

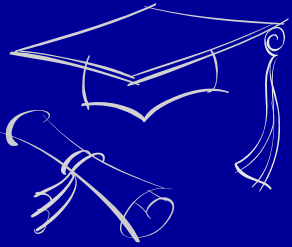
Graduation Options Students with Disabilities

Presenters:

Sue Gronewold, NNPED

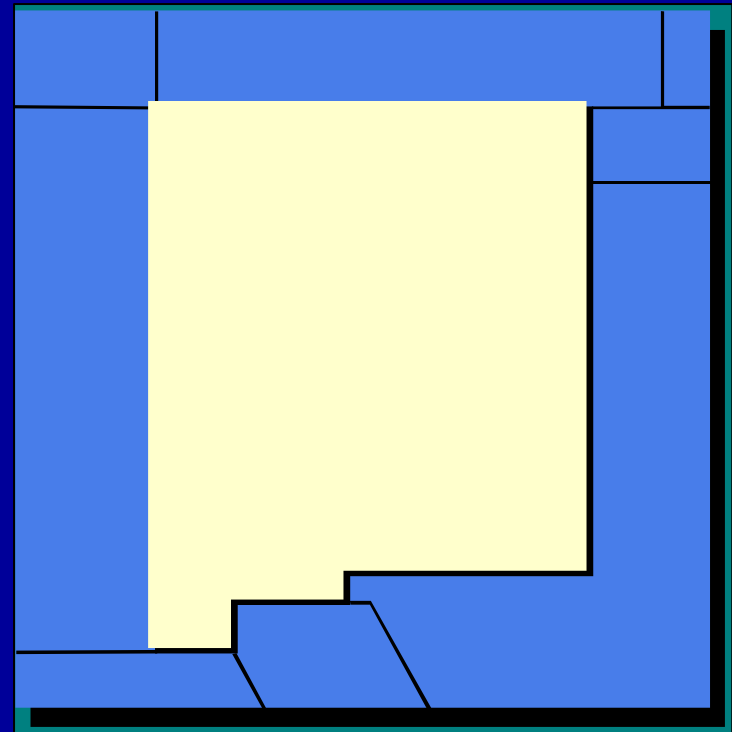
Marilyn D'Ottavio, APS

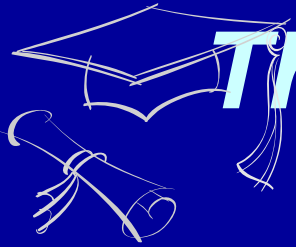
April 2009



New Mexico

- **Is one of many states with a high stakes graduation exam**
- **Is the only state that provides alternative graduation options for students receiving special education services to earn a regular high school diploma**

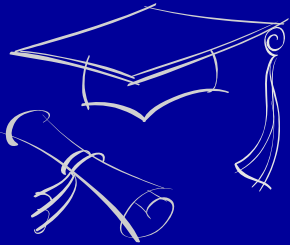




Three Graduation Options: One Diploma

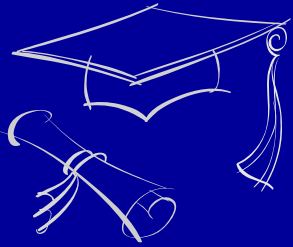


- **Standard Program of Study**
- **Career Readiness Program of Study**
- **Ability Program of Study**



Rational

- Implementation of previous State Rules regarding graduation practices for students with IEPs was inconsistent
- 1997 OCR complaint against the department of education
- Parent concerns regarding inconsistency in graduation practices for students with IEP
- Higher dropout rates for students receiving special education services



New Mexico Administrative Code 6.29.1.9

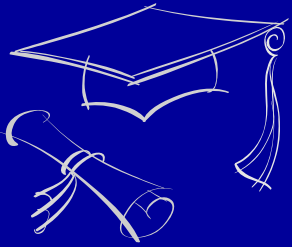
- **Standards for Excellence**
 - **Established graduation options to the diploma for students receiving special education services**
 - **Established that graduation plans must be a part of all IEPs**



New Mexico Graduation Requirements (NMSA)

