

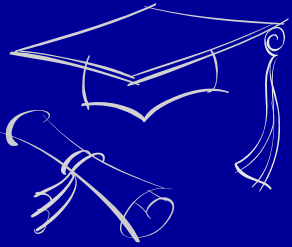
# *Graduation Options Students with Disabilities*

***Presenters:***

***Sue Gronewold, NNPED***

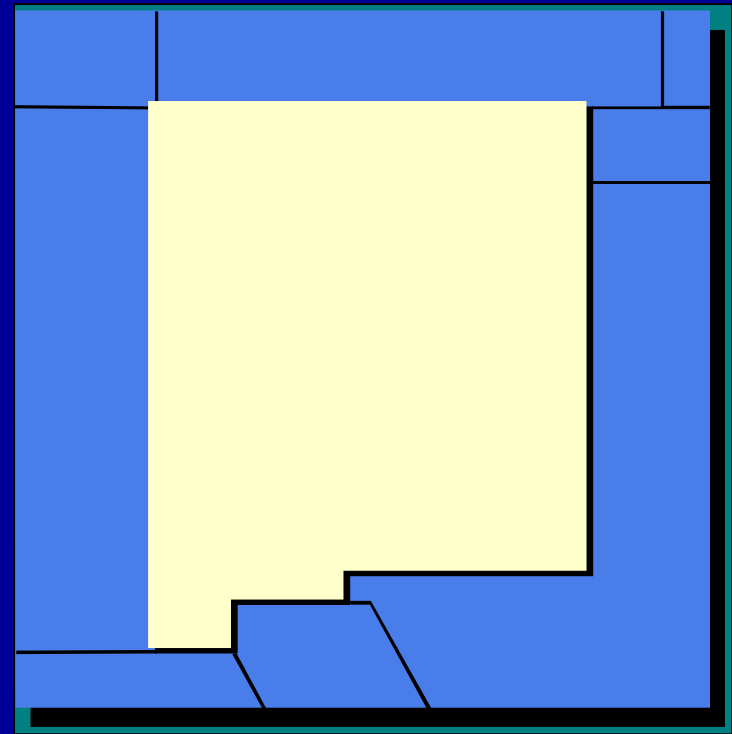
***Marilyn D'Ottavio, APS***

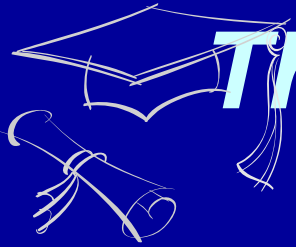
***April 2009***



# ***New Mexico***

- **Is one of many states with a high stakes graduation exam**
- **Is the only state that provides alternative graduation options for students receiving special education services to earn a regular high school diploma**

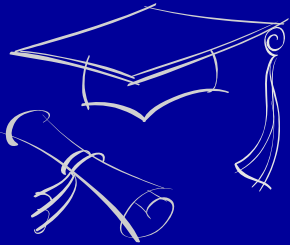




# ***Three Graduation Options: One Diploma***

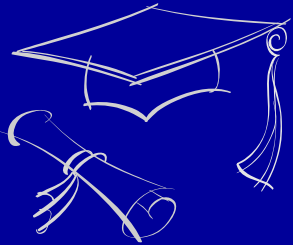


- **Standard Program of Study**
- **Career Readiness Program of Study**
- **Ability Program of Study**



# ***Rational***

- Implementation of previous State Rules regarding graduation practices for students with IEPs was inconsistent
- 1997 OCR complaint against the department of education
- Parent concerns regarding inconsistency in graduation practices for students with IEP
- Higher dropout rates for students receiving special education services



# ***New Mexico Administrative Code 6.29.1.9***

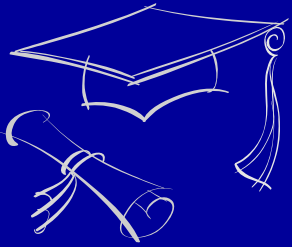
- **Standards for Excellence**
  - **Established graduation options to the diploma for students receiving special education services**
  - **Established that graduation plans must be a part of all IEPs**



