

SOME OF THE REQUIREMENTS IN THIS POLICY MAY BE SUPERSEDED BY EMERGENCY RULES DEVELOPED IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY. PLEASE REFER TO THE EMERGENCY RULES PASSED ON FINAL READING ON [APRIL 9, 2020](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

**POLICY SECTIONS**

- (1) Graduation Requirements
- (2) Move on When Ready
- (3) Graduation with Honors, State Honors, and State Distinction
- (4) Plan of Study
- (5) Work-Based Learning Framework
- (6) Assessment
- (7) Credit Recovery
- (8) Eliminating Barriers to Education

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

- (1) All students shall have access to a rigorous education that prepares them for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. All coursework shall be aligned to the Tennessee Academic Standards for each subject and course.
- (2) Schools shall minimize the tracking of students by ability, eliminate core classes taught below the college preparation level, and provide all students a challenging course of study.
- (3) All students shall meet the following course graduation requirements:
 

English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
Science	3 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
Personal Finance	0.5 credit
Wellness	1 credit
Physical Education	0.5 credit
World Language	2 credits
Fine Arts	1 credits
Elective Focus	3 credits
- (4) To earn a regular high school diploma, students shall:
  - (a) Earn the prescribed twenty-two (22) credit minimum;

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (b) Complete the ACT or SAT prior to graduation, if the student was enrolled in a Tennessee public school during their eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) grade year; and
  - (c) Have a satisfactory record of attendance and discipline.
- (5) Students with disabilities shall be included in regular classes to the maximum extent possible and with appropriate support and accommodations. To earn a regular high school diploma, students with disabilities shall earn the prescribed twenty-two (22) credit minimum.
- (6) A special education diploma shall be awarded at the end of the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year of high school to students with disabilities who have:
  - (a) Received special education services or supports and made satisfactory progress on an individualized education program (IEP);
  - (b) Not met the requirements for a regular high school diploma; and
  - (c) Have satisfactory records of attendance and conduct.

Students who obtain the special education diploma may continue to work toward a regular high school diploma through the end of the school year in which they turn twenty-two (22) years old.
- (7) An occupational diploma may be awarded to students with disabilities at the end of their fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year of high school who have (1) not met the requirements for a regular high school diploma; (2) received special education services or supports and made satisfactory progress on an IEP; (3) have satisfactory records of attendance and conduct; (4) have completed the occupational diploma Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Mastery Assessment (SKEMA) created by the Tennessee Department of Education; and (5) have completed two (2) years of paid or non-paid work experience. The determination that an occupational diploma is the goal for a student with a disability will be made at the conclusion of the student's tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) grade year or two (2) academic years prior to the expected graduation date. Students who obtain the occupational diploma may continue to work toward a regular high school diploma through the end of the school year in which they turn twenty-two (22) years old.
- (8) Beginning with students entering the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) grade in 2018, an alternate academic diploma may be awarded to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities at the end of their fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year of high school who have (1) participated in the high school alternate assessments; (2) earned the prescribed twenty-two (22) credit minimum; (3) received special education services or supports and made satisfactory progress on an IEP; (4) have satisfactory records of attendance and conduct; and (5) have completed a transition assessment(s) that

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

measures, at a minimum, postsecondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community involvement. The required credits may be earned either through the state-approved standards or through alternate academic diploma course requirements defined by the Department of Education. A student who earns an alternate academic diploma shall continue to be eligible for special education services under IDEA until the student receives a regular high school diploma or through the school year in which the student turns twenty-two (22).

- (9) Students must complete four (4) credits of English, including English I, English II, English III, and English IV.
- (10) Students must complete four (4) credits of mathematics including Algebra I and II, Geometry or the equivalent Integrated Math I, II, and III, and another mathematics course beyond Algebra I or Integrated Math I. Students must be enrolled in a mathematics course each school year. Students who complete any of the required math credits prior to the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) grade may receive graduation credit for that coursework; however, those students are still required to enroll in a mathematics course during each high school year.

