

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Title:** Occupational Course of Study - Proposed Temporary Waiver of Paid Employment Graduation Requirement

**Type of Executive Summary:**

- Action       Action on First Reading       Discussion       Information

**Policy Implications:**

- Constitution \_\_\_\_\_  
 General Statute # \_\_\_\_\_  
 SBE Policy # HSP-N-004  
 SBE Policy Amendment  
 SBE Policy (New)  
 APA # \_\_\_\_\_  
 APA Amendment  
 APA (New)  
 Other 16 NCAC 6D.0503

**Presenter(s):** Ms. Angela H. Quick (Deputy Chief Academic Officer, Curriculum, Innovation, Technology and Accountability Services) and Mrs. Mary N. Watson (Director, Exceptional Children Division)

**Description:**

The Occupational Course of Study (OCS) is one of two Future-Ready Courses of Study that students with disabilities may complete to receive a North Carolina Diploma. Currently, students participating in the OCS are required to complete 300 hours of supervised school-based vocational training, 240 hours of community-based vocational training and 360 hours of competitive, paid employment in an integrated employment setting. The students must be compensated at or above the federal minimum hourly wage. Students must complete the vocational training and competitive employment hours, in addition to completing all required state and local course credits and Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals which outline the computer/technology skills to be mastered.

The current economic recession has made it extremely difficult; and in many cases, impossible for students with cognitive disabilities to obtain competitive employment after completing their unpaid vocational training. If the current graduation requirement remains in place, hundreds of students with disabilities from all regions of the state will be denied a North Carolina diploma due to no fault of their own.

The Department of Public Instruction recommends that the paid employment graduation requirement for the OCS be temporarily amended to allow participating students in the graduating classes of the 2008-2009 and the 2009-2010 school years to substitute 360 hours of additional unpaid vocational training, unpaid internships, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours for the 360 hours of competitive, paid employment hours if unable to secure paid employment in an integrated employment setting due to local job market conditions. Any community rehabilitation facility used must be considered an affirmative employer by the North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. This recommendation means that students in the OCS will still be required to complete a total of 900 hours of vocational training and/or employment in order to receive a North Carolina Diploma. All paid employment, unpaid vocational training hours, internship hours, volunteer and/or community service hours will be conducted in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable state and federal child labor laws. In addition, LEAs will be required to maintain documentation of their attempts to help the student secure paid employment through referrals to the North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funded youth employment programs and other appropriate adult employment service agencies. Evidence of interagency collaboration and referral(s) must be documented on the student's transition component of their IEP.

**Resources:**

None



**NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Policy Manual**

**Policy Identification**

**Priority:** High Student Performance

**Category:** Student Accountability Standards/Graduation Requirements

**Policy ID Number:** HSP-N-004

**Policy Title:** 16 NCAC 6D .0503 State graduation requirements

**Current Policy Date:** 09/11/2008

**Other Historical Information:** Previous board dates: 12/01/1999, 05/04/2000, 06/01/2000, 07/12/2001, 10/04/2001, 03/07/2002, 05/02/2002, 07/11/2002, 06/03/2004, 01/06/2005, 10/06/2005, 05/03/2007

**Statutory Reference:** GS 115C-12(9b); GS 115C-81(b)(4); NC Constitution, Article IX, Section 5

**Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Reference Number and Category:** 16 NCAC 6D .0503

**THIS POLICY HAS BEEN ADOPTED BY THE NC STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, BUT IS STILL PENDING CODIFICATION IN THE NC ADMINISTRATIVE CODE. ALL CODIFIED RULES MAY BE ACCESSED BY GOING TO THE [OAH WEBSITE](#).**

The year a student enters grade nine for the first time determines the graduation course requirements the student must meet.

I. FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 9 FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2009–10 AND BEYOND. In order to graduate and receive a high school diploma, students entering grade nine for the first time in 2009–10 and beyond shall pass as defined in State Board of Education Policy HSP-L-004 (High School Transcript) the Future-Ready Core course of study, meet proficiency standards defined in State Board of Education Policy HSP-N-000. Note: The Occupational Course of Study is available for those students with disabilities who are specifically identified for this program.

