

1      **R277. Education, Administration.**

2      **R277-705. Secondary School Completion and Diplomas.**

3      **R277-705-1. Authority, [and] Purpose and Oversight Category.**

4              (1) This rule is authorized by:

5              (a) Utah Constitution [Article X, Section 3](#), which vests general control and  
6 supervision of public education in the Board;

7              (b) Subsections [53E-3-501](#)(1)(b) and (c), which direct the Board to make rules  
8 regarding competency levels, graduation requirements, curriculum, and instruction  
9 requirements; and

10              (c) Subsection [53E-3-401](#)(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute  
11 the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

12              (2) The purpose of this rule is to:

13              (a) provide consistent definitions;

14              (b) provide alternative methods for a student to earn credit and alternate  
15 methods for schools to award credit;

16              (c) provide rules and procedures for the assessment of all students as required  
17 by law; and

18              (d) provide rules for a student to receive an alternative to a traditional diploma if  
19 appropriate criteria are met.

20              (3) This Rule R277-705 is categorized as Category 3 as described in R277-111  
21 [\[53E-3-501\]](#).

22

23      **R277-705-2. Definitions.**

24              (1) "Alternate Diploma" means a diploma issued in accordance with Section  
25 R277-705-5.

26              (2)(a) "Comparable course" means a course that fulfills the same graduation  
27 credit requirements as a course for which a student seeks to improve a grade.

28              (b) "Comparable course" does not include a course a student completes through  
29 the packet method.

30        [(2)](3) "Demonstrated competence" means subject mastery as determined by  
31 LEA standards and review. LEA review may include such methods and documentation  
32 as: tests, interviews, peer evaluations, writing samples, reports, or portfolios.

33        [(3)](4) "Diploma" means an official document awarded by an LEA consistent  
34 with state and LEA graduation requirements and the provisions of this rule.

35        [(4)](5) "FAPE" means a free appropriate public education, which includes  
36 special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public  
37 supervision and direction, and without charge in accordance with Board rule and the  
38 IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

39        (6) "Grade replacement" means credit a student earns by retaking a teacher-led  
40 course for a letter grade to improve a previous grade, which:

41        (a) may raise the student's grade point average if the new grade is higher; and  
42 (b) replaces the lower grade on the student's transcript.

43        (7) "Original credit" means credit a student earns through the successful  
44 completion of a course for the first time.

45        (8) "Packet" means a collection of instructional materials and assessments used  
46 to receive credit through the packet method.

47        (9) "Packet method" means an educational approach where:

48        (a) a high school student receives a collection of instructional materials from an  
49 institution, organization, or LEA;

50        (b) the high school student works through the materials independently with  
51 minimal or no direct instruction from a teacher; and

52        (c) assessment is primarily based on completion of assignments within the  
53 instructional materials.

54        (10) "Replacement credit" means a pass-fail credit a student earns for a course  
55 the student did not pass or complete, which:

56        (a) does not affect the student's grade point average; and  
57        (b) allows the student to fulfill high school graduation requirements.

58        [(6)](11)(a) "Secondary school" means grades 7-12 in whatever kind of school  
59 the grade levels exist.

60        (b) Grade 6 may be considered a secondary grade for some purposes.

61        (6) "Section 504 plan" means a written statement of related aids and services for  
62 a student with a qualifying disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in  
63 accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

64        [(7)](12)(a) "Special purpose school" means a school designated by a regional  
65 accrediting agency, adopted by the Board.

66        (b) "Special purpose school" includes a school:

67            (i) that serves a specific population such as a student with a disability, youth in  
68 care, or a school with a specific curricular emphasis; and

69            (ii) with curricula designed to serve specific populations that may be modified  
70 from a traditional program.

71        [(8)](13) "Student with a significant cognitive disability" or "SWSCD" is  
72 determined by a comprehensive understanding of a whole student, including review of  
73 educational considerations and data obtained through the IEP process, including  
74 whether a student:

75            (a) requires intensive, repeated, modified, and direct individualized instruction  
76 and requires substantial supports to learn, maintain, and generalize skills in the  
77 student's grade and age-appropriate curriculum;

78            (b) has special education eligibility documentation indicating the disability  
79 significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior;

80            (c) demonstrates cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior in home, school,  
81 and community environments, which are significantly below age expectations, even with  
82 program modifications, adaptations, and accommodations;

83            (d) has a severe and complex cognitive disability, which limits the student from  
84 meaningful participation in the standard academic core curriculum or achievement of  
85 the academic content standards established at grade level, without substantial support,  
86 modifications, adaptations, and accommodations;

87 (e) may be eligible to participate in alternate assessments; and  
88 (f) has a disability, which increases the need for dependence on others for  
89 many, if not all, daily living needs, and is expected to require extensive ongoing support  
90 through adulthood.