The Bridge Math course is recommended for students who have not scored 19 or higher on the ACT mathematics subtest or a 460 on the SAT mathematics subtest by the beginning of the senior year. Other factors like career interest, study habits, etc. can be used to determine twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade placement.

Students with a qualifying disability who have deficits in mathematics as documented in the IEP shall be required to achieve at least Algebra I and Geometry (or the equivalent Integrated Math I and Integrated Math II). The required number of credits in mathematics will be achieved through strategies such as, but not limited to, increased time, appropriate methodologies, and accommodations as determined by the IEP team.

- (11) Students shall complete three (3) credits of Science. Students shall complete Biology, Chemistry or Physics, and a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) lab science. Students with a qualifying disability as documented in the IEP shall be required to achieve at least Biology I and two (2) other lab science credits. The required number of credits in science will be achieved through strategies such as, but not limited to, increased time, appropriate methodologies, and accommodations as determined by the IEP team.
- (12) Students shall complete three (3) credits of Social Studies. The content of the social studies courses will be consistent with Tennessee Academic Standards and with admissions requirements of Tennessee public institutions of higher education. Required courses include United States History and Geography, World History and Geography, Economics, and United States Government and Civics. In order to meet the Social Studies course credit requirements to earn a full diploma upon graduation from high school, each student must take and pass the civics test developed by the LEA, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-408.

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (13) Students shall complete one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) credit in Personal Finance. Three (3) years of JROTC may be substituted for one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) credit of Personal Finance if the JROTC instructor attends the Personal Finance training.
- (14) Students shall complete one (1) credit in wellness. The wellness courses will integrate concepts from health, physical fitness, and wellness and may be taught by a team of teachers from one (1) or more teaching areas, including health, physical education, family and nutrition sciences, and health sciences education. Participation in marching band and interscholastic athletics may not be substituted for this aspect of the graduation requirements.
- Upon the choice of the student, credit for basic training may be substituted for the required credit in lifetime wellness and credit in one (1) elective course or for credit in two (2) elective courses.
- (15) Students shall complete one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) credit in Physical Education. This 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.
- (16) Students shall complete two (2) credits of the same world language. The credit requirement for world language may be waived by the local school district for students, under certain circumstances, to expand and enhance the elective focus.
- (17) Students shall complete one (1) credit in Fine Arts. The credit requirement for fine arts may be waived by the local school district for students, under certain circumstances, to expand and enhance the elective focus.
- (18) Students shall complete three (3) credits in an elective focus. All students shall pursue a focused program of study designed to prepare them for the workforce and postsecondary study. The intent of the elective focus is to provide students with an opportunity to explore a particular academic area in greater depth.
- (a) The elective focus may be CTE, science and math, humanities, fine arts, AP/IB, Cambridge, or other areas approved by the local board of education. Students completing a CTE elective focus shall complete three (3) credits in the same CTE career cluster or state-approved program of study.
- (b) The director of schools may waive the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) credit requirement of the elective focus during a student's senior year if the completion of the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) elective focus credit would prevent or delay graduation. This waiver option includes those students who transfer during the junior or senior year to a Tennessee high school from a school in another state or from a non-public school.

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (19) Computer education is not specifically listed in the graduation requirements. However, T.C.A. § 49-6-1010 requires every candidate for graduation to have received a full year of computer education at some time during the candidate’s educational career. Computer science and courses such as digital art and design, architectural and engineering design, programming and logic, web design, and website development will also satisfy this requirement and serve as a complement to a student's elective focus.
  
- (20) Local high schools must 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.
  
- (21) A course schedule that presents students with the option of taking course work for the first time (i.e., first-attempt courses) during the summer should be reserved for students on an advanced or accelerated learning path. Credits received for any first-attempt courses taken during the summer may count towards the course requirements during the subsequent school year. Any applicable End of Course examinations must be taken during the fall semester immediately following the summer course. Credit may not be given in a summer course with an associated End of Course examination (that is a first attempt at the credit) until the student takes the examination. Students taking remediation courses during the summer may receive credit immediately upon passing. Remediation courses are those courses previously attempted with a completed End of Course examination, as applicable.
  