Sec. 22-13-1.1

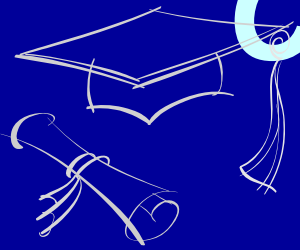
- **Established New Mexico Exit Exam as a “high stakes exam”**



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

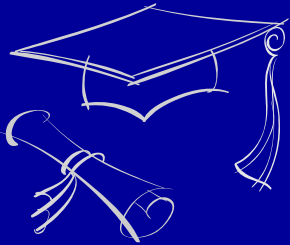
- **Requires the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district wide assessments.**
- **Requires development of alternate assessment methods.**





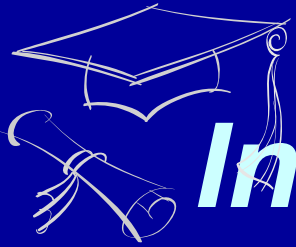
Changes To Exit Exam Requirements

- **Sec. 22-13-1.1 NMSA 2004 Graduation Requirements**
 - Provides that beginning with that beginning with the 2010-2011 school year the standards-based assessments required in Section 22-2C-4 NMSA 1978 may also serve as the assessment required for high school graduation.
- **Section 22-2C-4 NMSA Statewide assessment and accountability systems**
 - Requires the department to establish a statewide assessment and accountability system that is aligned with the state academic content and performance standards and that measures adequate yearly progress for each public school and school district.

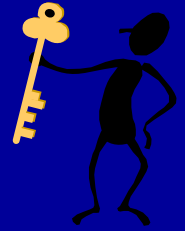


Additional Changes

- **Sec. 22-2c-4.1 Statewide College and Workplace Readiness Assessment System.**
 - Requires the department to establish a readiness assessment system to measure the readiness of every New Mexico high school student for success in higher education or a career no later than the 2008-2009 school year
- **6.29.1.9 NMAC Procedural Requirements**
 - Provides the implementing rules for Sec. 22-13-1.1 for all students, and establishes that the eleventh grades Standards Based Assessment will become the New Mexico Exit Exam



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



- **Ensure access to the general curriculum, so that eligible students can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that applies to all children.**



Graduation Requirements

- **The IEP team is responsible for determining the following:**
 - the student's planned program of study;
 - the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study.
 - if the student has completed a planned program of study; and
 - that the planned program of study is based on the student's strengths interest preferences, needs, and long term educational or occupational goal
 - documenting graduation option requirements on the student's IEP



Standard Program of Study

The standard program of study is the option that all students following students graduating on this program of study must:

- Must pass the current NM graduation exam;**
- Meet or exceed all State graduation requirements; and**
- Meet or exceed the district's graduation requirements**





Career Readiness Program of Study

Students graduating on the Career Readiness program of study must:

- **Earn the minimum number of credits required by the district for graduation.**
- **Students must participate in State and District Assessment.**
- **Achieve competency in all areas of the Employability and Career Development Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards.**



Career Readiness Program of Study

Students graduating on the Career Readiness program of study must:

- **Complete a course of study that includes a minimum of four units of career development opportunities and learning experiences that may include:**
 - **Career readiness and vocational course work,**
 - **Community based instruction,**
 - **Student Service Learning,**
 - **Job Shadowing or mentoring, and**
 - **Entrepreneurship**



Career Readiness Program of Study

Students graduating on the Career Readiness program of study must:

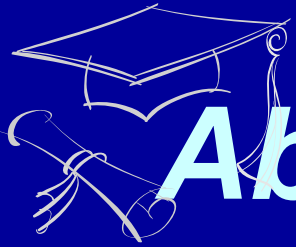
- must take the current graduation exam and achieve the level of competency determined by the IEP Team, and**
- earn the minimum number of credits required by the district through standard or alternative credits (July 2005)**

Ability Program of Study

- **The Ability Program of Study was developed for students with significant cognitive disability or severe mental health issues**

