
Approved High School Courses: English Language Arts

The Background:

Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards of the State Board of Education 0520-01-03-.05(1) calls for the State Board of Education to adopt curriculum standards for each subject area and grades K-12. The approved standards will be the basis for planning instructional programs in each local school system. Section 3.205 Approved High School Courses of the State Board of Education Policy identifies those courses which have been approved by the Board for instruction across the state. The Tennessee Department of Education proposes adoption of a Tier III Math Intervention course for high school that will follow component four of the Response to Instruction and Intervention Initiative.

Through the Response to Instruction and Intervention, Tier III addresses 3-5 percent of students who have received Tier I instruction and Tier II intervention and continue to show marked difficulty in acquiring necessary reading and writing skill(s). It could also include students who are one and a half (1.5) to two (2) years behind or who are below the 10th percentile and require the most intensive services immediately. Students at this level should receive daily, intensive, small group intervention targeting specific areas of deficit; this intervention may be in addition to interventions received in Tier II.

A high school Tier III intervention course is needed because struggling learners need more time and instruction to learn and apply strategies and concepts. For some students, Tier II interventions will not be sufficient to successfully meet their needs, and they will require a more intensive intervention that is explicit and focused on the area of skill deficit. Increasing frequency and duration is required in Tier III. One of the most frequently encountered barriers for high school implementation of RTI is scheduling issues. More time in and of itself is not the answer and it will not increase student academic growth. If the same strategies and curriculum are delivered in the same way, such as in a Credit Recovery system, student's specific needs will not be met. The intervention time must be targeted to the specific needs, or deficits of the student. Needs are identified through assessment. Because the needs of Tier III students are very specific and skill based, smaller instructional groupings are needed. Tier III interventions are progress monitored more frequently to see if students are acquiring the needed skills (at least once every other week). For students with significant deficits, the majority of the reading materials in Tier I classes will be too difficult for them to access. Schools determine the student's skill deficit(s) and provide the needed interventions for these students so that they can access Tier I materials at an instructional or independent level.

A high school Tier III intervention course will not have specific standards. Both the ELA and Math courses will use assessments to determine the specific student needs or

deficits. Tier III interventions should be systematic, research-based interventions that target the student's identified area of deficit (basic reading skills, reading fluency, reading comprehension, or written expression). The interventions are developed at the school level based on the unique needs of the students and thus do not adhere to grade-level standards. Students in need of Tier III interventions are significantly below grade-level.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends acceptance of the Tier III English Language Arts Intervention courses on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

Proposed Policy

Section 3.205 Approved High School Courses of the State Board of Education Policy

6. Language Arts

- 6.1. English Language Arts I, II, III, IV
- 6.2. Advanced Placement English*
- 6.3. Speech
- 6.4. Journalism
- 6.5. Competency English
- 6.6. Creative Writing
- 6.7. Latin I, II, III, IV
- 6.8. French I, II, III, IV
- 6.9. German I, II, III, IV
- 6.10. Spanish I, II, III, IV
- 6.11. Russian I, II, III, IV
- 6.12. Japanese I, II, III, IV
- 6.13. Chinese I, II, III, IV
- 6.14. Other Languages I, II, III, IV
- 6.15. Advanced Placement Spanish
- 6.16. Advanced Placement French
- 6.17. Advanced Placement German
- 6.18. Advanced Placement Latin
- 6.19. English as a Second Language**
- [6.20 Tier III English Language Arts Intervention](#)

* Advanced Placement English programs of the College Board may substitute for English III or English IV.

** Course work in English as a Second Language may be used to satisfy the English language requirement for graduation, not to exceed two units. Additional English as a Second Language course work may be awarded elective credits.

Current Policy

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