- (22) Students in middle school may take coursework for high school credit. If a student completes any of the State Board-required high school credits prior to grade nine (9), they shall receive graduation credit for that coursework.

**MOVE ON WHEN READY**

- (1) The *Move on When Ready Act* provides public high school students who wish to graduate early with the opportunity to graduate high school early and gain entry into a postsecondary institution.
  
- (2) A public high school student may complete an early high school graduation program and be eligible for unconditional entry into a public two (2)-year institution of higher education or conditional entry into a public four (4)-year institution of higher education, if the student fulfills each of the following requirements:
  - (a) Earns eighteen (18) credits that include:
    - 1. English I, II, III, and IV
    - 2. Algebra I and II<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Integrated Math I, II, and III may fulfill the Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry requirements in districts that offer the Integrated Math sequence.

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

3. Geometry
  4. United States History
  5. Two (2) courses in the same world language;
  6. One (1) course selected from:
    - (i) Economics
    - (ii) Government
    - (iii) World Civilizations
    - (iv) World Geography
  7. One (1) course selected from:
    - (i) History and appreciation of visual and performing arts
    - (ii) A standards-based arts course, which may include studio art, band, chorus, dance, or other performing arts
  8. Health and Physical Education (Wellness)
  9. Biology
  10. Chemistry
- (b) Has a cumulative GPA of at least 3.2 on the Uniform Grading System four (4) point scale;
- (c) Scores at the on-track or mastered level on each end-of-course assessment taken<sup>2</sup>;
- (d) Meets benchmark scores of twenty-one (21) or higher composite score on the ACT or an equivalent score on the SAT;
- (e) Achieves a passing score on a nationally recognized world language proficiency assessment; and
- (f) Completes two (2) early postsecondary courses.
- (3) A student pursuing early graduation through the Move on When Ready program may take two (2) high school English courses in an academic year.
- (4) A student pursuing early graduation through the Move on When Ready program shall complete an intent form available from the Department of Education and submit it to her or his high school principal and the Department of Education.
- (5) A student pursuing early graduation through the Move on When Ready program is exempt from any additional graduation requirements.

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<sup>2</sup> Excluding end-of-course assessments taken during the student's final semester prior to early graduation

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (6) A student who completes the Move on When Ready program shall be awarded a regular high school diploma.

**GRADUATION WITH HONORS, STATE HONORS, AND STATE DISTINCTION**

- (1) A variety of honors and distinctions may be awarded to graduating students meeting state or locally specified criteria. Each local school board shall develop a policy prescribing how students meeting the following requirements will be noted and recognized.
- (2) School systems may design student recognition programs that allow students to graduate with honors if they have met the graduation requirements and have attained an overall grade point average of at least a 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. School systems may set a higher GPA at their discretion. School systems may specify additional requirements, such as requiring students to demonstrate performance of distinction in one (1) or more areas.
- (3) Students who score at or above all the subject area readiness benchmarks on the ACT or equivalent score on the SAT will graduate with state honors.
- (4) Students shall be recognized as graduating with district distinction if they have met the graduation requirements, have obtained an overall grade point average of at least a 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale, and have earned an industry certification in his or her career interest category or a regionally-recognized industry certification.
- (5) A student who earns a composite score of nineteen (19) or higher on the ACT, or an equivalent score on the SAT, and earns a capstone industry certification as promoted by the Department of Education, shall be recognized as a Tennessee Tri-Star Scholar upon graduation from high school. The public high school shall recognize the student's achievement at the graduation ceremony by placing an appropriate designation on the student's diploma, or other credential, or by providing a ribbon or cord to be worn with graduation regalia. The student shall be noted as a Tennessee Tri-Star Scholar in the school's graduation program.
- (6) Students will be recognized as graduating with "state distinction" by attaining a B or better average and completing one (1) of the following:
- (a) Earn a national and/or state recognized industry certification;
  - (b) Participate in at least one (1) of the Governor's Schools;
  - (c) Participate in one (1) of the state's ALL State musical organizations;

