

Dear Parents:

Your daughter/son is on track for graduation from _____ High School this coming June. Since, according to the United States Department of Education, this constitutes a change in Special Education placement, we are required by law to notify you in writing “a reasonable time” before graduation, so that you may have sufficient time to plan for, or challenge, the pending graduation.

According to Section 300.122(a)(3) of the Education Code, a student’s right to a Free and Public Education (FAPE) ends when the student graduates with a regular high school diploma; but students who receive any document other than a regular diploma (for instance, a “certificate of completion”) are still entitled to FAPE if they are within the eligible age range (up to the 22nd birthday).

In other words, when a student graduates from high school, they may go on to a public college or university, or a private post-secondary school (for instance, a technical or trade school), but strictly on their own merits, not by any mandated “right”.

It is true that most California community colleges, and even state colleges and universities, have “resource centers” available to students with special needs, and your student may be able to avail themselves of these centers, if they qualify according to the college guidelines. But their absolute right to a Free and Public Education will end when they receive their high school diploma.

The purpose of this notice is to ensure that we do not “dump” students out into the “real world” without some sort of plan in place to help them be as successful after graduation, as they have been while in school. To this end, we have written Individual Transition Plans for each student, counselled each student regarding their future, and worked through various agencies and programs to prepare each student as well as can be done, while they were still here in high school.

It is our sincere hope that all students graduate with a promising future, and their own hopes and goals. If you feel that anything more needs to be done, please contact me.

We appreciate your support.

Sincerely,