# ***New Mexico Graduation Requirements (NMSA)***

## **Sec. 22-13-1.1**

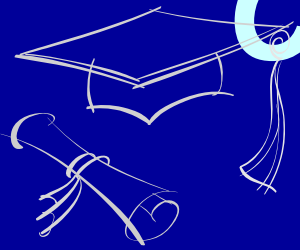
- **Established New Mexico Exit Exam as a “high stakes exam”**



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

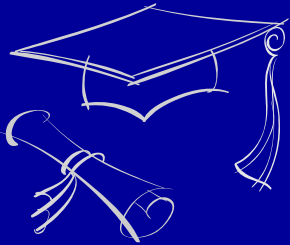
- **Requires the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district wide assessments.**
- **Requires development of alternate assessment methods.**





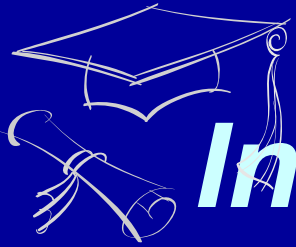
# *Changes To Exit Exam Requirements*

- **Sec. 22-13-1.1 NMSA 2004 Graduation Requirements**
  - Provides that beginning with that beginning with the 2010-2011 school year the standards-based assessments required in Section 22-2C-4 NMSA 1978 may also serve as the assessment required for high school graduation.
- **Section 22-2C-4 NMSA Statewide assessment and accountability systems**
  - Requires the department to establish a statewide assessment and accountability system that is aligned with the state academic content and performance standards and that measures adequate yearly progress for each public school and school district.

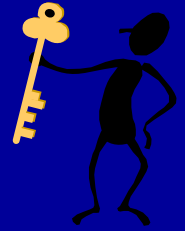


# ***Additional Changes***

- **Sec. 22-2c-4.1 Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System.**
  - Requires the department to establish a readiness assessment system to measure the readiness of every New Mexico high school student for success in higher education or a career no later than the 2008-2009 school year
- **6.29.1.9 NMAC Procedural Requirements**
  - Provides the implementing rules for Sec. 22-13-1.1 for all students, and establishes that the eleventh grades Standards Based Assessment will become the New Mexico Exit Exam



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



- **Ensure access to the general curriculum, so that eligible students can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that applies to all children.**



# ***Graduation Requirements***

- **The IEP team is responsible for determining the following:**
  - **the student's planned program of study;**
  - **the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study.**
  - **if the student has completed a planned program of study; and**
  - **that the planned program of study is based on the student's strengths interest preferences, needs, and long term educational or occupational goal**
  - **documenting graduation option requirements on the student's IEP**



# ***Standard Program of Study***

**The standard program of study is the option that all students following students graduating on this program of study must:**

- Must pass the current NM graduation exam;**
- Meet or exceed all State graduation requirements; and**
- Meet or exceed the district's graduation requirements**





# ***Career Readiness Program of Study***

**Students graduating on the Career Readiness program of study must:**

- **Earn the minimum number of credits required by the district for graduation.**
- **Students must participate in State and District Assessment.**
- **Achieve competency in all areas of the Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards.**



# ***Career Readiness Program of Study***

**Students graduating on the Career Readiness program of study must:**

- **Complete a course of study that includes a minimum of four units of career development opportunities and learning experiences that may include:**
  - **Career readiness and vocational course work,**
  - **Community based instruction,**
  - **Student Service Learning,**
  - **Job Shadowing or mentoring, and**
  - **Entrepreneurship**



# ***Career Readiness Program of Study***

**Students graduating on the Career Readiness program of study must:**

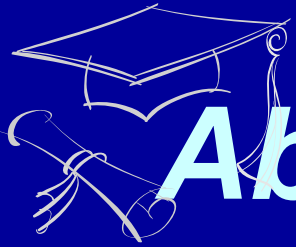
- must take the current graduation exam and achieve the level of competency determined by the IEP Team, and**
- earn the minimum number of credits required by the district through standard or alternative credits (July 2005)**

# ***Ability Program of Study***

- **The Ability Program of Study was developed for students with significant cognitive disability or severe mental health issues**

