

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS POLICY

3.103

### POLICY SECTIONS:

#### I. Purpose

#### II. Approved Course Permissions for Specific Graduation Requirements

#### III. Approved Course Substitutions for Specific Graduation Requirements ~~Approved Course Substitutions~~

#### I. Purpose

- (1) ~~Students~~ The courses listed in this policy may substitute the courses listed in this policy (e.g., AP Computer Science A) for graduation credit requirements listed below (e.g., Fourth Credit Math). Substitution decisions must be made on a student-by-student basis, based on their High School and Beyond Plan and elective focus in accordance with State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103.
- (2) In addition to the specific courses listed in this policy, pursuant to State Board of Education Academic Program Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.03(7), LEAs shall accept postsecondary credits as a substitution for an aligned graduation credit requirement ~~course~~, including for general education and the elective focus courses, for ~~those~~ students who take and pass dual enrollment courses at an accredited postsecondary institution for credit. The decision to permit a postsecondary course at an accredited postsecondary institution not contained in this policy to count as a substitution for a graduation credit requirement ~~course~~ listed in this policy is to be determined at the local level based on a review of whether the postsecondary course covers the state standards for the graduation credit requirement ~~course~~.
- (3) Pursuant to State Board of Education Middle Grades Policy 2.102, students in middle school may take coursework for high school credit. If a student successfully completes any ~~of the~~ State Board-required high school credits before prior to grade nine (9), they shall receive graduation credit for that coursework.
- (4) Any course listed in this policy as approved to substitute for more than one (1) graduation requirement can only be used by a student to substitute for one (1) graduation requirement course, with the following exceptions:
  - (a) One (1) full-credit course may substitute for two (2) half-credit courses.
  - (b) ~~to~~ A course used to substitute for a graduation requirement course may also be used ~~to~~ fulfill the requirements toward the student's elective focus, provided that the student meets all other requirements for the student's diploma type.
  - (b)(c) Pursuant to State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103 and T.C.A. § 49-6-1209, if, during high school, a student enlists in a branch of the United States

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS POLICY

3.103

military or in the national guard through the military delayed entry program, the national guard split training option or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduation from high school, the student shall receive high school credit towards graduation for basic training. Credit for basic training may be substituted, upon the choice of the student, for the required credit in lifetime wellness and credit in one (1) elective course or for credit in two (2) elective courses. A student who completes basic training and chooses basic training to substitute for the required credit in lifetime wellness shall be given credit for JROTC I.

### II. Approved Course Permissions for Specific Graduation Requirements~~Course Substitutions~~

#### **Fourth ~~Credit~~ Math**

Students pursuing a traditional high school diploma are required to complete four (4) credits of math. Three (3) of the required ~~four~~ (4) credits of mathematics ~~must shall~~ include Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry, or the equivalent Integrated Math I, II, and III. Students may complete the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) ~~credit of~~ math credit at any point ~~before prior to~~, in between, or following the sequence, ~~as long as provided~~ they meet the requirements ~~set forth in~~ State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103 and Graduation Requirements State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.06 and take all ~~of the~~ three (3) required courses. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) ~~credit of~~ math credit.

#### Programs of Study:

- International Baccalaureate Mathematics Program
- Cambridge Mathematics Program
- Advanced Placement Mathematics Program

#### Statewide Programs:

- Dual Enrollment Mathematics Program
- Statewide Dual Credit Pre-Calculus<sup>1</sup>*
- Statewide Dual Credit Statistics*

#### Science:

- Physics
- AP Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism
- AP Physics C: Mechanics
- AP Physics I: Algebra-Based
- AP Physics II: Algebra-Based
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Computer Science A

<sup>1</sup> Beginning in the 2025-26 school year, Statewide Dual Credit will be phased out over a three-year period. Courses listed in this policy that are set to be phased out are noted in italics.

