High School Diplomas – HEA 1219

HEA 1219, signed by the Governor on March 23, 2016, becomes effective on July 1, 2016. This bill makes two revisions to high school graduation requirements:

1. **All high schools must offer students the opportunity to earn any type of state diploma approved by the State Board. (IC 20-26-5-37)**

2. **A school corporation cannot require a student with a disability to complete locally required credits that exceed state credit requirements to receive a diploma unless otherwise required as part of the student's individualized education program under IC 20-35.**

Procedure for students with disabilities related to above revised requirement:

The Department of Education strongly encourages the case conference committee to maintain high expectations for students with disabilities, opting out of the Core 40 Diploma only after assistive technology and other supports and services have been implemented in a Core 40 Course of Study.

During the annual case review (as defined in IC 20-35-7-1) held when the student is in grade 8, the case conference committee (as defined in IC 20-35-7-2) shall, as a part of the annual case review, discuss with the student's parent and the student, if appropriate:

(1) The types of diplomas available for students to receive in the state of Indiana;

(2) The course requirements for each type of diploma; and

(3) Employment and career options for the student and the type of academic, technical, and vocational preparation necessary to achieve the employment or career.

Beginning in grade 8, the student's individualized education program must identify the type of diploma the student will seek and courses that allow the student to progress toward the diploma in a timely manner. If the locally offered diploma has requirements beyond those of the SBOE approved diploma, the case conference committee may eliminate the additional requirements, if appropriate. Per HEA 1219 (2016), a school may not require a student with a disability to complete additional credits that exceed that State's credit requirement in order to receive a diploma unless the additional local requirements are required as part of the student's IEP.

Because HEA 1219, requiring all high schools to offer all diplomas approved by the SBOE, is effective as of July 1, 2016, schools are encouraged to consider all diploma types, whether currently offered by the school or not, during the annual case reviews held during the remainder of the 2015-16 school year.

This bill applies to all students, including the senior class cohort of 2017, beginning with the 2016-17 school year.

As a reminder…

The completion of Core 40 course and credit requirements is an Indiana graduation requirement. Indiana's Core 40 curriculum provides the academic foundation all students need to succeed in college and the workforce. Graduation with less than a Core 40 diploma is permissible under the following circumstances:

1. Upon request of a student's parent (IC 20-32-4-7).
2. A student who does not pass at least 3 courses required under the Core 40 curriculum (IC 20-32-4-8).
3. A student who receives a score on the graduation qualifying examination that is in the 25th percentile or lower (IC 20-32-4-9).
4. Students with disabilities (IC 20-32-4-11).

Procedure for students <u>without</u> disabilities

- The student, the student's parent, and the student's counselor (or another staff member who assists students in course selection) must meet to discuss the student's progress.
- The student's Graduation Plan (including four year course plan) is reviewed.
- The student's parent determines whether the student will achieve greater educational benefits by completing the general curriculum or the Core 40 curriculum.
- If the student's parent determines the student will receive greater educational benefits by completing the general curriculum, the student is required to complete the course and credit requirements for a general diploma and the career/academic sequence the student will pursue is determined.

If you have additional questions regarding diplomas, please contact Director of College and Career Readiness, Jenny Berry (jberry@doe.in.gov); Coordinator of School Counseling, Amanda Culhan (aculhan@doe.in.gov); or Director of Special Education, Pam Wright, (pwright@doe.in.gov) for further assistance.