



**Los Angeles County
Office of Education**



A TECHNICAL GUIDE TO

SB

532

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Senate Bill 532

Summary

Sponsored by: Author - Senator Anna M. Caballero, 14th District
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[Senate Bill \(SB\) 532](#) was introduced in 2021, to require local educational agencies (LEAs) to consult rather than inform students and their educational rights holders of their right to a graduation exemption.

LEAs must determine, in consultation with the student and their educational rights holder, if the student can reasonably complete local graduation requirements within a fifth year of high school. Until January 1, 2028, if an LEA finds that a student cannot meet local requirements within a fifth year but can complete state requirements in that time, the LEA must offer this option to the student and their educational rights holder.

If a student is deemed ineligible for an exemption upon transferring schools, LEAs must reassess eligibility within 30 calendar days of the next academic year. This also applies to students in adult education programs, regardless of age. Each LEA is now required to submit an annual report to the CDE showing the number of students in their fourth- and fifth-year cohorts who graduated with an exemption from local requirements in the prior school year. This data, broken down by cohort, student category, race and disability status, will be published by the CDE annually.

Transferring LEAs must issue and the new LEA must accept credits on the student's transcript. If a student's transcript lacks credits earned, the new LEA must contact the previous LEA within 2 business days and the previous LEA must issue credits and all records within 2 business days of the request. Educational records must include enrollment days, seat time (if applicable) and a transcript showing full and partial credits earned or coursework completed.

ELIGIBILITY

How does a student qualify for the graduation exemption?

Transferred after their 2nd year of high school (or what would have been their 2nd year)

Meets one or more of the following criteria for a mobile student:

- A student in foster care (or former foster student, for adult education students)
- A student experiencing homelessness
- A former juvenile court school student
- A student from a military family
- A migratory student who transfers schools any time after completing their 2nd year of high school
- A student in a newcomer program in their 3rd or 4th year of high school

Determining a Student's Eligibility for the Graduation Exemption

A student's eligibility is assessed in their 3rd or 4th year of high school if they are not reasonably able to complete the LEA's graduation requirements. To qualify a student for exemption, an LEA can consider any of the following:

- The number of credits earned to date
- The length of the student's school enrollment
- The student's age compared to the average age of students in the 3rd or 4th year of high school (for students with significant gaps in attendance)

Ask yourself: Can the student reasonably complete the local graduation requirements within their 4-year cohort?



What do you mean by reasonable?

This can vary for everyone, but consider this: is it fair and equitable? Think about the student's situation—is it reasonable for them to take a full class load during the day and add on credit recovery, especially if previous attempts haven't worked?

NOTIFICATION

Note: This guide was created to support students residing in foster care. Portions of the bill may or may not apply to all mobile student populations.

The LEA must inform former juvenile court school students, current foster care students, their educational rights holder (ERH) and the Children's Social Worker/Probation Officer about the exemption's availability and the potential to qualify.

This consultation should occur within 30 calendar days of the student's transfer into the school.

Failure to notify:

A student shall be found eligible for the exemption of local graduation requirements, even if notification occurs after termination of the court's jurisdiction.



To learn if a student was previously enrolled in a juvenile court school, check CALPADS to verify enrollment history. This may also be accessed through your district CALPADS access or by logging into the LACOE, Educational Passport System (EPS).

Where may I find the Children's Social Worker or Probation Officer? You may find this information in the LACOE EPS data system under the details tab, or the 5.7 list. If this information is unavailable in EPS, you may contact the DCFS, Y.E.S. Inbox to learn about the Children's Social Worker for a student in foster care.



CONSULTATION

Under SB 532, LEAs are now required to consult with students and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student.

Upon determining a student's qualification for a graduation exemption, an LEA is required to discuss the following:

01 - Options

The options include the following:

- Graduate in their 4th year, with the state minimum graduation requirements.
- Remain for a 5th year to complete the LEAs graduation requirements.
- Remain for a 5th year to complete the statewide minimum graduation requirements.
 - An LEA determines this if the student cannot reasonably complete local graduation requirements in their 4th or 5th year of high school.
 - Please note, that this option (only) will sunset on January 1, 2028.