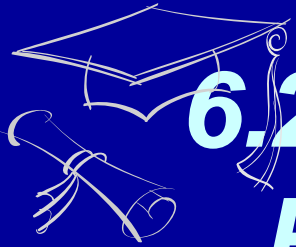
# ***Ability Program of Study***

- **The IEP team determines the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study**
  - **The IEP team must design a program of study to ensure the student:**
    - **Earns the minimum number of credits required by the district or charter school for graduation or be provided equivalent educational opportunities required by the district or charter.**
    - **IEP goals and functional curriculum must be based on the State's content standards with benchmarks and performance standards or the Expanded Grade Band Expectations.**
    - **Meets or exceeds IEP goals and objectives**



# ***Ability Program of Study***

- The student must take the current graduation exam or state approved Alternate Assessment and achieve the level (s) of proficiency determined by the IEP Team**
- The student must meet all graduation requirements established by the IEP team**
- The IEP must reference (document) the student's skill attainment and ability level**



## **6.29.1.9 NMAC Standards for Procedural Requirements**

- **The Standards for Excellence requires that graduation planning must be a part of all IEPs**
  - **Beginning at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade IEP**
  - **When a student returns to school after an extended absence**
  - **Subsequent times when evaluations warrant the need to modify**

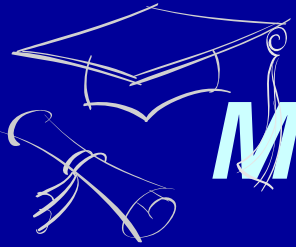
## ***6.31.2.11 EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES***

- Requires that graduation planning be integrated into the IEP transition process.
- Graduation plans must include:
  - the course of study;
  - projected date of graduation; and
  - if the child is not on target for the graduation plan, the strategies and responsibilities of the public agency, child and family must be identified in the IEP.

# ***Sec. 22-13-1.1 NMSA 2004***

## ***Graduation Requirements***

- At the end of grades eight through eleven, each student shall prepare an interim next step plan that sets forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high school graduation
- During the senior year each student must complete a “final next-step plan” that shows that the student has committed or intends to commit in the near future to a four-year college or university, a two-year college, a trade or vocational program, an internship or apprenticeship, military service or a job;
- An individual education program that meets the requirements of Subsections A and B of this section and that meets all applicable transition and procedural requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for a student with a disability shall satisfy the next-step plan requirements of section for that student.



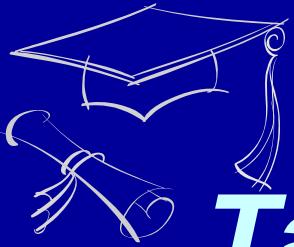
## ***Multi-year Program of Study***

- **Developed at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade IEP**
- **Contains proposed program of study for grades 9-12**
- **Must identify by name potential courses the student may take**
- **Must reflect the student's long-range measurable post school goals**



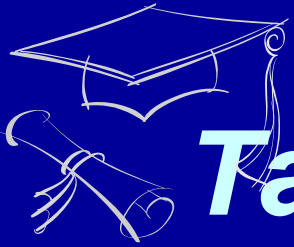
# ***Multi-year Program of Study***

- **Reviewed and revised on an annual basis for each year remaining until graduation**
- **Must be adjusted to address changes to student's strengths, preferences, interest, and needs**
- **IEP team must document the student's graduation status toward earning required credits and passing exit exam on the student's IEP**



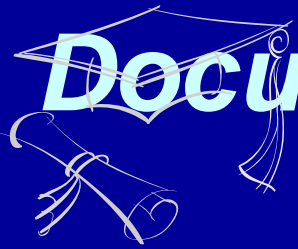
# ***Target Proficiency Scores***

- **Applies to Career Readiness and Ability graduation options for current graduate exit exam or the State's Alternate Assessment**
- **Review student performance on first attempt**
- **Establish targeted levels of proficiency for all subtest scores below State proficiency standards**



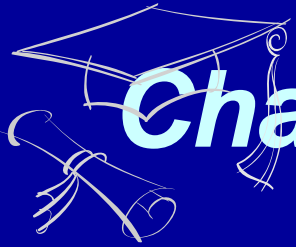
# ***Target Proficiency Scores***

- **The IEP team's targeted levels of proficiency should not be lower than the student's score on previous attempts**
- **Students taking the New Mexico Alternate Assessments must first meet the state's participation criteria**
- **If a student achieves an advanced proficiency level on all subtests of the Original NM Alternate Assessment, including the NM Alternate Assessment for Writing in Grades 3-9, the IEP team must arrange for the student to participate in the appropriate general assessment 6.29.1.9 (J)(13)(g)**



