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High School Courses Policy 3.205

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**The Background:**

T.C.A. § 49-1-302(a)(8) authorizes the State Board of Education to “set policies governing all curricula and courses of study in the public schools.” Additionally, *Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards of the State Board of Education* 0520-01-03-.05(1) calls for the State Board of Education to adopt standards for each subject area, grades K-12. The approved standards are to be the basis for planning instructional programs in each local school system.

This item presents for the addition of a new elective course, *Preparing for the ACT, College, and Career*, to the High School Course List Policy 3.205, as well as standards for the new course. The proposed new course is meant to provide explicit standards for schools to guide preparation activities for the state’s main college and career readiness assessment, the ACT, while setting clear expectations for how to link preparation for this exam to other student planning and readiness activities. These standards have been developed in response to a large need communicated by districts, dozens of which have been submitting special course applications for this type of preparation course for several years. This course is not meant to be solely test-prep activities. Course standards are directly aligned to ACT college and career readiness standards, Tennessee state standards, and also include specific expectations for student career exploration and postsecondary planning activities.

Multiple stakeholders from across the department and practitioners across the state have participated in review of the draft standards. The stakeholders asked to review include a mix of content experts (current and former classroom teachers), principals who have implemented ACT preparation courses and school-wide strategies, regional coaches who support a wide range of high school personnel, and departmental experts on Tennessee academic state standards. The department is planning to pilot these course standards with a set of over 100 high schools that have expressed interest and is working to provide free resources and full-length practice exams to support the course standards. Feedback from these schools will inform any changes for second reading, if approved. Full statewide availability of the course is scheduled for 2017-18 school year.

**The Fiscal Analysis Impact:**

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department of Education 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.

**The Recommendation:**

The Department of Education recommends acceptance of this item on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.