02 - Affect on Postsecondary Education

LEAs are required to discuss how accepting a graduation exemption would affect their postsecondary or vocational plans, which includes their ability to obtain admission, due to the varying requirements with the state and local graduation requirements.

03 - Student Data

Review and share the student's academic records and any other important/relevant information that would help the student and their ERH make an informed decision in accepting or denying the graduation exemption.

04 - Other Important Items

- LEAs must also discuss possible transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
- Credit recovery
- LEAs must remember to discuss the student's right to remain in their school of origin for students in foster care and/or facing homelessness.
- This exemption may not be revoked once it is agreed upon. Only an ERH (or student if over 18 years old) may revoke an exemption.
 - This exemption remains in effect, even if a student's court case terminates or transfers to another school or district.

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- All provisions of this bill extend to students enrolled in an adult education program, regardless of their age.
- If a student was once granted this exemption, the adult education program and all LEAs must continue to honor the exemption—no matter the student's current status (i.e., no longer in foster care).
- The exemption is extended to students enrolled in adult education programs who would have qualified for this provision while enrolled in high school.

What if the student enrolling is no longer under court jurisdiction and has been out of school for a year? Are we still obligated to provide or uphold the exemption?

Yes, once a student is granted an exemption, it transfers with them if they leave the school or LEA that provided it. The length of time out of school does not affect a student's exemption or eligibility.



What is meant by regardless of age. Does this mean an adult may enroll years after high school and claim this exemption?

Yes, Ed Code 51225.1 does not specify an age limit, so if an adult learner enrolls in any adult education program and at any point they were or should have qualified for this exemption while in high school, you shall grant the exemption at the time of the new/current enrollment.



DECISION MAKER

- It is the sole discretion of the following to decide on accepting or denying an exemption:
 - Student's ERH
 - Students, if they are over 18 years of age
 - Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness
 - Unaccompanied minors who hold their education rights, whether to accept the exemption, based on the student's best interest.

Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness can make educational decisions for themselves and are not required to obtain approval from an ERH.

Did you know?

If you are unsure who the holder of educational rights is, please refer to the LACOE Educational Passport System (EPS) for an uploaded court document (JV-535) in Document Library and the Details Tab for this information.



Who is considered an unaccompanied youth?

A youth that is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. An unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness is a youth that is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and is residing in a situation such as a runaway shelter, abandoned building, cars, street, couch surfing or other precarious situations that qualify as being homeless.

PARTIAL CREDITS & TRANSCRIPTS

- The LEA (where the student is transferring from) shall issue full or partial credits (for coursework successfully completed) on an official transcript.
- An accepting LEA shall accept full or partial credits earned, which should be clearly stated on an official transcript.
- If the accepting LEA is aware that the transcript is missing grades or credits, they must request this information within two business days.
 - The previous LEA also has a turnaround time of two business days to provide this information to the new LEA.
- Educational records are required to include days of enrollment or seat time, or both, if applicable.
- All credits and grades earned for each school and LEA shall be listed separately to clarify where the credits were earned.
- As always, the student has the right to be enrolled in the same or equivalent course when partial credit is awarded so that the student can continue and complete the entire course.
- An LEA shall not
 - Require a student to retake a portion of the course that has already been satisfactorily completed.
 - Prohibit the student from retaking a course to meet eligibility requirements for admission to a CSU or UC school.
 - Require a student to retake the portion of the course a student did not complete unless the LEA and ERH find that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate.

[Cal. Educ. Code Sec. 51225.2\(b\)](#)

[Cal. Educ. Code Sec. 51225.2 \(c\)\(2\)](#)

REEVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY

- If a student does not qualify for an exemption within the time they have transferred between schools (after their second year of high school), LEAs are required to reevaluate a student's eligibility.
- This reevaluation must occur within the first 30 calendar days of a new academic year after being determined to be ineligible.



At the start of each school year, a school counselor, district foster youth liaison or other staff should complete a new eligibility check for students who did not previously qualify.

Keep a list of these students and mark your calendar for consultations with each eligible student in the coming year.

Work with your CALPADS Administrator to ensure your district identifies and reports the accurate number of students in foster care.