FUTURE-READY CORE COURSE OF STUDY. (21 credits) Students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2009–10 and beyond and are following the Future-Ready Core must pass the following courses:

1. 4 sequential English credits which shall be:
  - a. Starting with English I
  - b. English II
  - c. English III
  - d. English IV
2. 4 Mathematics credits which shall be either:

- a. Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and a fourth mathematics course to be aligned with the student's post high school plans **or**
- b. Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III and a fourth mathematics course to be aligned with the student's post high school plans

Note: Students seeking to complete minimum application requirements for UNC universities must successfully complete four mathematics courses which include a mathematics course with either Algebra II **or** Integrated Mathematics III as a pre-requisite.

Note: In the rare instance a principal exempts a student from the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence, except as limited by N.C.G.S. §115C-81(b), the student will be required to pass:

- i. Algebra I and Geometry plus either Alternative Mathematics I and Alternative Mathematics II or two application-based mathematics courses as determined by the LEA or
- ii. Algebra I and Algebra II plus either Alternative Mathematics I and Alternative Mathematics II or two application-based mathematics courses as determined by the LEA or
- iii. Integrated Mathematics I and Integrated Mathematics II plus either Alternative Mathematics I and Alternative Mathematics II or two other application-based mathematics courses as determined by the LEA.

3. 3 Science credits which shall be:

- a. a physical science course
- b. Biology
- c. an earth/environmental science course

4. 3 Social Studies credits which shall be:

- a. Civics and Economics
- b. US History
- c. World History

Note: Effective with students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2003-04, World History must be taken to meet the requirements of World Studies.

5. 1 Health and Physical Education credit

6. 2 Elective credits of any combination from either:

- a. Career and Technical Education (CTE) **or**
- b. Arts Education **or**
- c. Second Language (Credits in the same second language or demonstration of proficiency in a language other than English as determined by the LEA. Minimum application requirements for UNC universities require students to pass two years of a second language)

Note: For clarification, possible elective combinations may include 2 Second Language credits; or 1 CTE credit and 1 Arts Education credit; or 2 CTE credits; or 1 Arts Education credit and 1 Second Language credit; or other (combinations from a., b. and c.).

7. 4 Elective credits (four-course concentration recommended) from one of the following:

- a. Career and Technical Education (CTE)

- b. ROTC
- c. Arts Education (e.g., dance, music, theater arts, visual arts)  
Any other subject area or cross-disciplinary courses (e.g., mathematics, science, social studies, English and courses e.g., dual enrollment, Huskins or Learn and Earn.)

II. FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 9 FOR THE FIRST TIME PRIOR TO 2009–10. In order to graduate and receive a high school diploma, students entering grade nine for the first time prior to the 2009–10 school year shall select and pass as defined in State Board of Education Policy HSP-L-004 (High School Transcript) one of the four courses of study (i.e., College/University Preparation, College Technical Preparation, Career Preparation, or Occupational), and meet proficiency standards defined in State Board of Education policy HSP-N-000, and meet local school board requirements.

A. COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PREPARATION COURSE OF STUDY. (For students entering ninth grade for the first time prior to 2009-10.) Students following the College/University Preparation course of study must pass the following 20 credits plus any local requirements:

1. English credits which shall be:
  - a. English I
  - b. English II
  - c. English III
  - d. English IV
2. Mathematics credits depend on the year the student entered grade 9:
  - a. Students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2002–03 and beyond must pass 4 Mathematics credits which shall be either:
    - i. Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and a higher level mathematics course for which Algebra II is a prerequisite or
    - ii. Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III and one course beyond Integrated Mathematics III.
  - b. Students entering the ninth grade for the first time prior to 2002–03 must pass 3 Mathematics credits which shall be either:
    - i. Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II or a higher level mathematics course for which Algebra II is a prerequisite or
    - ii. Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III.
3. 3 Science credits which shall be:
  - a. a physical science course
  - b. Biology
  - c. an earth/environmental science course
4. 3 Social Studies credits which shall be:
  - a. Civics and Economics
  - b. US History
  - c. World History

Note: Effective with students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2003–04, World History must be taken to meet the requirements of World Studies.

