R277. Education, Administration.
R277-705. Secondary School Completion and Diplomas.
R277-705-1. Definitions.

A. "Accreditation" means the formal process for internal and external review and approval under the Standards for the Northwest Accreditation Commission, a division of Advance Education Inc., (AdvancED Northwest).

B. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.

C. "Demonstrated competence" means subject mastery as determined by LEA standards and review. LEA review may include such methods and documentation as: tests, interviews, peer evaluations, writing samples, reports or portfolios.

D. "Diploma" means an official document awarded by an LEA consistent with state and LEA graduation requirements and the provisions of this rule.

E. "Individualized Education Program (IEP)" means a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with the Utah Special Education Rules and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

F. "LEA" means a local education agency, including local school boards/public school districts and schools, and charter schools.

G. "Military child or children" means a K-12 public education student whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) satisfies the definition of Section 53A-11-1401.

H. "Secondary school" means grades 7-12 in whatever kind of school the grade levels exist. Grade 6 may be considered a secondary grade for some purposes.

I. "Section 504 plan" means a written statement of reasonable accommodations for a student with a qualifying disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

J. "Special purpose schools" means schools designated by regional accrediting agencies, such as AdvancED Northwest. These schools typically serve a specific population such as students with disabilities, youth in custody, or schools with specific curricular emphasis. Their courses and curricula are designed to serve their specific populations and may be modified from traditional programs.

K. "Supplemental education provider" means a private school or educational service provider which may or may not be accredited, that provides courses or services similar to public school courses/classes.

L. "Transcript" means an official document or record(s) generated by one or several schools which includes, at a minimum: the courses in which a secondary student was enrolled, grades and units of credit earned, citizenship and attendance records. The transcript is usually one part of the student's permanent or cumulative file which also may include birth certificate, immunization records and other information as determined by the

school in possession of the record.

M. "Unit of credit" means credit awarded for courses taken consistent with this rule or upon LEA authorization or for mastery demonstrated by approved methods.

R277-705-2. Authority and Purpose.

A. This rule is authorized by Article X, Section 3 of the Utah Constitution, which places general control and supervision of the public schools under the Board; Section 53A-1-402(1)(b) and (c) which direct the Board to make rules regarding competency levels, graduation requirements, curriculum, and instruction requirements; and Section 53A-1-401(3) which allows the Board to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities.

B. The purpose of this rule is to provide consistent definitions, provide alternative methods for students to earn and schools to award credit, and to provide rules and procedures for the assessment of all students as required by law.

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

A. All Utah LEAs shall have a policy, approved in an open meeting by the governing board, explaining the process and standards for acceptance and reciprocity of credits earned by students in accordance with Utah state law. Policies shall provide for specific and adequate notice to students and parents of all policy requirements and limitations.

B. LEAs shall adhere to the following standards for credits or coursework from schools, supplemental education providers accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Commission, and accredited distance learning schools:

(1) Public schools shall accept credits and grades awarded to students from schools or providers accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Commission or approved by the Board without alteration.

(2) LEA policies may establish reasonable timelines and may require adequate and timely documentation of authenticity for credits and grades submitted.

C. LEA policies shall provide various methods for students to earn credit from non-accredited sources, course work or education providers. Methods, as designated by the LEA may include:

(1) Satisfaction of coursework by demonstrated competency, as evaluated at the LEA level;

(2) Assessment as proctored and determined at the school or school level;

(3) Review of student work or projects by LEA administrators; and

(4) Satisfaction of electronic or correspondence coursework, as approved at the LEA level.

D. LEAs may require documentation of compliance with Section 53A-11-102 prior to reviewing student home school or competency work, assessment or materials.

E. LEA policies for participation in extracurricular activities, awards, recognitions, and enhanced diplomas may be determined locally consistent with the law and this rule.

F. An LEA has the final decision-making authority for the awarding of credit and grades from non-accredited sources consistent with state law, due process, and this rule.

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

A. LEAs shall award diplomas and certificates of completion.

B. LEAs shall establish criteria for students to earn a certificate of completion that may be awarded to students who have completed their senior year, are exiting the school system, and have not met all state or LEA requirements for a diploma.

R277-705-5. Students with Disabilities.

A. A student with disabilities served by special education programs shall satisfy high school completion or graduation criteria, consistent with state and federal law and the student's IEP.

B. A student may be awarded a certificate of completion consistent with state and federal law and the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

R277-705-6. Adult Education Students.

A. Adult education students are eligible only for an adult education secondary diploma.

B. An adult education diplomas cannot be upgraded or changed to traditional, high school-specific diplomas.

C. School districts shall establish policies:

(1) allowing or disallowing adult education student participation in graduation activities or ceremonies.

(2) establishing timelines and criteria for satisfying adult education graduation/diploma requirements.

R277-705-7. Student Rights and Responsibilities Related to Graduation, Transcripts and Receipt of Diplomas.

A. LEAs shall supervise the granting of credit and awarding of diplomas, but may delegate the responsibility to schools within the LEA.

B. An LEA may determine criteria for a student's participation in graduation activities, honors, and exercises, independent of a student's receipt of a diploma or certificate of completion.

C. Diplomas or certificates, credit or unofficial transcripts may not be withheld from students for nonpayment of school fees.

D. LEAs shall establish consistent timelines for all students for completion of graduation requirements. Timelines shall be consistent with state law and this rule.

E. LEAs shall work with enrolled military children to evaluate the students' coursework or to assist students in completing coursework to allow military children to graduate with the

students' age-appropriate graduating class consistent with Section 53A-11-1404.

F. Consistent with Section 53A-11-1404(3), if a Utah school is unable to facilitate a military child's receipt of diploma by evaluating coursework in Utah schools and previous schools attended, the Utah school shall contact the military child's previous local education agency and aid, to the extent possible, the receipt of a diploma.

G. Graduation requirements are not retroactive.

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