The LACOE FYSCP has created a comprehensive school enrollment and disenrollment training geared toward front office staff, registrars and anyone enrolling students in foster care. Please contact your LACOE FYSCP regional team members to provide this resource to your entire district for FREE!

DATA REPORTING

New Annual Reporting

With SB 532 in place, LEAs are now required to provide the California Department of Education (CDE) with the following information:

- The number of students that have graduated with an exemption from local and statewide graduation requirements.
 - These students must be graduating in their 4th or 5th-year cohorts.
 - The data must be disaggregated by the following:
 - Student cohort
 - Student category
 - Race
 - Disability status

The CDE will make all data provided by the LEAs public annually and will be aligned with other reporting timelines associated with the California dashboard graduation data.

NON COMPLIANCE

Do you have a family that does not agree with your district's recommendation? If so, please provide the following information.

- All complaints regarding noncompliance with any part of this bill may be filed with the LEA under the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP).
- If a person making the complaint is not satisfied with a decision made by the LEA, they may appeal the decision in accordance with Chapter 5.1 (Section 4600) of Division 1 of the Title 5 California Code of Regulations.
 - A complainant shall receive a written decision of the appeal within 60 days of the department's receipt of an appeal.

Reduced Graduation Requirements: Eligibility & Verification Form

Assembly Bill 532 is an act to amend Sections 49069.5, 51225.1 and 51225.2 of the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

Student : Date of Birth: Grade: SSID #

Educational Rights Holder Name:

Education Code allows certain highly mobile students (youth in foster care, homeless child or youth, a former juvenile court school student, a student who is a child of a military family, a student who is a migratory child, or a student participating in a newcomer program) **to graduate with reduced graduation requirements if they meet specific eligibility criteria.**

Type of Consultation

Initial consultation date: (Should take place within 30 days after enrollment)

Reevaluation date: (within 30 days of the start of the following school year or by request)

Eligibility Criteria

Has the student transferred schools after their 2nd year of high school? (To determine if they are in the 3rd or 4th year of high school, use either the number of credits the student has earned to the date of transfer, the length of their school enrollment or, for those with significant gaps in school attendance, the student's age as compared to the average age of those in the 3rd or 4th year of high school, whichever will qualify the student for the exemption)

Yes (Continue to next Question) **No** (End of review - student is ineligible for the exemption at this time. Go to educational right holder signature section)

Is the student reasonably able to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements by the end of their 4th year of high school?

Yes (End of review - student is ineligible for the exemption at this time. Go to educational right holder signature section) **No** (Complete the remainder of the form)

Consultation

Consulted with the student and their educational rights holder regarding how enrolling in the 5th year of high school or accepting an exemption from the local educational agency's graduation coursework requirements may potentially impact postsecondary education or vocational plans and any alternative options such as credit recovery and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.

Student Initials: ERH Initials: Counselor or Administrative Designee Initials:

Graduation Pathways

Check the appropriate box

- | | | |
|----------|---|--------------------------|
| A | Remain in school for a 5th year to complete local graduation requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B | Remain in school for a 5th year to complete the minimum statewide graduation requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C | Decline exemption (A request for re-evaluation can be made any time before graduation) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Student and Educational Rights Holder Signature

Student Signature :

Date signed:

Educational Rights Holder Signature:

Date signed:

Print Educational Rights Holder Name:

School Site and District Contact Information

Counselor/ Administrative Designee:

Signature:

Telephone: () Email:

Date:

RESOURCES

The Los Angeles County Office of Education, Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program is available for additional information regarding SB 532. Should you need additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact your region's Senior Program Specialist. If you are not part of an LEA, please contact our office, see information below.

[Full Bill Text](#) - California Legislative Information

[About the Act](#) - California's Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC)
Through the lens of a student facing homelessness

[FAQs](#) - National Center for Youth Law

[Background of SB 532](#) - National Center for Youth Law, School House Connection & Los Angeles County Office of Education

Mission:
**To facilitate collaboration and build capacity in order
to maximize the educational success of students in
foster care.**



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[Click here](#) to learn more about the Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program.

Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program Administrators

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