

**RULES  
OF  
THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**CHAPTER 0520-01-03  
ACADEMIC AND INSTRUCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**0520-01-03-.03 ACADEMIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.**

- (1) The Tennessee state academic standards approved by the State Board shall be used for all courses grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12).
- (2) All textbooks and instructional materials adopted and purchased shall be aligned with state academic standards.
- (3) All courses listed in State Board's Approved High School Courses Policy 3.205 may be offered for credit in grades nine through twelve (9-12). Additional details about approved courses shall be included in the Correlation of Course and Endorsement Codes database managed by the Department of Education.
- (4) LEAs and public charter schools may offer special courses in addition to the courses listed in the State Board's Approved High School Courses Policy 3.205. Such special courses shall be approved by the Department of Education and the State Board. Each special course approved by the Department shall be recommended to the State Board for an approval period of one (1), three (3), or six (6) years.
- (5) Each school shall evaluate and report in writing to the parent or legal guardian each student's progress in each subject, at least every nine (9) weeks, in accordance with the local school board's grading policy.
- (6) LEAs shall implement the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) framework adopted by the State Board. RTI<sup>2</sup> shall include high-quality instruction and interventions tailored to student need where core instructional and intervention decisions are guided by student outcome data. Tiered interventions in the areas of reading, mathematics, and/or writing shall occur in the general education setting depending on the needs of the student. If a student fails to respond to intensive interventions and is suspected of having a Specific Learning Disability as defined in State Board Rule 0520-01-09-.02, then the student may require special education interventions.
- (7) LEAs shall award high school credit to students who successfully complete college-level courses aligned to a graduation requirement course, including general education and elective focus courses.
  - (a) Local high schools shall accept postsecondary credits as a substitution for an aligned graduation requirement course, including general education and elective focus courses for those students who take and pass dual enrollment courses at a postsecondary institution for credit.
  - (b) Local boards of education may adopt policies providing for dual credit college-level courses to be offered during the school day on the high school campus. Such courses must be taught by a licensed high school teacher or credentialed postsecondary faculty member approved by the local school system and partnering postsecondary institution. These courses are to be considered part of the high

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school program, with content and instruction subject to the supervision of the school principal and local board of education.

- (8) Coursework successfully completed in an LEA, public charter school, or Category I, II, or III private school, including coursework completed during a summer school operated or offered by these entities, is fully transferrable to any other approved school. All summer school teachers at a summer school operated or offered by an LEA or public charter school shall be licensed and hold endorsements in the subject areas in which they are teaching.
- (9) LEAs may offer Work-Based Learning (WBL) experiences that allow students to apply classroom theories to practical problems and to explore career options. All WBL experiences shall align to the State Board's Work-Based Learning Framework set forth in State Board High School Policy 2.103.
- (10) State-mandated student testing programs shall be undertaken in accordance with procedures published by the Department of Education.
  - (a) State-mandated assessments shall be given for grades three through eleven (3-11).
  - (b) End-of-course examinations shall be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Integrated Math I, Integrated Math II, Integrated Math III, U.S. History, and Biology I.
  - (c) A comprehensive writing assessment shall be conducted in at least one (1) grade within elementary, middle grades, and high school as part of the state-mandated assessment program.
  - (d) The Department of Education shall provide raw score data from the end-of-course examinations to each LEA for the purpose of including student scores on the examinations into a student's final grade for the course. The weight of the examination on the student's final course grade in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) shall be determined by the LEA from a range of not less than five percent (5%) and not more than fifteen percent (15%). If an LEA does not receive its students' end-of-course examination scores at least (5) instructional days before the scheduled end of the course, then the LEA may choose not to include its students' examination scores in the students' final average.
  - (e) Each local school board shall adopt a policy that details the methodology used and the required weighting for incorporating students' scores on end-of-course examinations into final report card grades.
  - (f) Local school boards shall adopt a policy regarding security of test administration, consistent with Department of Education guidelines.
  - (g) The Department of Education shall annually report to the State Board the number and percentage of students who scored below but were promoted to the next grade level by the LEA. This data shall be disaggregated by subgroups similar to those required for federal reporting.
- (11) Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, all students in grade eight (8), including students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), shall begin the development of the high school and beyond plan in accordance with the State Board's Middle Grades Policy 2.102 and High School Policy 2.103.

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- (12) Each local board of education shall adopt a credit recovery policy, aligned to the State Board's High School Policy 2.103, to provide standards-based extended learning opportunities for students who have previously been unsuccessful in mastering the standards required to receive course credit or earn promotion.
- (a) Each credit recovery policy shall include, but is not limited to, the following requirements:
1. Admission to and removal from credit recovery programs:
    - (i) The student's parent or legal guardian shall give written consent for the student to enroll in the proposed credit recovery course. Parents/guardians shall be informed that not all postsecondary institutions will accept credit recovery courses for credit and that the NCAA Clearinghouse will not accept credit recovery courses for credit.
    - (ii) The student has previously taken an initial, non-credit recovery section of the proposed course. Credit recovery is designed to be a remediation option for students, and a credit recovery course shall not be the first time a student is exposed to the course content.
    - (iii) The student mastered at least fifty percent (50%) of the course standards as evidenced by the course grade in a non-credit recovery section of the course or a diagnostic assessment. Students who mastered below fifty percent (50%) of the course standards as evidenced by the course grade in a non-credit recovery section of the course or a diagnostic assessment, must re-take the course.
  2. Instruction:
    - (i) Students enrolled in any credit recovery course shall be assigned to a teacher of record who is licensed and endorsed to teach the course.
    - (ii) Credit recovery facilitators may be responsible for day-to-day oversight and facilitation of credit recovery programs, under the guidance of the credit recovery teacher of record.
    - (iii) Credit recovery courses shall align with Tennessee's current academic standards for the relevant course content area.
  3. Grading and awarding of credit:
    - (i) Until the 2022-23 school year, students passing credit recovery courses shall receive a grade of seventy percent (70%) under the state uniform grading system. For grades issued in the 2022-23 school year and thereafter, students passing credit recovery courses shall receive a grade of sixty (60%) percent under the state uniform grading system. If the LEA also utilizes a locally-adopted grading scale that differs from the uniform grading