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (d) Earn statewide recognition or award at a skill- or knowledge-based state tournament, convention, or competition hosted by a statewide student organization, and/or qualify for national recognition by a national student organization;
  - (e) Be selected as a National Merit Finalist or Semi-Finalist;
  - (f) Attain a score of thirty-one (31) or higher composite score on the ACT or SAT equivalent;
  - (g) Attain a score of three (3) or higher on at least two advanced placement exams;
  - (h) Successfully complete the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme; or
  - (i) Earn twelve (12) or more semester hours of postsecondary credit.
- (7) LEAs shall recognize students who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one (1) or more languages in addition to English with a Seal of Biliteracy. Students receiving this recognition shall meet the following criteria:
- (a) Complete all English language arts (ELA) requirements for graduation with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher in those classes;
  - (b) Demonstrate English proficiency through one (1) of the following:
    - 1. Score at the on-track or mastered level on each ELA end-of-course assessment taken;
    - 2. Score three (3) or higher on an Advanced Placement English Language or English Literature exam; B1 or higher on a Cambridge International English exam; or four (4) or higher on an International Baccalaureate English exam;
    - 3. Score 22 or higher on the ACT Reading subtest or 480 or higher on the SAT evidence-based reading and writing subtest; or
    - 4. Score 4.5 or higher on the WIDA Access, if the student is an English learner; and
  - (c) Demonstrate proficiency in a world language through one (1) of the following:
    - 1. Score Intermediate-Mid or higher in all three (3) communication modes (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) on a world language proficiency assessment recognized by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL);
    - 2. Score three (3) or higher on an Advanced Placement world language exam; B1 or higher on a Cambridge International world language exam; or four (4) or higher on an International Baccalaureate world language exam;
    - 3. Score at the Intermediate level or higher on the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI: ASL);



<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

4. Pass a foreign government's approved non-English language exam, or score at a level comparable to Intermediate-mid or higher on the ACTFL proficiency scale on another country's secondary level standardized exam in the country's non-English native language; or
5. Score at a level comparable to Intermediate-Mid or higher on the ACTFL proficiency scale on an LEA developed alternate model. Alternate models may only be used if the identified world language does not have an associated nationally recognized assessment and must address communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities.

Each school shall document and track students' progress toward the Seal of Biliteracy. Each local board shall affix an appropriate insignia to the diploma of the qualifying student indicating that the student has been awarded a Tennessee Seal of Biliteracy.

- (8) Students who voluntarily complete at least ten (10) hours of community service each semester the student is in attendance at a public high school shall be recognized at their graduation ceremony.
- (9) Students graduating with a gold or platinum medal on National Career Readiness Certificate (WorkKeys) shall be recognized at their graduation ceremony.
- (10) Students graduating with a district-developed work ethic distinction shall be recognized at their graduation ceremony.

#### **PLAN OF STUDY**

- (1) At age fourteen (14) or prior to the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) grade, all students, including students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), shall develop an initial four (4)-year plan of focused and purposeful high school study. The plan of study shall be reviewed annually by the student and school counselor or faculty advisor and revised based on the student's academic progress and changes in the student's interests and career goals. Results of various types of assessments will also be used in adjusting the plan of study.
- (2) As part of the of the plan of focused and purposeful high school study, all students shall take a career interest inventory during either middle school or grade nine (9) and a career aptitude assessment during grade seven (7) or grade eight (8), and use the results to inform their plan of study.
- (3) High school and middle grades faculty will collaborate in planning curriculum and the transition between middle grades and high school.

