MERCER COUNTY SCHOOLS
Policy Comment(s) / Suggestion(s)

Policy: I-02
Secondary School Attendance and Graduation Requirements

Individual / Organization: ________________________________
Title: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________

Comment(s) / Suggestion(s)
Please write your comments below in the sections that apply to the policy. Use additional paper if necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.0 Purpose</th>
<th>Agree (reason)</th>
<th>Disagree (reason)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This policy is being changed to address new state requirements and to facilitate the scheduling at the high school level.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.0 Definitions</th>
<th>Agree (reason)</th>
<th>Disagree (reason)</th>
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<tr>
<th>3.0 Procedures</th>
<th>Agree (reason)</th>
<th>Disagree (reason)</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Comments</th>
<th>Agree (reason)</th>
<th>Disagree (reason)</th>
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Return comments NO LATER THAN August 17, 2020 to:
Dr. Kristal Filipek - Director, Human Resources
Mercer County Schools
1403 Honaker Avenue
Princeton, WV 24740
SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
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1.0 Purpose

The Mercer County Board of Education recognizes a direct relationship exists between student attendance and performance, graduation, and work ethic. Additionally, the BOE understands the importance of communicating educational expectations for student attendance and student graduation requirements to faculty, students, parents, and to the community. Therefore, attendance and graduation requirements are outlined below.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Advanced Placement – An academic learning experience characterized by content and performance expectations beyond those normally available for the age/grade level of the student (e.g., College Board Advanced Placement, College Courses (including Dual Credit Courses), advanced satellite or Internet courses).

2.2 Capstone Experience – The culminating senior project and assessment required for all seniors eligible to earn a standard diploma. The Capstone Experience includes two options. All graduates must select and complete one option.

Option One: The Senior Project (Capstone Experience) is an exit program for students who have not completed a CTE (Career and Technical Education) program. The project is completed at a student’s home high school during a student’s senior year. The long-term academic project requires all seniors to work with a faculty mentor to apply writing, speaking, problem solving, time management, organizational and risk taking skills. The following components comprise the Capstone Experience: (a) product – a physical (written, performed, created, experienced, etc.) artifact generated from research; (b) portfolio – organized documentation of project which includes a proposal, a synopsis of investigative research and a conclusion, and (c) presentation – sharing of product and knowledge with mentor and additional community or faculty member(s).

Option Two: The CTE Completer Project is a required evaluation for Career and Technical Education program completers. The project is completed at the Mercer County Technical Education Center (MCTEC) for all CTE completers except JROTC and Business. For JROTC and Business, the student’s home school will be responsible for completing these programs. The project is completed during a student’s fourth (4th) CTE course in a specific concentration regardless of the student’s graduation date. The project is comprised of two major components: a) Student Portfolio – a collection of personal documents which reflect requirements of the West Virginia Career and Technical Education Rubric and showcase student learning experiences, goals and achievements.
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b) Student Capstone – a multifaceted assessment that demonstrates learning from all CTE courses in the student’s selected concentration. MCTEC faculty will serve as mentors, and community members, industry professionals, and district staff (including teachers) will evaluate each project.

2.3 College Course – Any course for which college credit is awarded (e.g., dual credit, regular college course).

2.4 Experiential Learning – Structured quality learning experiences that are work-based, service-based, community-based, and/or research-based.

2.5 Higher Level Course - A course in the same content area, but at a higher sequential level (e.g., AP Language and Composition in lieu of English 11).

2.6 Modified Diploma – The diploma awarded to eligible students with disabilities who have been determined by an IEP Team to be unable, even with extended learning opportunities and significant instructional accommodations, to meet state and county standard graduation requirements.

2.7 More Rigorous Course - A course within the same content area in which the rigor and expectations are higher than the course for which the substitution is being made (e.g., AP Chemistry in lieu of Chemistry).

2.8 Option Pathway Program – The state approved alternative means to earn a high school diploma that requires passing the High School Equivalency Assessment (HSEA) and successful completion of a required Career Technical Education (CTE) program.

2.9 Personalized Education Plan (PEP) – An educational plan developed in grades six through eight (6-8) requiring the school to engage staff in a school-wide, systemic, guidance and advisement approach to ensure students and their parents or guardians thoughtfully explore individual interests and aptitudes prior to course selection and career planning.

