

The Personal Curriculum

A Tool for Modifying the Michigan Merit Curriculum

Diploma vs. Completion without a Diploma

With a high school diploma a student may be eligible for:

- Entering any branch of the U.S. military and armed forces.
- Attending a community college or four-year university.
- Entering a trade or vocational school.
- Applying for scholarships and financial aid (certain test scores such as the MME, ACT, and SAT are also considered).
- Tuition Incentive Program (TIP).
- GEAR UP Scholarships (federal funds).
- Michigan Competitive Scholarship (MCS).
- Michigan Tuition Grant (MTG).
- Children of Veterans Tuition Grant (CVTG).
- Survivors Tuition Grant (STG).

Without a diploma a student may:

- Enter trade or vocational school ("Ability to Benefit"* admission method which is usually based on the results of a standardized test such as the ACT, SAT, Work Keys, etc.).
- Attend most community colleges ("Ability to Benefit"* admission method which is usually based on the results of a standardized test such as the ACT, SAT, Work Keys, etc. Most community colleges also require students to take placement exams).
- Enter certain branches of the U.S. armed forces—
 - ◇ The U.S. armed forces will accept applicants who possess a "Certificate of Attendance." These are sometimes called certificates of competency or completion, but they are based on course completion rather than a test such as the GED or CHSPE. These applicants are called Tier II candidates.
 - ◇ Less than 1 percent of Air Force enlistees are Tier II candidates each year; approximately 10 percent of Army and Navy enlistees are Tier II candidates; approximately 5 percent of Marines enlistees are Tier II candidates.
- Apply for scholarships and financial aid such as:
 - ◇ Michigan Competitive Scholarship
 - ◇ Michigan Tuition Grant
 - ◇ Tuition Incentive Program
 - ◇ Children of Veterans Tuition Grant
 - ◇ Survivors Tuition Grant

*Students without a diploma or recognized equivalent who first enroll in a program of study on or after July 1, 2012, will **not** be eligible for Title IV student aid. Students with intellectual disabilities who are enrolled in approved Comprehensive Transition & Postsecondary Programs will still be eligible.

A student who receives a certificate of completion is eligible to continue receiving special education services until the age of 26 per Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) Rule 340.1702. Only a regular high school diploma or reaching the age of 26 years old can end special education entitlement.

Parents should be thinking about their child's curriculum and high school completion goal as early as possible, even at the elementary level.