



Deputy Commissioner  
Office of Instructional Support

May 2018

TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Public Schools  
Public School Administrators  
Charter School Administrators  
Superintendents of State-Operated and State-Supported Schools  
Executive Directors of Approved Private Schools  
Nonpublic School Administrators  
Directors of Special Education  
Directors of Pupil Personnel Services  
Chairpersons of Committees on Special Education  
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education

FROM: Angélica Infante-Green *A. Infante - Green*

SUBJECT: Chapter 32 of the Laws of 2018 Relating to Policies that Allow All Students to Participate in a High School Graduation Ceremony

New York State Education Law section 3204 has been amended by Chapter 32 of the Laws of 2018 relating to policies that allow students to participate in a high school graduation ceremony with their graduating class (i.e., the twelfth-grade class with which such student entered into ninth grade), effective February 27, 2018. Chapter 32 requires the board of education or the board of trustees of each school district to establish a policy and adopt procedures to allow any student to participate in the graduation ceremony of the student's high school graduating class and all related activities if such student has been awarded a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential<sup>1</sup> or Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential<sup>2</sup> but has not otherwise qualified for a Regents or local high school diploma. This provision applies to all students.

Annual written notice must be provided to all students and their parents or guardians about the policy and procedures adopted by the school district. Nothing in Chapter 32 compels a student to participate in the high school graduation ceremony and activities. For your reference, a copy of the full text of Chapter 32 is attached.

Questions regarding this memorandum may be directed to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at [emscgradreq@nysed.gov](mailto:emscgradreq@nysed.gov) or 518-474-5922.

Attachment - Chapter 32 of the Laws of 2018

<sup>1</sup> The Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential is only available to students with severe cognitive disabilities who are eligible to take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA).

<sup>2</sup> The Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential is available to all students, except for students with severe cognitive disabilities who are eligible for the NYSAA.