school diploma by completing adapted graduation requirements (see section 3 above), the student is eligible to get educational services from their school district through the semester he/she turns 21 years old. Those services may end earlier if a re-evaluation determines the student doesn’t need special education services any longer.

The IEP team making these decisions shall include a district representative knowledgeable about state and local graduation requirements. (Idaho Special Education Manual, Chapter 7, Section 2, 2007 revised 2009)

****

**Laws, Rules, and Policies Related to   
Planning for Graduation**

Idaho Administrative Procedures Act (IDAPA), rules governing thoroughness, 08.02.03.105.03 and 105.06   
(IDAPA rules tell agencies how to implement Idaho laws).

Idaho Special Education Manual 2007 Revised 2009.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (2004).

**Resources**

The ***“Moving On” Idaho Transition Binder*** has a lot of information to help a student plan for the transition from school to adult life. The contents of the binder can be downloaded from the Idaho Training Clearinghouse, Secondary Learning Community website at:   
[**http://itcnew.idahotc.com/secondary-transition.aspx**](http://itcnew.idahotc.com/secondary-transition.aspx)

The Idaho State Department of Education website has many resources about graduation requirements and planning for graduation. Go to:

[**http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs\_grad\_requirements/**](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs_grad_requirements/)

**Terms to Know**

**Academic Content Standards**

According to federal law (No Child Left Behind), every state must have academic content standards in reading/language arts, math, and science. These academic content standards contain what students need to know. Many states have content standards in other academic areas as well. These standards must be the same for all schools and all students in that state. In Idaho, there are **Extended Content Standards** that can be used for students with more significant intellectual disabilities.

**Academic Achievement Standards**

Academic achievement standards spell out how well students need to know the academic content standards. Each state’s achievement standards must provide at least three levels of achievement: advanced, proficient, and basic. Many states have more than three levels and may use different names for the levels. Each state determines its own academic achievement standards.

**Common Core Standards**

Idaho will be moving to a new common core of state standards for proficiency in English-language arts and mathematics for grades K-12. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have learned during their K-12 education so when they graduate from high school they will be able to succeed in post-secondary education and the workforce.

To learn more about the Common Core go to the State Dept. of Education website at this link: [**http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/common/**](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/common/)

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

A written statement for each student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised according to the requirements of IDEA. When the student turns 16, their IEP must include a list of transition activities and a plan for graduation.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

The federal law provides for early intervention and special education services for children who are eligible based on their disability. It describes which children are eligible for services, what services states must make available to children/students, and how states must provide services.

**Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)**

This is Idaho’s annual statewide academic assessment that is used to measure student performance and progress. This test is aligned with the state academic content standards and academic achievement standards. The ISAT includes tests in reading, language usage, and mathematics for grades 3-10 and science tests for grades 5, 7, and 10.

To learn more go to: [**http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/ISAT/**](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/ISAT/)

The **Idaho Standards Achievement Test - Alternative (ISAT-Alt)** can be used to assess students with the most significant intellectual disabilities who have been found eligible by the IEP team. These are students who aren’t able to fully participate in the regular ISAT even with accommodations. The ISAT-Alt is a portfolio of student work collected over time. It is made up of different items that show the student has learned the Idaho Extended Content Area Objectives. Student work is collected and submitted by the teacher.

To learn more go to: [**http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/ISATalt/**](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/ISATalt/)

**Special Education Manual**

The Idaho Special Education Manual has been developed as a guide to help schools follows IDEA. The manual can be found at: [**http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/special\_edu/manual.htm**](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/special_edu/manual.htm)

**Transition Timeline**

The Idaho Transition Timeline is a resource for teachers, students and families that includes activities to consider when planning for the transition from school to adult life. The timeline will be available soon at **http://www.idahotc.com/secondary-transition/home.aspx**