
Adult High Schools, Rule

The Background:

The Tennessee Department of Education recently convened a Task Force for Students Overage and Under Credit. Several policy recommendations came from that interdisciplinary committee including some related to adult high schools. State Board Rule 0520-01-02-.05 outlines regulations for the operation of adult high schools. It is proposed that Part (d) of paragraph (2) of Rule 0520-01-02-.05 Adult High Schools be amended by the deletion of “and must have withdrawn from the regular school program.” During task force meetings it was noted that some adult high schools offer credit recovery and other supports to traditional high school students who are *not* enrolled full-time at the adult high school. Removing this requirement clarifies confusion about such activities and allows for more innovation thereby supporting localized dropout prevention efforts. Additionally, it is recommended that Part (f) of paragraph (2) of Rule 0520-01-02-.05 Adult High Schools be amended by deletion of this part in its entirety which states that “To earn one unit of credit in an adult high school, a minimum of 133 contact hours per course shall be required.” This recommendation stems from the recognition that seat time is not an adequate measure of student competency. Task force members noted that districts should have the freedom to move students through their coursework based upon proficiency and not be inhibited because of current seat time requirements.

The Master Plan Connection:

This item supports the Board’s *Master Plan* by ensuring that all students can complete rigorous, relevant curriculum regardless of location and without equating proficiency to seat time.

The Recommendation:

The State Department of Education staff recommends acceptance of this rule on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

0520-01-02-.05 ADULT HIGH SCHOOLS.

- (1) Adult high schools may be established and maintained by local boards of education.
- (2) Before the FTEADM of any adult high school shall be counted in distribution of state funds, such schools shall meet the standards of an approved school and shall provide without fee all services, such as free textbooks, to which any student of grades 9 through 12 is entitled under rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, state and federal statutes, and policies of local boards of education, with the exceptions listed below:
 - (a) The computation of the FTEADM of adult high schools shall be on the basis of a 4 hour day and 20 day school month. The FTEADM for any month shall be determined by dividing the total hours for which persons were enrolled during the month by 80.
 - (b) While in attendance at an adult high school, students may earn all or a portion of the required credits necessary for graduation. Physical education, however, shall not be a requirement for graduation. Except for the Tennessee Proficiency Test, students are exempted from other state-mandated testing programs.
 - (c) Adult high schools may operate twelve months per year and provide flexible scheduling necessary for both day and night programs, provided hours-per-credit requirements are met. All terms in a year round operation are considered regular terms.
 - (d) Adult high school students must be at least 17 years of age.
 - (e) Adult high school students may register for and earn as few as 1/2 unit of credit per term.