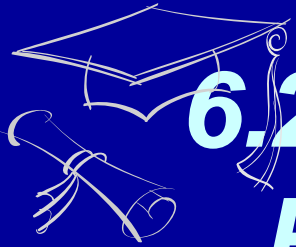
Ability Program of Study

- **The IEP team determines the standard or alternate courses that will make up the student's program of study**
 - **The IEP team must design a program of study to ensure the student:**
 - **Earns the minimum number of credits required by the district or charter school for graduation or be provided equivalent educational opportunities required by the district or charter.**
 - **IEP goals and functional curriculum must be based on the State's content standards with benchmarks and performance standards or the Expanded Grade Band Expectations.**
 - **Meets or exceeds IEP goals and objectives**



Ability Program of Study

- The student must take the current graduation exam or state approved Alternate Assessment and achieve the level (s) of proficiency determined by the IEP Team**
- The student must meet all graduation requirements established by the IEP team**
- The IEP must reference (document) the student's skill attainment and ability level**



6.29.1.9 NMAC Standards for Procedural Requirements

- **The Standards for Excellence requires that graduation planning must be a part of all IEPs**
 - **Beginning at the 8th grade IEP**
 - **When a student returns to school after an extended absence**
 - **Subsequent times when evaluations warrant the need to modify**

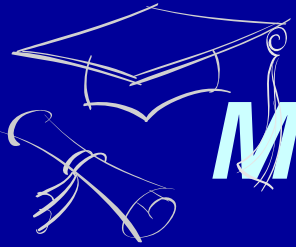
6.31.2.11 EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

- Requires that graduation planning be integrated into the IEP transition process.
- Graduation plans must include:
 - the course of study;
 - projected date of graduation; and
 - if the child is not on target for the graduation plan, the strategies and responsibilities of the public agency, child and family must be identified in the IEP.

Sec. 22-13-1.1 NMSA 2004

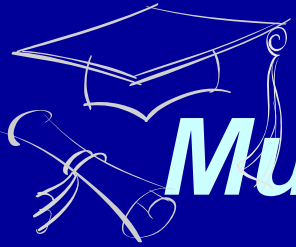
Graduation Requirements

- At the end of grades eight through eleven, each student shall prepare an interim next step plan that sets forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high school graduation
- During the senior year each student must complete a “final next-step plan” that shows that the student has committed or intends to commit in the near future to a four-year college or university, a two-year college, a trade or vocational program, an internship or apprenticeship, military service or a job;
- An individual education program that meets the requirements of Subsections A and B of this section and that meets all applicable transition and procedural requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for a student with a disability shall satisfy the next-step plan requirements of section for that student.



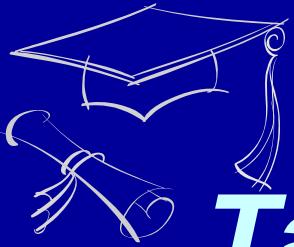
Multi-year Program of Study

- **Developed at the 8th grade IEP**
- **Contains proposed program of study for grades 9-12**
- **Must identify by name potential courses the student may take**
- **Must reflect the student's long-range measurable post school goals**



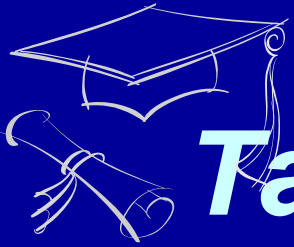
Multi-year Program of Study

- **Reviewed and revised on an annual basis for each year remaining until graduation**
- **Must be adjusted to address changes to student's strengths, preferences, interest, and needs**
- **IEP team must document the student's graduation status toward earning required credits and passing exit exam on the student's IEP**



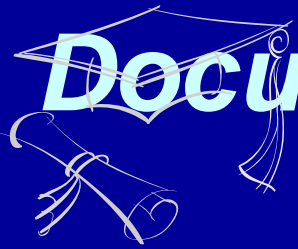
Target Proficiency Scores

- **Applies to Career Readiness and Ability graduation options for current graduate exit exam or the State's Alternate Assessment**
- **Review student performance on first attempt**
- **Establish targeted levels of proficiency for all subtest scores below State proficiency standards**