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system, students passing credit recovery shall receive a D under the locally-adopted grading scale.

- (ii) The student transcript shall denote that the credit was attained through credit recovery.
- (iii) The original failing grade may also be listed on the transcript, but shall not factor into the student's GPA, in accordance with the State Board of Education's Uniform Grading Policy 3.301.

(13) High School Equivalency Credentials.

- (a) Pursuant to T.C.A. § 4-3-1422, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (Department of Labor) is required to make recommendations to the State Board for approval of assessments or criteria leading to the award of a high school equivalency credential. A high school equivalency credential is recognized as being equivalent to a traditional high school diploma.
- (b) The Department of Labor shall oversee the issuance of high school equivalency credentials to individuals who meet the criteria established in subparagraphs (c) and (d) of this Rule.
- (c) An individual shall be eighteen (18) years of age before being eligible to obtain a high school equivalency credential. However, a seventeen (17) year old who is not currently enrolled in school or who is currently enrolled in a Tennessee public school may be eligible to obtain a high school equivalency credential upon receiving a signed recommendation from the director of schools (or the director's designee) of the LEA having jurisdiction over the individual. A seventeen (17) year old enrolled in a private school or church-related school may be eligible to obtain a high school equivalency credential upon receiving a signed recommendation from the leader of the private school or church-related school where the student is currently enrolled. The director of schools or leader of the private school or church-related school may require written documentation from the individual to support this recommendation. A seventeen (17) year old who is independently home schooled by their parent or legal guardian may be eligible to obtain a high school equivalency credential upon receiving a signed recommendation from the individual's parent or legal guardian.
- (d) In addition to meeting the requirements set forth in subparagraph(c), a high school equivalency credential may be obtained by meeting the requirements of any one (1) of the following pathways:
  - 1. Pathway 1: High School Equivalency Test (HiSET).
    - (i) The HiSET test shall be operated in accordance with the policies established by the Department of Labor.
    - (ii) The HiSET test consists of five (5) subtests that count twenty (20) points each. In order to pass, the total composite score on the HiSET test shall be forty-five (45) or higher, and the minimum score on each subtest shall be eight (8) or higher.
  - 2. Pathway 2: General Educational Development Test (GED).

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- (i) The GED test shall be operated in accordance with the policies established by the Department of Labor.
  - (ii) The GED test consists of four (4) subtests that count 200 points each. In order to pass, the score on each subtest shall be 145 or higher.
- 3. Pathway 3: Multiple Measures.
  - (i) Demonstrating subject matter competency by achieving passing sub-test scores in math, reading, writing/ language, science, and social studies. Passing scores can be demonstrated through a combination of HiSET, GED, Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), CASAS GOALS, or ACT WorkKeys subtests.
    - (I) All tests shall be operated in accordance with the policies established by the Department of Labor.
    - (II) The TABE test consists of three (3) subtests in the subject areas of math, reading, and writing/language. In order to pass the math subtest, the scale score shall be 537 or higher. In order to pass the reading subtest, the scale score shall be 536 or higher. In order to pass the writing/language subtest, the scale score shall be 547.
    - (III) The CASAS GOALS test consists of two (2) subtests in the subject areas of math and reading. In order to pass the math subtest, the scale score shall be 214 or higher. In order to pass the reading subtest, the scale score shall be 228 or higher.
    - (IV) The ACT WorkKeys test consists of one (1) math subtest and one (1) reading subtest. In order to pass the math subtest, the "Applied Math" score shall be 83 or higher. In order to pass the reading subtest, the "Workplace Documents" score shall be 78 or higher.

**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 4-3-1422, 49-1-302, 49-2-110, 49-2-114, 49-6-101, 49-6-201, 49-6-3001, 49-6-3003, 49-6-3005, 49-6-3104, 49-6-3105, 49-6-6001 and 49-6-6002; and Public Chapter 652 of 2020.

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*21, 2012; effective August 29, 2012. Amendment filed February 6, 2013; effective July 29, 2013. Amendment filed May 22, 2015; effective August 20, 2015. Amendments filed October 25, 2017; effective January 23, 2018. Amendments filed March 20, 2018; to have been effective June 18, 2018. However, on May 24, 2018, the Government Operations Committee filed a 5-day stay; new effective date June 23, 2018. Amendments filed January 11, 2019; effective April 11, 2019. Amendments filed August 20, 2020; effective November 18, 2020. Emergency rules filed November 19, 2020; effective through May 18, 2021. Emergency rules expired effective May 19, 2021, and the rules reverted to their previous statuses. Amendments filed September 6, 2022; effective December 5, 2022. Amendments filed January 4, 2024; effective April 3, 2024.*