

*Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area
Community Advisory Committee (CAC)*



Information Alert for Parents of Special Education Students

Updated September 2011

Certificate of Completion – Now What?

With the advent of the California High School Exit Exam, and strict requirements for coursework (including algebra), it is becoming more difficult for students to get a high school diploma, particularly special education students. According to the law, special education students may be given a Certificate of Educational Achievement or Completion if they have:

- Completed a prescribed alternative course of study (*or*)
- Met his/her IEP goals during high school (*or*)
- Attended high school and participated in instruction specified in the IEP and met transition objectives

⌘ A certificate of completion is not considered to be a regular diploma ⌘

What does this mean for my family?

- ✓ The Education Code specifically states that a student who receives a Certificate of Completion must be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies of the school, including receiving the Certificate on stage.
- ✓ Although a student receiving a Certificate of Completion would not be able to attend a four-year college right away, s/he would be able to enroll in a community college at age 18. If successful, s/he can then transfer to a four-year college as a junior transfer.
- ✓ Some vocational/technical schools do not require a high school diploma.
- ✓ The Marines will accept people without a diploma with 15 community college units.
- ✓ Many jobs do not require a diploma.
- ✓ Even with a Certificate of Completion, special education students may continue to receive special education services until they turn 22 years old. If they then meet requirements for a diploma, they will be given one, at which time they will no longer be eligible for special education services.
- ✓ For 18-22 year old students who have not yet obtained a diploma, Regional Centers will encourage students to continue to access the public school program as their first resource. To discuss your student's individual needs contact your Regional Center service coordinator.

We have lots of informational materials for you! Go to our website and click on "Parent Information."

Plus, see our website for our Training and Information for Parents (TIPS) series - there are over 24 topics available to be reserved.

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