
**Academic & Instructional Requirements - Academic Program Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.03
and Civics Rule 0520-01-03-.07**

The Background:

This item proposes revisions to Rule 0520-01-03-.03 titled Academic Program Requirements in alignment with Public Chapter 114 of 2023 (PC 114) pertaining to the award of high school equivalency credentials.

PC 114 revised present law provisions relative to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development being authorized to make recommendations to the State Board relative to criteria or assessments that lead to the award of a high school equivalency credential. Specifically, T.C.A. 4-3-1422 now requires the State Board of Education to review the recommendations of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development for criteria or assessments leading to the award of a high school equivalency credential. PC 114 clarifies that a student who successfully completes the criteria or assessments approved by the State Board shall be issued a high school equivalency credential by the Department of Labor.

Currently the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) is the only assessment offered to individuals looking to obtain a high school equivalency credential in Tennessee. In an attempt to expand both participant choice and successful attainment rate, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is aiming to introduce several new pathways for individuals to obtain a high school equivalency credential. Accordingly, this item proposes a revision to Rule 0520-01-03-.03(15) titled High School Equivalency Credentials, which would provide detailed information of all of the available pathways for individuals looking to obtain a high school equivalency credential in Tennessee.

Additionally, language regarding transfer requirements for students transferring from non-public to public schools has been removed from this rule as this language has been moved to the State Board's revised Non-public Schools Rule 0520-07-01-.02 (set to become effective on August 15, 2023). Removal of this language will ensure that the requirements for students transferring from non-public schools to public schools is contained in one place in rule and eliminates the possibility for conflicting language.

This item also amends Civics Rule 0520-01-03-.07 to remove the requirement that LEAs submit verification to the Department of implementation of a project-based civics assessment. This requirement was removed to align with changes to the law from Public Chapter 686 of the 2022.

State Board staff will hold a rulemaking hearing between first and final reading to collect public feedback.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item supports the State Board's strategic focus on Engagement and Accountability outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring that the process for awarding high school equivalency credentials is in compliance with recently-passed legislation.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development recommends acceptance of this item on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.