91 [§9] (14) "Supplemental education provider" means a private school or  
92 educational service provider:

93 (a) that may or may not be accredited; and  
94 (b) that provides courses or services similar to public school courses or classes.  
95 ~~(10)~~<sup>(15)</sup>(a) "Transcript" means an official document or record generated by one  
96 or several schools which includes:

97 (i) the courses in which a secondary student was enrolled;  
98 (ii) grades and units of credit earned; and  
99 (iii) citizenship and attendance records.

100 (b) A transcript is one part of a student's permanent record or cumulative file that  
101 may include:

102 (i) birth certificate  
103 (ii) immunization records; and  
104 (iii) other information as determined by the school in possession of the record.  
105 ~~(11)~~(16) "Unit of credit" means credit awarded for a course taken:  
106 (a) consistent with this rule;  
107 (b) upon LEA authorization; or

110 R277-705-3. Required LEA Policy Explaining Student Credit.

111 (1)(a) An LEA governing board shall establish a policy, in an open meeting,  
112 explaining the process and standards for acceptance and reciprocity of credits earned  
113 by a student in accordance with state law.

114 (b) An LEA policy described in Subsection (1)(a) shall include specific and  
115 adequate notice to a student and a parent of all policy requirements and limitations.

116 (2)(a) An LEA shall accept credits and grades awarded to a student from a  
117 school or a provider accredited by an accrediting entity adopted by the Board.

118 (b) An LEA policy may establish reasonable timelines and may require adequate  
119 and timely documentation of authenticity for credits and grades submitted.

120 (3) An LEA policy shall provide various methods for a student to earn credit from  
121 a non-accredited source, course work, or education provider including:

122 (a) satisfaction of coursework by demonstrated competency, as evaluated at the  
123 LEA level;

124 (b) assessment as proctored and determined at the school or school level;

125 (c) review of student work or projects by an LEA administrator; and

126 (d) satisfaction of electronic or correspondence coursework, as approved at the  
127 LEA level.

(4) An LEA may require documentation of compliance with Section 53G-6-204.

128 (4) An LEA may require documentation of compliance with Section [53G-6-204](#)  
129 before reviewing a student's home school or competency work, assessment, or  
130 materials.

131 (5) An LEA policy for participation in extracurricular activities, awards,  
132 recognitions, and enhanced diplomas may be determined locally consistent with the law  
133 and this rule.

134 (6) An LEA has the final decision-making authority for the awarding of credit and  
135 grades from a non-accredited source consistent with state law, due process, and this  
136 rule.

137 (7) An LEA may award a grade for original credit or replacement credit through  
138 the packet method if the packet adheres to the standards prescribed in state board rule  
139 and:

140 (a) the LEA approves the packet for use as an instructional material in  
141 accordance with:

142        (i) Subsection [53G-4-402\(27\)](#) for a district school; or  
143        (ii) Section [53G-5-404](#) for a charter school; or

144        (b) the state board recommends the packet after going through the state  
145        instructional materials process described in [Title 53E, Chapter 4, Part 4, State](#)  
146        Instructional Materials.  
147        (c) Packets for original credit are not “Demonstrated Competence” as defined in  
148        R277-705-2(2).  
149        (8) An LEA may not use the packet method, or classify a packet as original  
150        credit, to improve a previous course grade of a high school student as described in  
151        Subsection 9.  
152        (9) A high school student may improve a grade through grade replacement by:  
153        (a) repeating a course one or more times; or  
154        (b) enrolling in and completing a comparable course that is teacher-led.  
155        (10) The state board shall:  
156        (a) in accordance with [Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking](#)  
157        Act, make rules or policies that:  
158        (i) establish standards for the use of the packet method to award original credit  
159        and replacement credit;  
160        (ii) include alignment with core standards the state board establishes under  
161        Sections 53E-3-501 and 53E-4-202; and  
162        (iii) maintain a comprehensive list of state board approved packets in the state  
163        board's Recommended Instructional Materials System on the state board's website; and  
164        (b) report annually to the Education Interim Committee the number of students in  
165        each LEA who receive academic credit through the packet method.  
166        (11) An LEA shall:  
167        (a) assign a distinct course name and number for credit earned through the  
168        packet method to easily identify the use of the packet method on a student transcript;  
169        and  
170        (b) track and record the number of packets an LEA uses to award original credit  
171        or replacement credit each school year.

172        (12) Subsection R277-705-3(11)(b), regarding a report on the packet method, is  
173        repealed July 1, 2028.

174

175 **R277-705-4. Diplomas and Certificates of Completion.**

176        (1) An LEA shall award diplomas and certificates of completion.