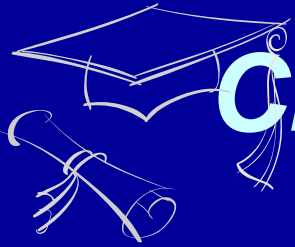
# ***Documentation Requirements for Target Scores***

- Targeted levels of proficiency should be documented on the IEP and PWN**
- Responsibilities toward meeting targeted levels of proficiency for district and student must be documented on IEP and PWN**



# ***Changing a Student's Program of Study***

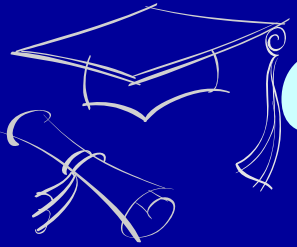
- **Must be considered in the order listed in the Standards for Excellence**
- **An alternative program of study may depart from the standard program only as far as is needed for the individual student**
- **Building administrator or designee must be a member of the team when an alternative program of study is developed**



# ***Changing a Student's Program of Study***

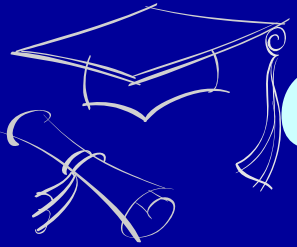
**Constitutes a change in placement and must be documented in the IEP and on the PWN**

- Identify reasons for change**
- Provide clear and concise program of study**
- Potential consequences**



# ***Changing a Student's Program of Study***

- **IEP teams shall not change a senior's program of study from standard to career readiness or career readiness to ability after the first 20 school days of the senior year**
- **For special exceptions the IEP team must provide justification by submitting a waiver request to the PED**
- **IEP teams can move a senior from the ability to career readiness or the career readiness to the standard if the student meets the requirements of that program of study**

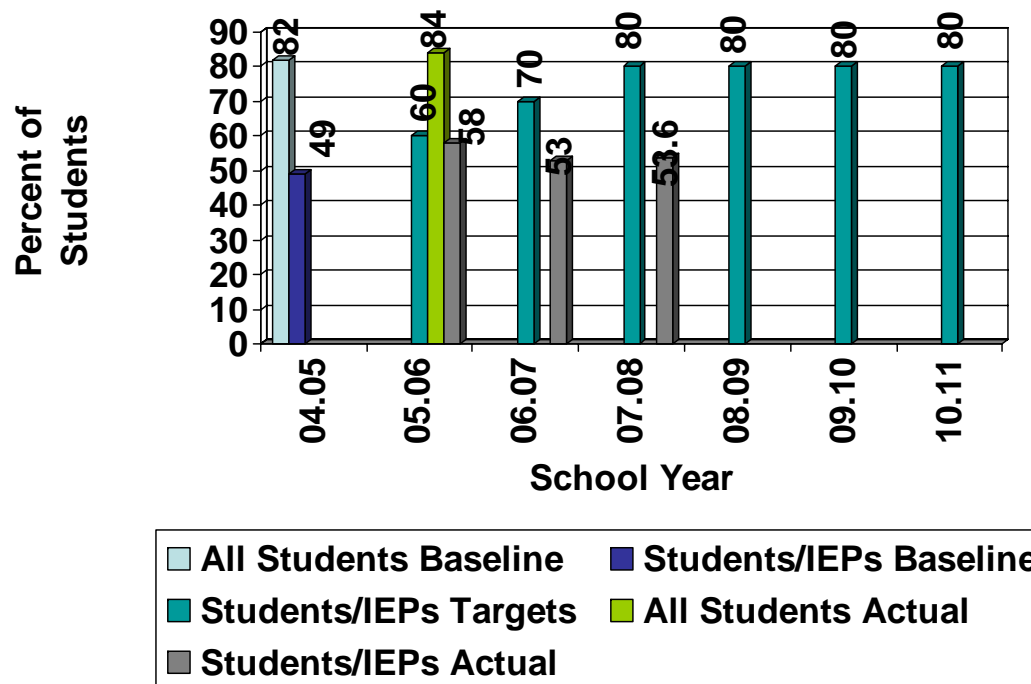


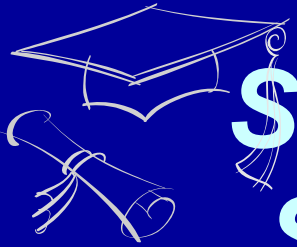
# ***Changing a Student's Program of Study***