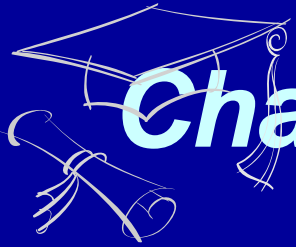
Target Proficiency Scores

- **The IEP team's targeted levels of proficiency should not be lower than the student's score on previous attempts**
- **Students taking the New Mexico Alternate Assessments must first meet the state's participation criteria**
- **If a student achieves an advanced proficiency level on all subtests of the Original NM Alternate Assessment, including the NM Alternate Assessment for Writing in Grades 3-9, the IEP team must arrange for the student to participate in the appropriate general assessment 6.29.1.9 (J)(13)(g)**



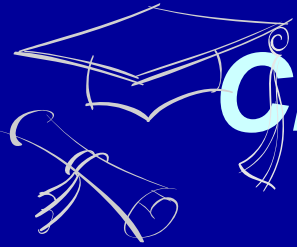
Documentation Requirements for Target Scores

- Targeted levels of proficiency should be documented on the IEP and PWN**
- Responsibilities toward meeting targeted levels of proficiency for district and student must be documented on IEP and PWN**



Changing a Student's Program of Study

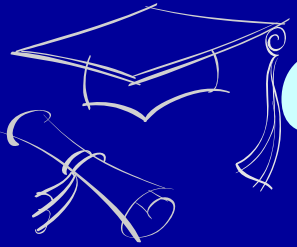
- **Must be considered in the order listed in the Standards for Excellence**
- **An alternative program of study may depart from the standard program only as far as is needed for the individual student**
- **Building administrator or designee must be a member of the team when an alternative program of study is developed**



Changing a Student's Program of Study

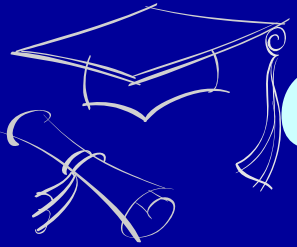
Constitutes a change in placement and must be documented in the IEP and on the PWN

- Identify reasons for change**
- Provide clear and concise program of study**
- Potential consequences**



Changing a Student's Program of Study

- **IEP teams shall not change a senior's program of study from standard to career readiness or career readiness to ability after the first 20 school days of the senior year**
- **For special exceptions the IEP team must provide justification by submitting a waiver request to the PED**
- **IEP teams can move a senior from the ability to career readiness or the career readiness to the standard if the student meets the requirements of that program of study**

