

Graduation Pathway Options for Students with Significant Disabilities

Purpose:

Students who participate in the alternate assessment require extensive modification to their curriculum, and their assessments should be aligned with the Louisiana Connectors. Students are not required to meet the Carnegie credit graduation requirement and may take courses focused on applied learning and career preparation. The alternate assessment is a performance-based assessment designed for students whose instructional program is aligned with the Louisiana Connectors. Course decisions for alternate assessment eligible students should be driven by the least restrictive environment determined by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team. Students who participate in the alternate assessment must take the English Language Arts, Math, and Science LEAP Connect in grade 11. High School students who do not score Level 2 or higher on the alternate assessment may complete a growth portfolio approved by the district Special Education Director (or their designee) to fulfill the assessment component for the purposes of graduation. Students participating in the alternate assessment may pursue a Certificate of Achievement if they do not meet the graduation requirements for a high school diploma. Guidance for graduation pathways can be found at [Louisiana Special Education Guidance for High School Students](#).

Graduation Requirements for Jump Start TOPS Tech Career Alternate Diploma pathway:

Career Diploma Pathway aligned with the student's IEP will be reflected on the [Individual Graduation Plan](#) (IGP).

- Course Experiences (can be applied courses or Carnegie credit courses):
 - English (4 credits)
 - Math (4 credits)
 - Science (2 credits)
 - Social Studies (2 credits)
 - Electives (2-4 credits)
 - Career Preparation (7-9 credits)
- Assessments
 - LEAP Connect (Grade 11)
 - Score At Goal or Above Goal
 - ACT: Students who take the alternate assessment are not required to take the ACT series of assessments.
- Transition

- Evidence of a plan for the student to successfully transition from the school system to post-secondary opportunities:
 - Post-secondary education
 - Employment
 - Independent living skills

Growth Portfolio

Students pursuing an Alternate Jumpstart Diploma Pathway who do not satisfy standard assessment criteria may fulfill graduation requirements through the completion of a portfolio. This portfolio is intended to serve as a thorough exhibition of the student's academic progress and accomplishments. The portfolio must include verifiable data that demonstrates the achievement of IEP objectives and advancement in both extended standards and core subjects. Furthermore, the portfolio must present evidence of the student's advancement toward and attainment of their transition objectives, which are formulated to equip them for post-secondary life. Active participation of students in the portfolio's creation is mandatory, as it fosters a sense of responsibility. Students, with the assistance of special education instructors and personnel, should construct portfolios that accurately reflect their distinctive abilities, requirements, and accomplishments.

For students with significant cognitive disabilities, an effective portfolio can demonstrate the student's unique abilities and potential. The portfolio might include:

- Personal Introduction: A section where the student can introduce themselves and share their interests, strengths, and aspirations.
- Educational History: A summary of the student's educational experiences, including schools attended, services received, and supports utilized.
- Work Samples: Examples of the student's work across different subject areas, demonstrating their skills and knowledge.
- Recommendations: Letters of recommendation from teachers, therapists, or other professionals who have worked with the student.
- Achievements: A highlight of the student's accomplishments, both academic and personal.
- Future Goals: A description of the student's goals for the future, including post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.

Certificate of Achievement

The Certificate of Achievement is an exit document granted to students with disabilities who have successfully met specific requirements and conditions. This certificate acknowledges their accomplishments and signifies their completion of a significant educational milestone. However, it's important to note that receiving this certificate does not automatically disqualify a student from continuing eligibility for services under existing regulations, unless they have reached the age of 22 as outlined in [Bulletin 1706](#).

The student has a documented disability that meets the mandated criteria:

- The student participated in the LEAP Alternate Assessment.
- The student completed at least 12 years of schooling or reached the age of 22, with the exception of students younger than 16.
- The student fulfilled the required attendance requirements.

- The student's IEP reflects that they have engaged with the general education curriculum.
- The student completed and documented transition planning.