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS POLICY

3.103

### Computer Science:<sup>2</sup>

- International Baccalaureate Computer Science Program
- Cambridge International Computer Science Program
- Dual Enrollment Computer Science Program
- Computer Science
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Computer Science A
- Computer Science Foundations
- Coding I
- Coding II
- Coding Practicum
- Cybersecurity I
- Cybersecurity II
- Cybersecurity Practicum
- Data Science I
- Data Science II
- Mobile App Development

### CTE Course Substitutions:

- Agricultural Fabrication & Biosystems Engineering
- Principles of Farm and Agribusiness Management

### Work-Based Learning Courses<sup>3</sup>

- Coding Practicum
- IT (Information Technology) Clinical Internship
- Web Design Practicum
- Cybersecurity Practicum
- Manufacturing Practicum
- Engineering Practicum
- STEM IV: Practicum
- Supply Chain Management Practicum
- Teaching as a Profession Practicum (Math Placement)

### **Third Lab Science**

Students pursuing a traditional high school diploma are required to complete three (3) credits of science. Two (2) of the three (3) credits of science ~~shall~~ **must** include Biology and Chemistry or Physics. The third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ~~credit of~~ science **credit must** ~~shall~~ be a lab science. Students may complete the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) lab science credit at any point ~~before prior to~~, in between, or following

<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to State Board of Education Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06, ~~S~~students may fulfill their required computer science graduation requirement by substituting a computer science course for the 4<sup>th</sup> credit of math.

<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to State Board of Education Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06, a student pursuing an Industry 4.0 ~~D~~iploma ~~D~~istinction may substitute their 4<sup>th</sup> credit of math with a work-based learning course.

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION [PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS POLICY](#)

3.103

the required Biology and Chemistry or Physics courses. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) lab science.

### Programs of Study:

- International Baccalaureate Science Program
- Cambridge Science Program
- Advanced Placement Science Program

### Statewide Programs:

- Dual Enrollment Science Program
- Statewide Dual Credit Science Program*

### Computer Science:<sup>4</sup>

- International Baccalaureate Computer Science Program
- Cambridge International Computer Science Program
- Dual Enrollment Computer Science Program
- Computer Science
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Computer Science A
- Computer Science Foundations
- Coding I
- Coding II
- Coding Practicum
- Cybersecurity I
- Cybersecurity II
- Cybersecurity Practicum
- Mobile App Development

### CTE Course Substitutions:

- Advanced Food Science
- Agriscience
- Applied Environmental Science
- BioSTEM I
- BioSTEM II
- BioSTEM III
- Engineering Design I
- Engineering Design II
- Food Science & Safety
- ~~Human~~ Anatomy & Physiology
- Natural Resources Management
- Nutrition Science & Diet Therapy

---

<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to [State Board of Education Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06](#), students may fulfill their required computer science graduation requirement by substituting a computer science course for the 3<sup>rd</sup> lab science.

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS POLICY

3.103

Plant & Soil Science  
Principles of Engineering & Technology (PLTW)  
STEM I: Foundations  
STEM II: Applications  
STEM III: STEM in Context  
Veterinary Science Technologies

### Work-Based Learning Courses<sup>5</sup>

Coding Practicum  
IT (Information Technology) Clinical Internship  
Web Design Practicum  
Cybersecurity Practicum  
Clinical Internship  
Nursing Education  
Emergency Medical Services Practicum  
BioStem Practicum  
STEM IV: Practicum

### III. Approved Course Substitutions for Specific Graduation Requirements

#### **English III or IV**

Students pursuing a traditional high school diploma are required to complete four (4) credits of English. Two (2) of the four (4) credits of English must include English I and English II. Courses substituting for a third (3<sup>rd</sup>)- or fourth (4<sup>th</sup>)-English course should contain English content that extends the student's English knowledge beyond English II or English III content. Therefore, ~~the substituting~~ course credit for English III or IV ~~must will need to~~ be earned after completing following the English II or English III credit, respectively. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) or fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) credit of English.<sup>6</sup>

#### Programs of Study:

AP English Language & Composition  
AP English Literature & Composition  
AP Research  
AP Seminar

<sup>5</sup> Pursuant to State Board [of Education](#) Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06, a student pursuing an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction may substitute their 3<sup>rd</sup> lab science with work-based learning courses.

<sup>6</sup> Pursuant to State Board [of Education](#) English as a Second Language Programs Rule 0520-01-19-.03, for students who are English learners, two (2) high school English as a Second Language (ESL) courses ~~must shall~~ be counted toward the four (4) required English credits required for graduation. At least one (1) of the ESL courses counted toward graduation credit ~~must shall~~ be counted toward credit in an English course with an end-of-course assessment.