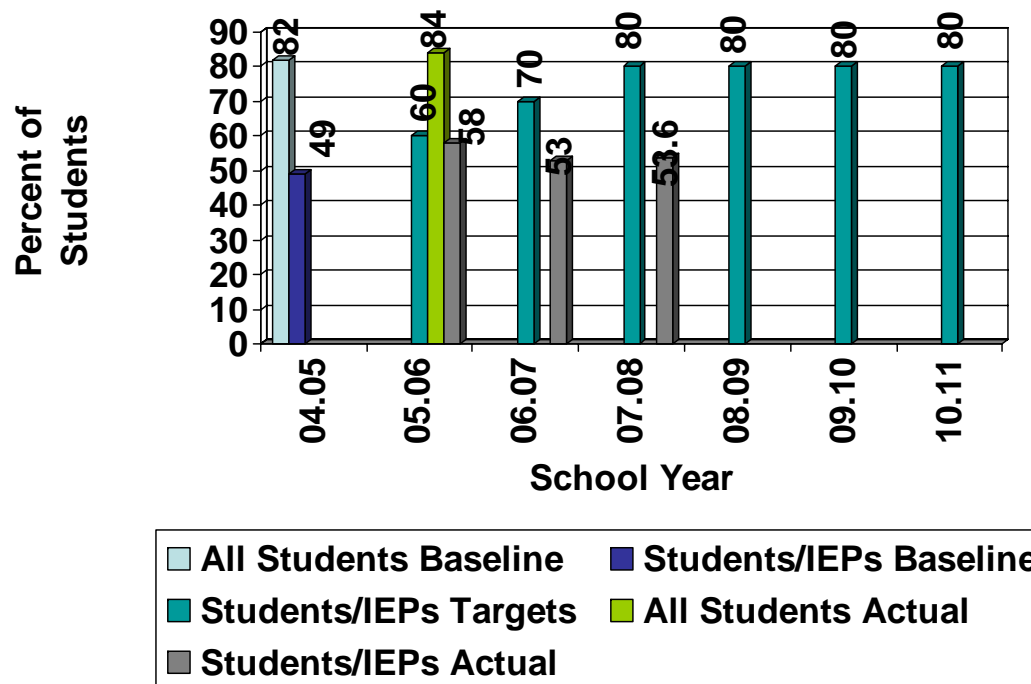


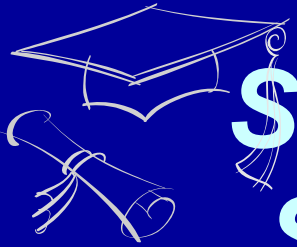
Changing a Student's Program of Study

Effective with 2005-2006 students entering 10th grade

- **Districts shall ensure that:**
 - 80-100% standard program of study
 - 10-15% career readiness program of study
 - 1-3% ability program of study
- **Waiver**

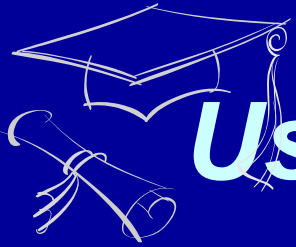
The NMPED will meet the SPP Indicator One as measured by an increase in the percent of youth graduating from high school with a regular diploma (standard pathway).





Students Continuing Beyond the Standard High School Program

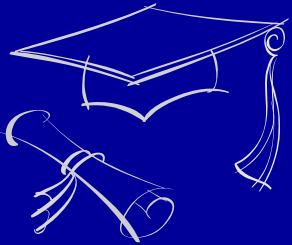
- A student who receives special education services may be granted a conditional certificate of transition in the form of a continuing or transition IEP when the IEP team provides documentation on the IEP and PWN:
 - that justifies that the issuance is warranted;
 - ensures that a conditional certificate of transition is not a program of study and does not end the student's right to a FAPE; and
 - ensures that the student has a continuing or transition IEP that outlines measures, resources and specific responsibilities for both the student and the district or charter school to ensure that the student receives a diploma.



Use of a Conditional Certificate of Transition

- **A certificate does not end a student's right to FAPE**
- **The student is not reported as exited in the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS).**



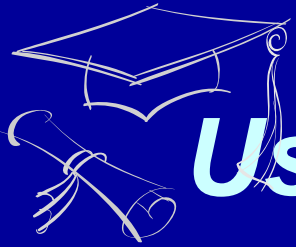


Standards for Excellence Graduation Requirements

6.29.1.9 (J)(13)(j)

- **Clarifies the use of a conditional or transitional IEP developed within the IEP process**

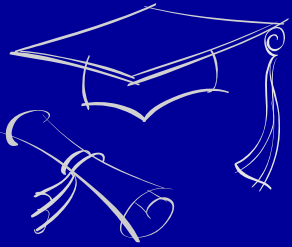




Use of a Conditional Certificate of Transition

- **A student who does not return to complete the follow-up plan of action will be considered as a dropout**

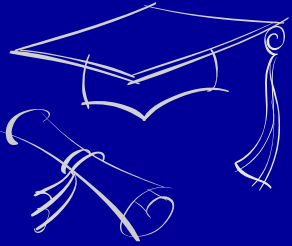




Recap

- **Graduation plans must be documented on the student's IEP and prior written notice of proposed actions**

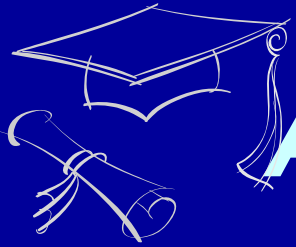




Exit IEP Meeting

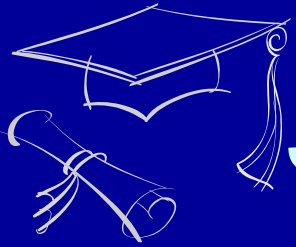


- Identify if additional evaluations, reports, or documents are needed for a student who will graduate on one of the three graduation options



