
Graduation Substitutions Policy 3.103

The Background:

This item creates a new policy titled Graduation Substitutions Policy 3.103. Due to the passage of recent legislation requiring certain courses to count as graduation credit substitutions, it was determined that the creation of a new policy listing all courses that may serve as graduation credit substitutions was necessary. The list of graduation substitutions has previously been contained in Department guidance. The creation of this policy will ensure transparency and consistency across the state regarding graduation substitutions and will ensure public notice regarding any changes to courses approved for graduation credit substitutions.

Chapter 946 of the Public Acts of 2022 (PC 946) requires the State Board of Education to develop an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction for high school students interested in pursuing a career in a high-need, high-skill industry after graduation. PC 946 also allows a student pursuing the distinction to earn at least one science credit and at least one math graduation credit through work-based learning (WBL) courses, dual enrollment courses, or other course substitutions approved by the State Board. This policy includes a list of WBL courses that students pursuing the Industry 4.0 distinction can use as a substitution for their 3rd credit of science or 4th credit of math.

Additionally, in accordance with Chapter 979 of the Public Acts of 2022, revisions to the Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06, approved by the State Board at the October 28, 2022 quarterly meeting, allows students to substitute a computer science course for their 3rd credit of science or 4th credit of math. This policy lists the computer science courses that may serve as substitutions.

Between first and final reading, additional course substitutions were added to the policy to ensure alignment with previous Department guidance. Revisions were also made to ensure consistent formatting throughout the policy.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department prepare a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA.

Policy Justification:

T.C.A. § 4-5-230 requires that justification for adopting an item as a policy instead of a rule be submitted to the chair of the Government Operations Committee. This item is proposed to be adopted as a policy because it defines or explains the meaning of a statute or rule and/or concerns only the internal management of state government that does not affect private rights or privileges.

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 State Board policy aligns with changes in law, and to ensure the effective implementation and transparency of education policy.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.