**Effective with 2005-2006 students entering 10<sup>th</sup> grade**

- **Districts shall ensure that:**
  - 80-100% standard program of study
  - 10-15% career readiness program of study
  - 1-3% ability program of study
- **Waiver**

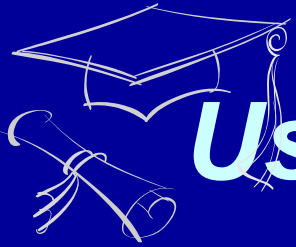
The NMPED will meet the SPP Indicator One as measured by an increase in the percent of youth graduating from high school with a regular diploma (standard pathway).





# ***Students Continuing Beyond the Standard High School Program***

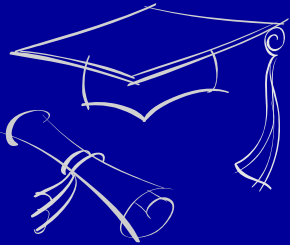
- A student who receives special education services may be granted a conditional certificate of transition in the form of a continuing or transition IEP when the IEP team provides documentation on the IEP and PWN:
  - that justifies that the issuance is warranted;
  - ensures that a conditional certificate of transition is not a program of study and does not end the student's right to a FAPE; and
  - ensures that the student has a continuing or transition IEP that outlines measures, resources and specific responsibilities for both the student and the district or charter school to ensure that the student receives a diploma.



# ***Use of a Conditional Certificate of Transition***

- **A certificate does not end a student's right to FAPE**
- **The student is not reported as exited in the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS).**



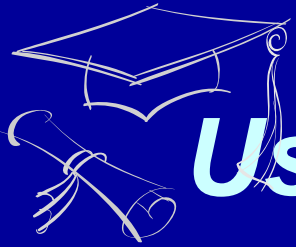


# ***Standards for Excellence Graduation Requirements***

## **6.29.1.9 (J)(13)(j)**

- **Clarifies the use of a conditional or transitional IEP developed within the IEP process**

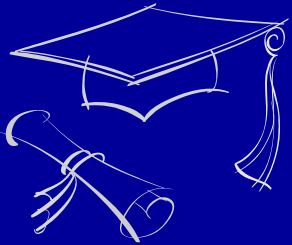




# ***Use of a Conditional Certificate of Transition***

- **A student who does not return to complete the follow-up plan of action will be considered as a dropout**

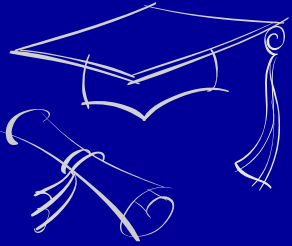




# *Recap*

- **Graduation plans must be documented on the student's IEP and prior written notice of proposed actions**

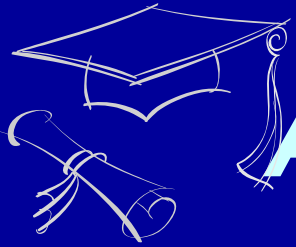




# *Exit IEP Meeting*

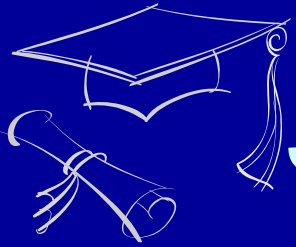


- Identify if additional evaluations, reports, or documents are needed for a student who will graduate on one of the three graduation options



# ***All Programs of Study***

- **What to look for:**
  - **Student's long-range goal statement**
  - **Student's identified strengths and needs**
  - **Student participate in the NM Statewide Assessment Program**
  - **Strategies to ensure the student master skills to pass the appropriate assessment or meet the targeted proficiency score if on an alternative graduation option**
  - **Accommodations needed**
  - **Responsibilities for both the district and the student**



# ***Standard Program of Study***

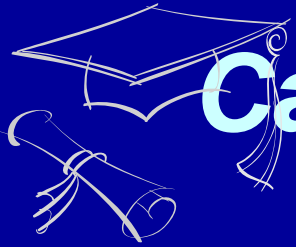
- **What to look for in the IEP:**
  - **Program of study should include all graduation requirements**
  - **Electives and any remedial activities should support the student to achieve long range goals and address student needs**