During the 8th grade year, each student’s PEP is developed to identify course selections for the 9th and 10th grade based on each student’s identified career aspirations. Prior to development of the PEP, the school shall provide ongoing opportunities during the school day for career exploration and self-discovery involving student needs assessments, career and interest inventories, learning style inventories, self-reflections, and career inquiry.
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2.10 Standard Diploma - The document awarded to a student to verify completion of standard graduation requirements or completion of the Option Pathway Program.

2.11 Standard Graduation Requirements – The number of required classes and elective units of credit that must be earned by a student in order to graduate and receive a high school diploma.

2.12 TASC – The Test Assessing Secondary Completion which is aligned with College and Career Readiness standards. Students can study at their own pace for assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

2.13 Unit of Credit – Recognition given to a student and entered into a student’s transcript for the successful completion of the content standards and objectives at a level established for an approved required or elective high school level course. Credit may be accumulated by students who attend public schools or who participate in dual credit programs sponsored and approved by the county. In order for students to earn course credit, schools operating under the provision of WV Code §18-28-1 et seq. are to submit for approval an overview of the curriculum, that may include, but is not limited to, course syllabi, instructional goals and objectives to be covered, course requirements and total instructional minutes of each course to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

3.0 Procedure

3.1 Attendance - All students must be scheduled for the full instructional day each of the four (4) years. Attendance exceptions for seniors must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent. The exceptions recognized by the Mercer County Board of Education are as follows:

3.1.1 College Placement - Exceptions may be made to accommodate placement of seniors into college courses for one or more of the four instructional periods in order to take three hours of college credit per semester in place of each period for which they are excused. Generally, there are two reasons for accepting college credit: a) the student is enrolled in the high school and would profit by taking a course at the college/university that is not available at the high school; or b) the student is enrolled as a full time college student and needs to transfer elective credits back to the high school to complete graduation requirements.
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3.1.2 Compelling Circumstances - Compelling circumstances recognized by Mercer County Schools under which students may attend school fewer than four (4) years and/or may be scheduled for less than the school day (46 periods) are:

3.1.2.a parenthood,
3.1.2.b family responsibility upon proper verification,
3.1.2.c extreme financial need as evidenced by thorough documentation.
3.1.2.d enrolled in Option Pathway and either have successfully completed the TASC or the CTE requirements and show evidence of employment.
3.1.2.e enrollment in a credit-bearing (elective credit) workplace readiness program.
3.1.2f to assist with social distancing recommendations seniors maybe exempt from courses that exceed their graduation requirements.

3.1.3 Enrollment in a course offered through the Virtual School (see Policy I-29).

3.1.4 Enrollment in a CTE course which is not offered at the Mercer County Technical Education Center but is offered at another vocational or technical school.

3.1.5 Students enrolled in the Option Pathway Program who have completed TASC, have finished CTE requirements, and have met graduation requirements.

3.2 Secondary Graduation Requirements – The standard graduation requirement is twenty-eight (28) units of credit for graduates of 2016 and beyond. The twenty-eight (28) units of credit consist of the following: twenty-two (22) required units of credit and six (6) elective units of credit that constitute a common body of general learning necessary for preparing a student to function in society. Additionally, there are two (2) non-credit graduation requirements consisting of the Capstone Experience (see Section 2.2) and Experiential Learning, as described in Policy I-21.

All students must take at least one math course each year, grades nine through twelve (9-12). If a senior has completed the math requirements for graduation based on WVDE Policy 2510, then the following courses may be taken to meet the county requirement of having a math class each year: Accounting I or II; completion of the concentration CADD; Personal Finance; Physics; and completion of the “Project Lead the Way” career concentration. Other courses to be considered to meet this math requirement must go through the process of listing the course, course description and College and Career Readiness Standards (CCR), and submitting this information to the Supervisor of
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Secondary Education. It will then be submitted to the Superintendent of Mercer County Schools for approval.

In addition, a notice of exemption should be filed with the superintendent’s office if there are circumstances that may preclude a student in his/her senior year from meeting this requirement. This notice of exemption must meet the following criteria: if a student has taken all the math courses available to him/her in that school; if a student will not be able to be a CTE completer if he/she takes the math credit; or if taking the math course will prevent a student from graduating in the school year when he/she is a senior. Other circumstances will not be considered or approved.