5. 1 Health and Physical Education credit
  6. 2 credits in the same second language or demonstration of proficiency in a language other than English as determined by the LEA.
  7. Elective credits depend on the year the student entered grade nine:
    - a. Students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2002–03 and beyond must pass 3 elective credits
    - b. Students entering the ninth grade for the first time prior to 2002–03 must pass 4 elective credits
- B. COLLEGE TECHNICAL PREPARATION COURSE OF STUDY. (For students entering ninth grade for the first time prior to 2009-10.) Students following the College Technical Preparation course of study must pass the following 20 credits plus any local requirements:
1. 4 English credits which shall be:
    - a. English I
    - b. English II
    - c. English III
    - d. English IV
  2. 3 Mathematics credits which shall be one of the following:
    - a. Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II or
    - b. Algebra I, Technical Mathematics I and II or
    - c. Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III.

Note: A student who is pursuing this course of study may also meet the requirements of a College/University course of study by passing one additional mathematics course for which Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics III is a prerequisite, and effective with the class entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2002-03 school year, two credits in the same second language.

3. 3 Science credits which shall be:
  - a. a physical science course
  - b. Biology
  - c. an earth/environmental science course
4. 3 Social Studies credits which shall be:
  - a. Civics and Economics
  - b. US History
  - c. World History

Note: Effective with students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2003-04, World History must be taken to meet the requirements of World Studies.

5. Second Language is not required.

Note: A student who is pursuing this course of study may also meet the requirements of a college/university course of study by passing one additional mathematics course for which Algebra II is a prerequisite, and effective with the class entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2002-03 school year, two credits in the same second language.

6. 1 Health and Physical Education credit
  7. 4 Career/Technical Education credits which shall be in a career concentration or pathway that leads to a specific career field and which shall include a second-level (advanced) course.
  8. 2 elective credits
- Note: A student who is pursuing this course of study may also meet the requirements of a College/University course of study by passing one additional mathematics course for which Algebra II is a prerequisite, and effective with the class entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2002-03 school year, two credits in the same second language.

C. CAREER PREPARATION COURSE OF STUDY. (For students entering 9th grade for the first time prior to 2009-10.) Students following the Career Preparation course of study must pass the following 20 credits plus any local requirements:

1. 4 English credits which shall be:
  - a. English I
  - b. English II
  - c. English III
  - d. English IV
2. 3 Mathematics credits, one of which shall be Algebra I (except as limited by G.S. § 115C-81(b)); Note: This requirement may be met with Integrated Mathematics I and II when accompanied with the Algebra I end-of-course (EOC).
3. 3 science credits which shall be:
  - a. a physical science course
  - b. Biology
  - c. an earth/environmental science course
4. 3 Social Studies credits which shall be:
  - a. Civics and Economics
  - b. US History
  - c. World History

Note: Effective with students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2003-04, World History must be taken to meet the requirements of World Studies.

5. 1 Health and Physical Education credit
6. 2 elective credits
7. 4 credits in Career/Technical Education, which shall be in a career concentration or pathway that leads to a specific career field and which shall include a second-level (advanced) course; **or** 4 credits in one of the four disciplines in arts education (e.g., theatre, music, visual arts, or dance) **or** 4 credits in ROTC;

III. Eligible students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2000–2001 and beyond may follow the Occupational Course of Study. Students following the Occupational course of study must pass the following units 22 credits plus any local requirements:

1. 4 English credits which shall be:
  - a. Occupational English I
  - b. Occupational English II
  - c. Occupational English III
  - d. Occupational English IV
2. 3 Mathematics credits which shall be:
  - a. Occupational Mathematics I
  - b. Occupational Mathematics II
  - c. Occupational Mathematics III
3. 2 Science credits which shall be:
  - a. Life Skills Science I
  - b. Life Skills Science II
4. 2 Social Studies credits which shall be:
  - a. Social Studies I: Government/U.S. History
  - b. Social Studies II: Self-Advocacy/Problem Solving
5. 1 Health and Physical Education credit
6. 6 Occupational Preparation Education credits, which shall be Occupational Preparation I, II, III, and IV (i.e, completion of 300 hours of school-based training, 240 hours of community-based training, and ~~360 hours of paid employment~~ or 360 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internship, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community services hours for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years.)
7. 4 ~~Vocational Education~~ Career/Technical Education Elective credits
8. Computer proficiency as specified in the student's IEP
9. A career portfolio
10. Completion of the student's IEP objectives

*History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9b); 115C-81(b)(4); N.C. Constitution, Article IX, Sec. 5; Eff. December 1, 1999; Amended Eff. January 2, 2006; April 1, 2005; September 1, 2002; December 1, 2001; December 1, 2000.*