# ***Graduation Option Selection***

- **Must be based on the needs of the student and not solely based on the student's ability to earn credits or pass the current exit exam**

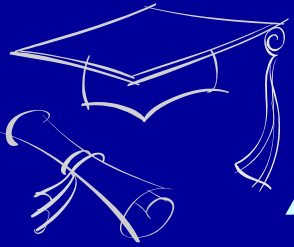




# ***Career Readiness Program of Study***

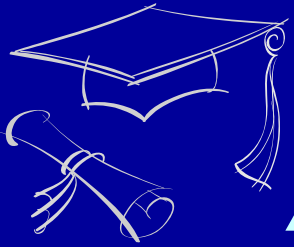
## **What to look for in the IEP:**

- **The focus is on the student's interest, career preference, and needs**
- **Includes a statement of why the standard graduation option was rejected**
- **Includes alternate and standard graduation requirements**
- **Goals and objectives are based on student needs and the employability and career development standards with benchmarks and performance standards**
- **Mastery and progress is documented in the IEP**



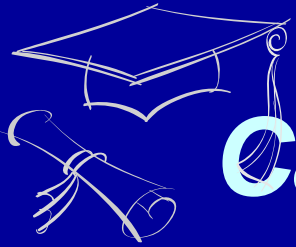
# ***Ability Program of Study***

- **What to look for in the IEP:**
  - **Statement of why the standard and career readiness graduation options were rejected**
  - **Based on meeting or surpassing IEP goals and objectives**
  - **Reference skill attainment at the student's ability**
  - **Lead to meaningful employment**



# ***Ability Program of Study***

- **What to look for in the IEP:**
  - **Functional or applied academics**
  - **IEP goals and objectives address areas of need**
  - **Mastery, progress, skill attainment is documented in the IEP**
  - **Varies from the standard high school graduation requirements**
  - **Individualized for each student**



# ***Career Readiness And Ability Options***

- **What to look for in the IEP:**
  - Targeted level (s) of proficiency the student must meet on the graduation examination



# ***Emerging Issues Surrounding the Graduation Options***

- **Misinterpretations of the alternative graduation options**
  - Achieving a targeted level of proficiency determined by the IEP team does not equate to passing the test for accountability and reporting purposes.
  - IEP teams are automatically selecting an alternate graduation option when a student doesn't pass the NMHSCE on the first try
  - IEP teams are placing students on alternate graduation options due to concerns that student cannot pass the established curriculum (algebra 1)

# ***STARS Reporting***

Indicator 1:  
First Semester or  
Prior Summer  
Graduate

Special Education  
Snapshot & Student  
Templates

Student Template

Not Required

Complete Fields:  
46, 65, 66, 91, and  
95

# ***STARS Reporting***

Indicator 1:  
End-of-Year  
Graduates

Special Education  
Events

Student Template  
And  
Student Snapshot

Special Education  
Snapshot

Complete Fields  
5, 6, & 7  
Event Type &  
Reason Codes

Complete Fields  
34, 38, 40, 46, 53,  
65, 66, 91, and  
95

Complete Fields  
11, 21, 44 and  
45

# ***STARS Reporting***

**Indicator 1:  
For Students  
Continuing Beyond Four  
Years**

**Student and  
Student  
Snapshot  
Templates**

**Special Education  
Snapshot  
Templates**

**Complete Fields:  
38, 40, 46, 53, 95**

**Complete Fields:  
11, 21, 44, 45**

# ***STARS Reporting***

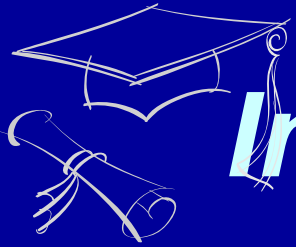
**For Students  
Exiting Special  
Education  
For Other Reasons**

**Student and  
Templates**

**Special Education  
Events**

**Complete Fields:  
34, 38, 40, 95**

**Complete Fields:  
5, 6, and 7**



# ***Integrity of the Diploma***

- **Verify that the student achieved met graduation requirements**