All Programs of Study

- **What to look for:**
 - **Student's long-range goal statement**
 - **Student's identified strengths and needs**
 - **Student participate in the NM Statewide Assessment Program**
 - **Strategies to ensure the student master skills to pass the appropriate assessment or meet the targeted proficiency score if on an alternative graduation option**
 - **Accommodations needed**
 - **Responsibilities for both the district and the student**



Standard Program of Study

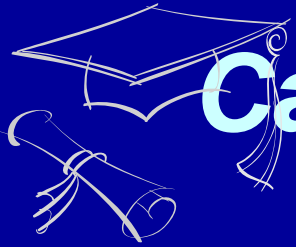
- **What to look for in the IEP:**
 - **Program of study should include all graduation requirements**
 - **Electives and any remedial activities should support the student to achieve long range goals and address student needs**



Graduation Option Selection

- **Must be based on the needs of the student and not solely based on the student's ability to earn credits or pass the current exit exam**

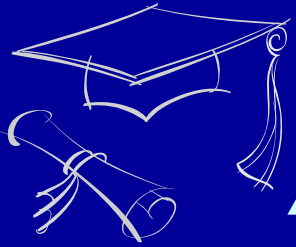




Career Readiness Program of Study

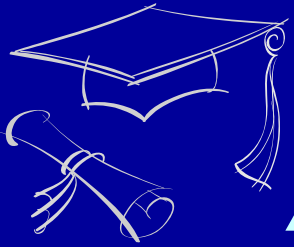
What to look for in the IEP:

- **The focus is on the student's interest, career preference, and needs**
- **Includes a statement of why the standard graduation option was rejected**
- **Includes alternate and standard graduation requirements**
- **Goals and objectives are based on student needs and the employability and career development standards with benchmarks and performance standards**
- **Mastery and progress is documented in the IEP**



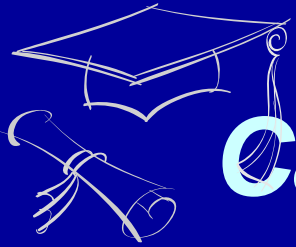
Ability Program of Study

- **What to look for in the IEP:**
 - **Statement of why the standard and career readiness graduation options were rejected**
 - **Based on meeting or surpassing IEP goals and objectives**
 - **Reference skill attainment at the student's ability**
 - **Lead to meaningful employment**



Ability Program of Study

- **What to look for in the IEP:**
 - **Functional or applied academics**
 - **IEP goals and objectives address areas of need**
 - **Mastery, progress, skill attainment is documented in the IEP**
 - **Varies from the standard high school graduation requirements**
 - **Individualized for each student**