177        (2) An LEA shall establish criteria for a student to earn a certificate of completion  
178        that may be awarded to a student who:

179            (a) has completed the student's senior year;

180            (b) is exiting or aging out of the school system; and

181            (c) has not met all state or LEA requirements for a diploma.

182        (3) A student with a disability served by a special education program shall satisfy  
183        high school completion or graduation criteria, consistent with state and federal law and  
184        the student's IEP.

185        (4) An LEA may award a student a certificate of completion consistent with state  
186        and federal law and the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.

187        (5) An LEA may not enroll a student with the intent to award a diploma or a  
188        certificate of completion once the student has earned a high school equivalence.

189

190 **R277-705-5. Alternate Diploma.**

191        (1) An LEA may award an alternate diploma to a student with a significant  
192        cognitive disability if:

193            (a) the student accesses grade-level Core standards through the Essential  
194        Elements;

195            (b) the student's IEP team makes graduation substitutions in the same content  
196        area, from a list of alternative courses approved by the Superintendent; and

197            (c) the student meets all graduation requirements before exiting school at or  
198        before age 22.

199        (2) An alternate diploma issued in accordance with Subsection (1) may not  
200        indicate that the recipient is a student with a disability.

201 (3) Notwithstanding the award of an alternate diploma, an LEA may still be  
202 obligated to provide FAPE to an eligible student in accordance with the IDEA.

203 (4)(a) The Superintendent shall provide a list of alternative courses that may be  
204 considered for student with cognitive disabilities working to receive an alternate  
205 diploma.

206 (b) An LEA may submit courses to the Superintendent to be considered for  
207 possible inclusion on the list required by Subsection (4)(a).

208 (c) The Superintendent shall annually update the list of alternative courses  
209 required under Subsection (4)(a) following review of LEA recommendations made under  
210 Subsection (4)(b).

212 R277-705-6. Career Development Credentials.

213 (1) An LEA may award a career development credential to a student with an IEP  
214 or Section 504 plan:

215 (a) who meets the requirements of a career focused work experience before  
216 leaving school; and

217 (b) consistent with:

218 (i) state and federal law; and

219 (ii) the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.

(2) Before receiving a career development credential, a student shall:

221 (a) earn the following credits in core content:

222 (i) English Language Arts (3.0):

## 223 (ii) Mathematics (2.0):

224 (iii) Science (1.0); and

225 (iv) Social Studies (1.0)

226 (b) complete 120 hours e

227 (i) 40 hours of paid employment; or

228 (ii) documentation of completion of

229 the Department of Workforce Services:

230 (c) complete an LEA approved transition curriculum class or coursework that  
231 includes:

232 (i) disability awareness;

233 (ii) accommodations;

234 (iii) self-advocacy training;

235 (iv) career exploration; and

236 (v) workplace soft skills;

237 (d) receive .5 credits in a CTE Work Based Learning internship, including

238 accommodations or modifications as appropriate and allowed by industry standards;

239 and

240 (e) verify concentration in a CTE pathway in the student's area of interest.

241

## 242 R277-705-7. Adult Education Students.

243 (1) An adult education student is eligible only for an adult education secondary  
244 diploma.

245 (2) An adult education diploma may not be upgraded or changed to a traditional,  
246 high school-specific diploma.

247 (3) A school district shall establish a policy:

248 (a) allowing or disallowing adult education student participation in graduation  
249 activities or ceremonies; and

250 (b) establishing timelines and criteria for satisfying adult education graduation  
251 and diploma requirements.

252

**253 R277-705-8. Student Rights and Responsibilities Related to Graduation,  
254 Transcripts, and Receipt of Diplomas.**

255 (1) An LEA shall supervise the granting of credit and awarding of diplomas, but  
256 may delegate the responsibility to schools within the LEA.

257                   (2) An LEA may determine criteria for a student's participation in graduation  
258 activities, honors, and exercises, independent of a student's receipt of a diploma or  
259 certificate of completion.

260                   (3) A diploma, a certificate, credits, or an unofficial transcript may not be  
261 withheld from a student for nonpayment of school fees.

262                   (4)(a) An LEA shall establish a consistent timeline for all students for completion  
263 of graduation requirements.

264                   (b) A timeline described in Subsection (4)(a) shall be consistent with state law  
265 and this rule.

266                   (5) An LEA's graduation requirements may not apply retroactively.

267

268 **KEY: adult education, high school credits, graduation requirements**

269 **Date of Last Change: November 7, 2024**

270 **Notice of Continuation: November 15, 2022**

271 **Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: [Art X Sec 3](#); [53E-3-501\(1\)\(b\)](#);**  
272 **[53E-3-401\(4\)](#)**

273

274