



Transition
T E N N E S S E E

WEBCAST TAKEAWAYS

A NEW DIPLOMA: ALTERNATE ACADEMIC DIPLOMA

SUMMARY

In August's webcast, we had Alison Gauld from the Tennessee Department of Education talk to us about Tennessee's new diploma option for students with disabilities, the Alternate Academic Diploma (AAD). Unlike the Special Education and Occupational Diplomas, the AAD counts toward the school's graduation rate when completed during the allotted time period. If a student meets the requirements to qualify for the AAD, they will get to take classes with content that is aligned to what their same-grade peers are taking. For example, if an 11th grader in the general education population is taking algebra 2, the 11th grader in the special education population on the AAD track would take content that is aligned to algebra 2 content, similar to what others are learning in that class. The AAD not only allows for greater general education content access, but it also holds special educators to a higher accountability to involve their students in the general education curriculum.

- The Alternate Academic Diploma (AAD) is a new diploma option in Tennessee for students with disabilities if they meet the requirements.
- To qualify for the AAD, students need the following: participate in the alternate assessment, take 22 credits, have an active IEP, attend school regularly, and take the transition assessment which serves as a replacement for the ACT and/or SAT.
- AAD allows students to take classes aligned to general education with what their same-grade peers are taking.
- If a student graduates with the AAD in the allotted time period, it will count in the school's graduation rate.
- The AAD does not terminate a student's IDEA services, unlike the regular high school diploma.
- The AAD allows for greater general education curriculum access for students with disabilities.

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