Career Readiness And Ability Options

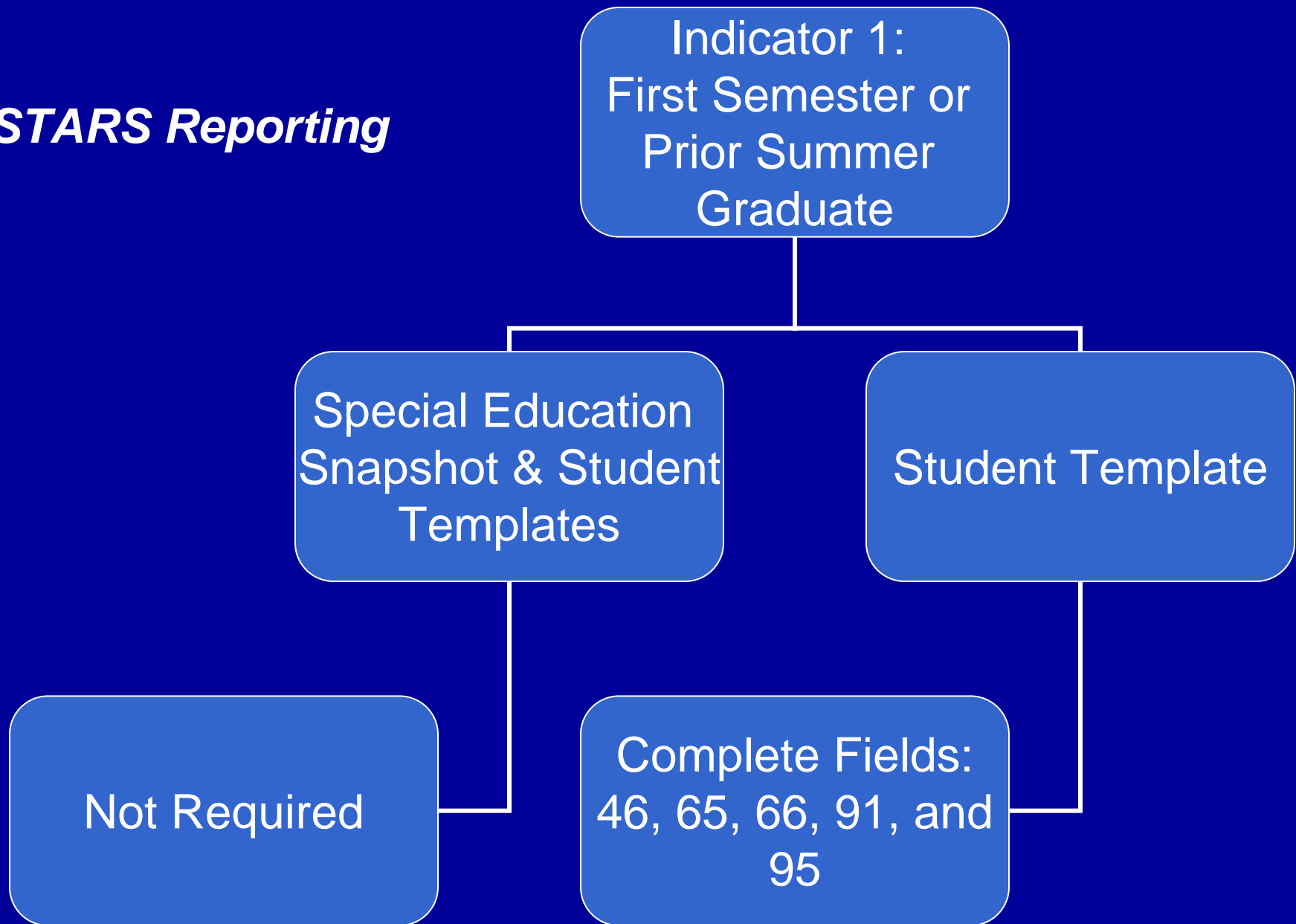
- **What to look for in the IEP:**
 - Targeted level (s) of proficiency the student must meet on the graduation examination



Emerging Issues Surrounding the Graduation Options

- **Misinterpretations of the alternative graduation options**
 - Achieving a targeted level of proficiency determined by the IEP team does not equate to passing the test for accountability and reporting purposes.
 - IEP teams are automatically selecting an alternate graduation option when a student doesn't pass the NMHSCE on the first try
 - IEP teams are placing students on alternate graduation options due to concerns that student cannot pass the established curriculum (algebra 1)

STARS Reporting



STARS Reporting

Indicator 1:
End-of-Year
Graduates

Special Education
Events

Student Template
And
Student Snapshot

Special Education
Snapshot

Complete Fields
5, 6, & 7
Event Type &
Reason Codes

Complete Fields
34, 38, 40, 46, 53,
65, 66, 91, and
95

Complete Fields
11, 21, 44, and
45

STARS Reporting

**Indicator 1:
For Students
Continuing Beyond Four
Years**

**Student and
Student
Snapshot
Templates**

**Special Education
Snapshot
Templates**

**Complete Fields:
38, 40, 46, 53, 95**

**Complete Fields:
11, 21, 44, 45**

STARS Reporting

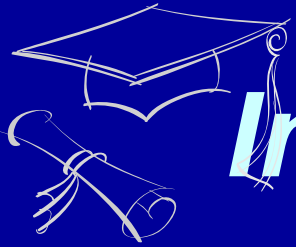
**For Students
Exiting Special
Education
For Other Reasons**

**Student and
Templates**

**Special Education
Events**

**Complete Fields:
34, 38, 40, 95**

**Complete Fields:
5, 6, and 7**



Integrity of the Diploma

- **Verify that the student achieved met graduation requirements**