9-12 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (28 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>English 9, English 10 or an AP English course, English 11 or an AP English Course, and English 12, English 12 CR, English 12 TR, one (1) Additional Personalized Credit from Course Options, or an AP English course may be substituted for any of the above.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grade 9: Earth and Space Science; Grade 10: Biology or AP Biology; and One (1) Additional state approved science course or AP science course Personalized Credit from Course Options. An AP® or Dual Credit Science course may be substituted for any science credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies**</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grade 9: World Studies or AP Social Studies Course; Grade 10: United States Studies or AP US History; Grade 11: Social Studies Course or AP Social Studies Course. When substituting AP World History or AP US History, both should be taken in place of their required courses. One (1) Credit from World Studies or an AP® Social Studies Course, one (1) Credit from United States (US) Studies* or US Studies Comprehensive, or AP® US History, One (1) Credit from Civics (includes personal finance) or AP® Government and Politics, and one (1) Additional Personalized Credit from Course Options. *Students who take US Studies must utilize Contemporary Studies as their Personalized Credit unless they are utilizing JROTC Courses I-IV. Grade 12: Civics for the Next Generation or AP Government and Politics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Arts</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Applications</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personalized Education Plan Required Courses (PEP)</td>
<td>4</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electives</th>
<th>5 credits</th>
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*Students will be required to earn four (4) mathematics credits to qualify for graduation. The following chart will assist with scheduling students.

**Students shall take the high school social studies courses in the listed sequence to ensure maximum understanding of the material to be covered and to ensure alignment of the content for WV State Assessment. World Studies, US Studies, Contemporary Studies a Social Studies elective, and Civics for the Next Generation shall be taken in consecutive order. When substituting AP courses, students should take AP World History and AP US History courses in place of two of their required courses. Students may substitute AP European History or AP Human Geography as a third required course in grades nine through eleven (9-11). The senior course, Civics for the Next Generation, has been written to deliver rich academic content within relevant context for students entering the world of work and college; therefore, the only acceptable substitutions for this course are AP Government and Politics, or an embedded credit through JROTC.

As required by HB 2855 and WV Policy 2510, a student, in consultation with his/her parents, may request to take a higher level or more rigorous course, advanced placement course, or career college course in place of a required career concentration course or recommended elective course as specified in the high school program of studies. Such requests must be approved by the county superintendent (or designee) and principal. The decision as to whether the substitute course will count as credit for the specified career concentration or recommended elective requirement must be based on its applicability to the student’s PEP and post-high school goals.

The student and his or her parents will be advised of the decision of the superintendent (or designee). The student’s Certificate of Proficiency may not indicate that the student completed a career major unless the substitute course is deemed to be related and relevant to the career major.

A notation must be made on the student’s PEP indicating that this process was followed and that the parents and student clearly understand the impact of the course substitution.

3.2.1 Elective Units - Elective units are the additional offerings that are needed to complete graduation requirements and which meet a student’s specific needs, interests, and abilities. State Board Policy 2510, Regulations for General, Vocational, and Special Educational Programs, catalogs electives that must be available to students in all schools of West Virginia. Elective offerings needed to meet state requirements should be chosen from those listed in WVDE
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Policy 2510. The State Board of Education is the only body that may make exceptions to this graduation requirement.

3.3 Students transferring to Mercer County Schools from other schools will be required to meet all county graduation requirements with the exception of the number of credits required for graduation. The number of credits required for graduation will be determined by the number of credits the student could have potentially acquired - less four. For example, a student who transferred to Mercer County in his/her senior year from a school system that offers seven (7) credits per year could have obtained twenty-one (21) credits in three (3) years and could obtain eight (8) more in his senior year giving that student a potential of twenty-nine (29) credits. Therefore, he/she would need twenty-five (25) credits to graduate.

3.4 Upon completion of all standard graduation requirements, or completion of requirements for the Option Pathway Program, a student will be awarded a standard diploma.

4.0 Administration

4.1 As specified in West Virginia Code §18-20-1, students with disabilities whose IEPs provide for a modified diploma shall be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies with their same grade classmates when requested, in writing, by parents and shall be allowed to continue to receive services until twenty-one (21) years of age.

5.0 Severability

5.1 If any portion of this policy or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this policy.


Source: Board of Education Minutes, Superintendent's Memo

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Legal Reference: State Board Policies 2510 and 2420, and HB 2855