



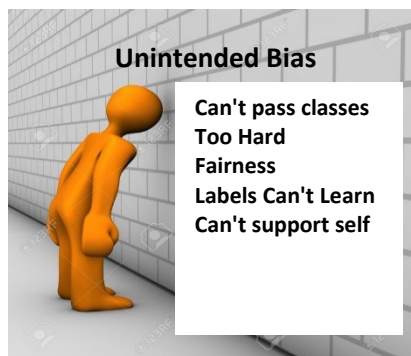
# The Diploma and The Power of the IEP

## How to advocate for a diploma for youth with disabilities Suggestions for Preparing and Planning to Achieve the High School Diploma

### The IEP

Postsecondary Goals  
Assessment  
Course of Study  
Annual Goals  
PERSON CENTERED PLANS

The High School Diploma is a ticket to employment and post-secondary education and training. Most students with IEPs can earn a diploma. What are the challenges they face? **Expectations**



How to Use the IEP to Advocate for Students with IEPs who can and should earn a diploma

### 1. Assessment:

- Does the assessment process focus on attributes or deficits?
- Does the assessment include career interests, skills and traits that motivate the youth to create of a personal plan?
- Does the student research potential career choices and identify education/training needs-defines a career pathway

### 2. Post-Secondary Goals:

- Does the student list their post-secondary employment and education goals?
- Is career information referenced to align post-secondary education and training goals to career preparation?
- Are all options considered - including community college, industry certification, apprenticeships-considered?

### 3. Course of Study:

- Does the course of study list classes to achieve the high school diploma? Are dual enrollment courses encouraged?
- If necessary, are waivers (e.g. math, pe) identified that may allow students to achieve the diploma?
- Are all diploma options considered: Does the student qualify for a diploma based on state course requirements?
- Is the student a member of a population of students who can earn the standard diploma through alternative means? Example, Foster youth, members of military families, homeless youth are exempt from LEA standards.

### 4. Transition Services

- Is the student offered self-advocacy and self-determination training that includes understanding the disability that he/she is coping with and effective accommodations?
- Are the options to utilize instructional strategies, such as universal design, differentiated instruction listed?
- Are recommendations to provide staff training for general education and career-technical educators listed?
- Are transition services that relate to pre-employment transition skills offered?

### 5. Annual Goals

- Are annuals aligned with state standards?
- Are annual goals that help the student to develop the study skills needed for academic success?

### 6. Student participation in the IEP

- Is the student voice the focus of the IEP? Are people listening to the student list goals and plans?
- Does the student have the opportunity to share accomplishments that prove he/she can earn the diploma?

### 7. Parent participation in the IEP

- Are parents and/or adult allies informed about the difference between the diploma and the certificate of completion?