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (4) The plan of focused and purposeful high school study shall:
- (a) Cover either grades nine through twelve (9-12) or grades eight through twelve (8-12);
  - (b) Connect the student’s goals for high school to the courses or training that shall equip the student with the skills necessary to meet his or her goals after high school;
  - (c) Consider a variety of indicators, such as student academic strengths and needs, attendance, behavior, and course grades;
  - (d) Include information regarding programs of study, a student’s readiness for specific early post-secondary opportunities (EPSOs), and elective focuses aligned to the student’s interest inventory results;
  - (e) Provide students with opportunities to begin building technical skills in a field of interest, in addition to employability skills required to be successful in that job; and
  - (f) If applicable, identify possible transition service needs of a student under the applicable components of the student’s IEP.

**WORK-BASED LEARNING FRAMEWORK**

- (1) Students will have access to a system of structured work-based learning (WBL) experiences that allows them to apply classroom theories to practical problems and to explore career options. The following Work-Based Learning Framework will govern all WBL experiences. The Tennessee Department of Education will provide school systems with a Work-Based Learning Policy Guide and Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide consistent with this framework to address training requirements, program expectations, and legal requirements.
- (2) Structure of the Program. Structured WBL experiences may be paid or unpaid, may occur in public, private, or non-profit organizations, or on-site at the school; they may occur during or outside of school hours and may result in the attainment of academic credit when WBL course standards are met. In all instances, all federal and state labor laws shall be observed.
- (3) Coordination of the Program. A Work-Based Learning Coordinator, in conjunction with a team of supervising teachers as outlined by the Work-Based Learning Policy Guide and the Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide, will be responsible for: (1) the recruitment of appropriate work sites; (2) coordination of ongoing communications with workplace mentors; (3) facilitation of instruction that meets the WBL Framework requirements and WBL course standards where applicable; and (4) all required documentation related to student work, safety training, and job

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

placements as outlined by the Work-Based Learning Policy Guide and the Work-Based Implementation Guide.

- (4) **Supervision of Students.** A designated workplace mentor will supervise each student. Regular monitoring will be provided by a dedicated supervising teacher or the WBL Coordinator to ensure WBL Framework requirements are met as outlined in the Work- Based Learning Policy Guide and the Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide.
- (5) **Development of Personalized Learning Plans.** A personalized learning plan will be created for each student and will address applicable employability skills, including, but not limited to, (1) the application of academic and technical knowledge and skills, (2) career knowledge and navigation skills, (3) 21<sup>st</sup>Century learning and innovation skills, and personal and social skills. The personalized learning plan will also include safety trainings appropriate to the WBL experience as covered by the supervising teacher, the workplace mentor, or both, and as outlined in the Work-Based Learning Policy Guide and the Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide.
- (6) **Student Assessment Using Multiple Measures.** Students must exhibit work readiness, knowledge, attitudes, and skills as determined by the supervising teacher and workplace mentor and consistent with the Work-Based Learning Policy Guide and the Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide before beginning a WBL experience. During the experience, students will practice the employability skills identified in their personalized learning plan. Students will demonstrate their knowledge and skill attainment through the development of artifacts and/or portfolios that may include, but are not limited to: work products, evaluations, original research, reflections, and presentations as outlined in the Work-Based Learning Policy Guide and Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide.
- (7) **Evaluation of Program Quality.** Local boards of education will adopt a process for evaluation and assessment to ensure WBL experiences are of high quality for the student. Recommended evaluation tools are provided in the Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide.

#### **ASSESSMENT**

- (1) The assessment program is consistent with legislative intent as specified in the accountability provisions of the state *Education Improvement Act* (1992) and the federal *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015). The assessment program focuses on enabling all students to succeed in challenging coursework by beginning with use of results of the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) and eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) for diagnostic purposes to determine the appropriate educational experience for entering ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) grade students. School systems will determine the appropriate array of programs; schools will incorporate strategies into their school improvement process. The focus must be on providing high quality instruction, sometimes over

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

extended periods of time, so that all students can be successful. Schools will also use examinations administered in high school for diagnostic purposes.

