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**Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06**

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**The Background:**

Tennessee State Board of Education Graduation Requirements Rule 0520-01-03-.06 outlines the graduation requirements for students in Tennessee. The rule outlines diploma options for high school students (e.g., traditional, special education, occupational, alternate academic high school diploma), and specific credit requirements needed to earn each diploma type.

During the February 2026 quarterly meeting of the State Board, the board tabled a proposal to reduce the number of world language credits while increasing elective courses required for graduation. Board members discussed the need to improve language related to the process by which fine arts and/or world language courses are waived, allowing students to increase elective focus courses. Members expressed a desire to ensure the process was clear and intentional, and directed board staff to make edits to the rule based on this feedback.

Revisions proposed to this rule seek to increase clarity and intentionality of the waiver process by making explicit connections between the waiver and each student's High School and Beyond Plan, requiring discussions about the waiver to include school-based staff responsible for advising, school leadership, the student, and the parent, maintaining the requirement that the parent agree to the waiver in writing, and directing the Department to develop guidance and a standard waiver template to be used by districts when waiving fine arts and/or world language courses.

In addition, proposed rule revisions include the following:

- Restructuring sections to improve clarity and readability;
- Adding language referencing board policies that build on the rule, including the Graduation Permissions and Substitutions Policy 3.103, which impacts courses otherwise listed as "required" in this rule;
- Updating elective focus course areas and expectations, including adding world language as an area of focus, and clarifying that students may switch focus areas if appropriate and in alignment with the student's High School and Beyond Plan; and
- Removing the requirement that world language courses must be taken in the same language.

**Connection to Master Plan**

This item supports the State Board's strategic focus on College, Career, and Military Readiness outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring that all students have rigorous and flexible pathways to graduation and are prepared for post-secondary opportunities.

**The Recommendation:**

The SBE staff recommends approval of this item on first reading.