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION [PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS](#) POLICY

3.103

Cambridge International English Program  
International Baccalaureate English Program

### Statewide Programs:

Dual Enrollment English Program  
*Statewide Dual Credit: Speech and Communication*

### **Economics**

Courses substituting for an Economics course should contain economics content that extends the student's knowledge in Economics. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the Economics course.

### Programs of Study-

AP Microeconomics  
AP Macroeconomics

### Statewide Programs

*Statewide Dual Credit Introduction to Agricultural Business*  
*Statewide Dual Credit Introduction to Business*  
Dual Enrollment Business Program  
Dual Enrollment Economics Program

### CTE Course Substitutions

Agricultural Business & Finance  
Business Economics  
Entrepreneurship  
Marketing & Management I: [Principles](#)  
Retail Operations  
[Virtual Enterprise International](#)

### **~~Visual and Performing Arts (Fine Arts)~~**

Courses substituting for a Fine Arts course should contain ~~visual and/or performing arts~~ content that extends the student's knowledge in Fine Arts. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the Fine Arts course.

### ~~Programs of Study~~

~~AP Art History~~  
~~AP 2-D Art and Design~~  
~~AP 3-D Art and Design~~  
~~AP Drawing~~  
~~AP Music Theory~~

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## GRADUATION PERMISSIONS AND SUBSTITUTIONS POLICY

3.103

[International Baccalaureate Fine Arts Program](#)

[Statewide Program](#)

[Dual Enrollment Fine Arts Program](#)

### CTE Course Substitutions

Digital Arts & Design I  
Floral Design and Operations  
Foundations of Fashion Design  
Foundations of Interior Design  
Landscaping & Turf Science  
Web Design Foundations

### **Physical Education<sup>7</sup>**

Courses substituting for a Physical Education course should contain physical education content that extends the student's knowledge in Physical Education. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the Physical Education course.

JROTC II

### **U.S. Government and Civics**

Courses substituting for a U.S. Government and Civics course should contain U.S. Government and Civics content that extends the student's knowledge in U.S. Government and Civics. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the U.S. Government and Civics course.

### Programs of Study-

AP United States Government and Politics  
AP United States History

### Statewide Programs-

Dual Enrollment U.S. or American History Program  
*Statewide Dual Credit American History*

### CTE Course Substitutions

Pre-Law I, Pre-Law II, and Pre-Law III  
American Business Legal Systems

<sup>7</sup> Pursuant to [State Board of Education](#)BE High School Policy 2.103, the Physical Education requirement may be met by substituting a documented and equivalent time of physical activity in marching band, JROTC, cheerleading, interscholastic athletics, school sponsored intramural athletics, and other areas approved by the local board of education.

Other Course SubstitutionsJROTC III<sup>8</sup>**Lifetime Wellness**

Courses substituting for a Lifetime Wellness course should contain wellness content that extends the student's knowledge in Lifetime Wellness. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the Lifetime Wellness course.

JROTC I

Basic Training (JROTC I)<sup>9</sup>**Personal Finance**

Courses substituting for a Personal Finance course should contain personal finance content that extends the student's knowledge of business and/or finance. The following list includes allowable course substitutions for the Personal Finance course.

Statewide Programs

Dual Enrollment Business Program

*Statewide Dual Credit Introduction to Business*CTE Course Substitutions-

Agricultural Business and Finance

Business Management

Entrepreneurship

Other Course Substitutions-JROTC III<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Students who complete JROTC III may substitute that course for one-half (½) credit of Personal Finance and one-half (½) credit of U.S. Government and Civics.

<sup>9</sup> ~~See I.(4)(c) above. Pursuant to SBE High School Policy 2.103 and T.C.A. § 49-6-1209, If, during high school, a student enlists in a branch of the United States military or in the national guard through the military delayed entry program, the national guard split training option or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduation from high school, then the student shall receive high school credit towards graduation for basic training. Credit for basic training may be substituted, upon the choice of the student, for the required credit in lifetime wellness and credit in one (1) elective course or for credit in two (2) elective courses. A student who completes basic training and chooses to utilize basic training to substitute for the required credit in lifetime wellness shall be given credit for JROTC I.~~

<sup>10</sup> JROTC III may substitute for one-half (½) credit of U.S. Government and Civics and one-half (½) credit of Personal Finance if the JROTC instructor attends the Personal Finance training.