- (2) Rationale for Assessment. The purposes to be served and the rationale for testing include the following:
- (a) Improvement of Student Learning in Major Content Areas. The examinations will align with the state standards and will include both content knowledge and critical thinking skills.
  - (b) Preparation for Further Learning. Examinations occurring early in the student's high school program of study will help prepare them for success in subjects taken later.
  - (c) Diagnostic Information. The examinations will help students to improve their performance and help prepare them for the ACT, SAT, and successful entry into postsecondary educational programs.
  - (d) School and Program Improvement. The examinations will provide data that can be used to improve the effectiveness of the instructional delivery system at the school and the school system.
  - (e) Accountability. The examinations will provide for teacher, school, and school system accountability. To provide for school and school system accountability, the proposed program provides for examinations in four areas: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. These academic areas are important for the successful transition to work and postsecondary study.
  - (f) Students will take the examinations in the year they complete the relevant content standards and course work or at the earliest available test administration.
- (3) End of Course Examinations. End of Course (EOC) examinations shall be administered in the following subjects: English I, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Integrated Math I, Integrated Math II, Integrated Math III, U.S. History, and Biology I.
- (a) The state shall report scores for schools and school systems for academic achievement and academic gain.
  - (b) Students shall take the examinations in the semester they complete the relevant course work or at the earliest available test administration. Only students who are enrolled in a course with an associated End of Course examination shall take the End of Course examination. Students enrolled in a substituting course without an End of Course examination explicitly tied to the State Board of Education-approved content standards

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

of that course shall not take an End of Course examination. This exemption applies to all substituting courses, including, but not limited to, Advanced Placement, Cambridge AICE, International Baccalaureate, local and statewide dual enrollment, and local and statewide dual credit courses.

- (c) Students enrolled in courses with End of Course examinations may not withdraw from such courses after being enrolled in the course for at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the instructional days in the course.
- (d) Students with disabilities shall be provided accommodations in accordance with their IEP or 504 plan. English Learner proficiency level shall also be considered when determining if accommodations are needed. Needed accommodations and supports shall be reviewed at least annually.
- (e) The IEP team must determine if a student with a disability should participate in the general assessment with or without accommodations or in the alternate assessment. To participate in an alternate assessment, the IEP team shall determine that alternate assessment is more appropriate than the general assessment and that the student meets all three of the following eligibility requirements:
  - 1. The student has a significant cognitive disability and adaptive skills that result in performance that is substantially below grade-level achievement expectations even with the use of accommodations and modifications;
  - 2. The student is learning content linked to and derived from the Tennessee Academic Standards as indicated in the Alternate Academic Standards; and
  - 3. The student requires substantial modifications, adaptations, or supports to meaningfully access the subject area content and requires intensive individualized instruction in order to acquire and generalize knowledge.
- (f) The IEP team shall rule out that the inability to achieve the state grade-level achievement expectations is the result of excessive or extended absences or social, cultural, or economic differences. Participation in the alternate assessment shall be determined at least annually. A student who meets the eligibility criteria and whose IEP team determines participation in the alternate assessment is appropriate shall be assessed in all four (4) content areas: ELA, math, science, and social studies.
- (g) Results of individual student performance from all administered End of Course examinations shall be provided in a timely fashion to facilitate the inclusion of these results as part of the student's grade. Each LEA must establish a local board policy that details the methodology used and the required weighting for incorporating student scores on EOC examinations into final course grades. If an LEA does not receive its

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

students' End of Course examination scores at least five (5) instructional days before the scheduled end of the course, then the LEA may choose not to include its students' End of Course examination scores in the students' final course grade. The weight of the EOC examination on the student's final average shall be determined by the local board of education from a range of no less than fifteen (15%) and no more than twenty-five (25%).

- (4) Eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) Grade Assessment. As a strategy for assessing student readiness for postsecondary education, students enrolled in a Tennessee public school during their eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) grade year shall take either the ACT or SAT. To receive a regular high school diploma, all students enrolled in a Tennessee public school during their eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) grade year must take either the ACT or SAT.
- (5) United States Civics Test. Beginning July 1, 2019, all high school students must take and pass a United States civics test in order to meet the Social Studies course credit requirement to earn a regular diploma.
  - (a) The LEA shall prepare the civics test. The test shall meet the requirements outlined in T.C.A. § 49-6-408.
  - (b) A student shall pass the test if the student correctly answers at least seventy percent (70%) of the questions. The LEA may provide students with the opportunity to take the test as many times as necessary. A passing score on the civics test must be noted on a student's transcript.
  - (c) The U.S. civics test shall be administered to a student who has an IEP with the accommodations and/or modifications that are deemed necessary by the IEP team.
  - (d) The Tennessee Department of Education shall recognize a school on the department's website as a United States civics all-star school for any school year in which all of the school's seniors receiving a regular diploma make a passing grade of eighty-five percent (85%) or higher.
- (6) Project-based Civics Assessment. All LEAs shall implement a project-based assessment in civics at least once in grades nine through twelve (9-12).
  - (a) The project-based assessment shall be developed by the LEA, measure the civics learning objectives contained in the social studies standards, and allow students to demonstrate understanding and relevance of public policy, the structure of federal, state and local governments, and both the Tennessee and the United States constitutions.

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (b) "Project-based" means an approach that engages students in learning essential knowledge and skills through a student-influenced inquiry process structured around complex authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks.
  - (c) LEAs shall submit verification of implementation of the project-based assessment to the Department of Education.
  
- (7) Adult Students. Adult students from high school graduating classes 1988-2012, who have not received a diploma, but have met all graduation requirements with the exception of the requirement for a diploma assessment, have two (2) options to complete the requirements for a diploma:
  - (a) Adult students may choose to take the Gateway assessment. If these students achieve a passing score on the relevant Gateway assessment, they may receive a diploma.
  - (b) If an adult student does not wish to take the diploma assessment, or if they require additional courses to complete the course work for graduation, they may enroll in an adult high school. Upon enrollment, they will be required to take and pass all courses required under the current diploma guidelines. Students who have enrolled in an adult high school and are meeting current diploma requirements are not required to take an End of Course examination or the Gateway assessment.
  
- (8) Local Assessment Policy. All LEAs shall annually include in each school's student handbook, or other policy guidebook, and post to the district website, a local assessment policy. The assessment policy shall be posted to the district website by July 31 each year and shall include, at a minimum, the following information:
  - (a) The names of all state and locally required assessments that will be administered in the upcoming school year;
  - (b) The purpose and use of each assessment;
  - (c) Information on how each locally required assessment complements and enhances student instruction and learning and how each local assessment serves a purpose distinct from required state assessments;
  - (d) The grade or class for which the assessment is to be administered;
  - (e) The tentative date or dates on which the assessment will be administered;

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (f) The local policy on the inclusion of TCAP scores into a student’s grade, including the percentage that TCAP scores will be weighted for each grade level, the methodology by which the grades will be calculated for inclusion in student grades, and the policy on excluding TCAP scores if they are not received at least five (5) instructional days before the end of the course;
- (g) The anticipated timeframe when parents and students will receive results from the assessment; and
- (h) Information on how parents can access the items on the student's state-required summative standardized assessments and the student's answers.

**CREDIT RECOVERY**

- (1) Credit recovery is a course-specific, standards-based extended learning opportunity for students who have previously been unsuccessful in mastering the standards required to receive course credit or earn promotion. Credit recovery programs, in general, have a primary focus of helping students stay in school and graduate on time.
- (2) Local boards of education shall develop credit recovery program rules, regulations, and processes (referred to as “credit recovery policies” throughout). These policies shall be formally adopted by the local board of education, posted to the district’s website, and provided in writing to any participating students, parents, or legal guardians. At a minimum, credit recovery policies must address the following standards for admission and removal, instruction, content and curriculum, and grades.
- (3) Admission and Removal.
  - (a) No LEA shall admit or otherwise enroll students in credit recovery courses unless all of the following are true:
    - 1. The student’s parent or legal guardian gives written consent for the student to enroll in the proposed credit recovery course. Parents/guardians should 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.
    - 2. 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.
    - 3. 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



<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

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.

- (b) If a student is seeking to recover credit for the first semester of a two (2)-semester course, the student may not receive the full credit for the course until they have enrolled in and passed the second semester of the course and taken any applicable End of Course examinations.
  - (c) Local board of education credit recovery policies may set additional requirements for admission to and removal from credit recovery programs including but not limited to attendance, discipline, availability of coursework, availability of space, appropriate progress, and grades.
  - (d) Local boards of education shall track and designate students enrolled in credit recovery courses as directed by the Tennessee Department of Education.
- (4) Instruction.
- (a) Students enrolled in any credit recovery courses must be assigned to a teacher of record.
  - (b) Credit recovery teachers of record must be endorsed and certified in any content area(s) for which they oversee credit recovery courses.
  - (c) Credit recovery teachers of record must be responsible for reviewing initial student diagnostic results; assisting in determining appropriate goals, coursework, and assignments for students; working closely with credit recovery facilitators on class content and instruction; and reviewing final student work.
  - (d) 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.
  - (e) Local boards of education shall ensure that credit recovery facilitators receive training pertaining to the credit recovery course organization, online instruction management, and related technology.
  - (f) LEAs shall ensure that all credit recovery courses:
    - 1. Align with Tennessee’s current academic standards for the relevant course content area, as approved by the State Board of Education.
    - 2. Are able to differentiate instruction to address individual student growth needs based on diagnostic assessment or End of Course data.

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (g) Credit Recovery content may be delivered through instructional technology.
- (h) Students in Credit Recovery programs:
  - 1. Shall complete a course standard-specific diagnostic to determine standard-specific goals.
  - 2. Shall meet individual standard-specific goals in a flexible time frame as established by identified student need.
  - 3. May be required to complete additional assignments as directed by local board of education credit recovery policy and credit recovery teacher of record.
  - 4. Shall master all individualized standard-specific goals and assignments as established by the diagnostic process and the credit recovery teacher of record, in order to earn credit.
- (5) Grades.
  - (a) Students passing credit recovery shall receive a grade of seventy percent (70%).
  - (b) The student transcript shall denote that the credit was attained through credit recovery.
  - (c) 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.

**ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO EDUCATION**

- (1) In accordance with the federal McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act, state and local educational agencies must develop and implement policies to remove barriers related to the education of homeless children and youths and other at-risk youth.
- (2) Each local education agency (LEA) shall establish procedures to eliminate barriers to enrollment and retention for students identified as homeless, migrant, foster, or military, as defined in state and federal law. LEA procedures shall include:
  - (a) An assurance that the local procedures are aligned to all relevant state and federal laws for the identified classifications of students;
  - (b) A procedure for determining the appropriate school, grade, and course placement that is in the student's best interest, including:
    - 1. A transcript analysis;
    - 2. Consultation with multiple stakeholders, as available; and
    - 3. A written justification for the placement decision;

<b>TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL POLICY</b>	<b>2.103</b>

- (c) A provision that grades cannot be lowered solely due to absences or gaps in enrollment caused by changes in school or home placements, rather than due to missed assignments that the student did not make up despite opportunities to do so;
- (d) A process for providing tiered support for attendance for students identified as at-risk for chronic absenteeism; and
- (e) credit accrual plan that eliminates academic and nonacademic barriers for the qualifying student, including:
  - 1. A process for granting full or partial credit for unresolved or incomplete coursework that was completed before the date of withdrawal or transfer;
  - 2. An alternative means of completing required coursework or demonstrating mastery on required coursework, in order to facilitate on-time graduation; and
  - 3. An exemption from local graduation requirements that exceed the State Board minimum requirements.