

Section I:

**Instructional  
Goals and  
Objectives**

**Knox County Board of Education Policy**

Descriptor Term:

**Graduation Requirements**

Descriptor Code:

**I-370**

Issued:

**7/95**

Reviewed:

**9/24**

Revised:

**10/24**

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2 Students shall fulfill all state requirements as set by the State Board of Education and earn the prescribed  
3 28 credits required by the Knox County Schools. In instances where a student does not have the  
4 opportunity to earn the 32 credits that are available with block scheduling, the required number of credits  
5 required for graduation from the Knox County Schools will be four less than the total available, but in  
6 any event, a student must earn the state minimum requirement of 22 credits.  
7

8 The pattern of courses which shall be required of all students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) shall  
9 be in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the State Board of Education and the Knox County  
10 Board of Education.  
11

12 To earn a regular high school diploma, students must (1) earn the prescribed number of credits, (2)  
13 complete the ACT or SAT, (3) pass the Civics exam, and (4) have satisfactory records of attendance and  
14 discipline.<sup>1</sup>  
15

16 In accordance with T.C.A.<sup>2</sup>, school districts must maintain a policy pertaining to the implementation of  
17 credit exams to fulfill graduation requirements for state-approved courses. It is the policy of Knox County  
18 Schools that students must be enrolled in a class to receive credit toward any of the above-listed  
19 graduation requirements.  
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21 **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**  
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23 The high school diploma will be awarded to students with disabilities who earn the specified 22 units (at  
24 minimum) of credit. A special education diploma may be awarded to students at the end of their fourth  
25 year of high school to students with disabilities who have (1) not met the requirements for a high school  
26 diploma, (2) have satisfactorily completed an individualized education program, and (3) have satisfactory  
27 records of attendance and conduct. Students who obtain the special education diploma may continue to  
28 work towards the high school diploma through the end of the school year in which they turn twenty-two  
29 (22) years old.  
30

31 An occupational diploma may be awarded to students with disabilities at the end of their fourth year of  
32 high school who have (1) not met the requirements for a high school diploma, (2) have satisfactorily  
33 completed an individualized education program, (3) have satisfactory records of attendance and conduct,  
34 (4) have completed the occupational diploma Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Mastery Assessment  
35 (SKEMA) created by the Tennessee Department of Education, and (5) have completed two years of paid  
36 or non-paid work experience. The determination that an occupational diploma is the goal for a student  
37 with a disability will be made at the conclusion of the student's tenth grade year or two academic years  
38 prior to the expected graduation date. Students who obtain the occupational diploma may continue to  
39 work towards the high school diploma through the end of the school year in which they turn twenty-two  
40 years old.<sup>3</sup>  
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**STUDENT COURSE LOAD**

All students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) shall be enrolled each semester in subjects that will allow them to graduate within those four (4) years. Schools may appeal hardship cases to the director of schools.

**11<sup>th</sup> GRADE ASSESSMENT**

To receive a regular high school diploma, all students enrolled in a Tennessee public school during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year shall take either the ACT or SAT.

**UNITED STATES CIVICS TEST**

Beginning January 1, 2017, all high school students shall be given a United States civics test. Beginning August 2019, students will earn a passing score of 70% on a civics assessment of 52 questions pulled from the 100 question civics test administered by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens in order to receive a high school diploma. The LEA will provide students with the opportunity to take the test as many times as necessary. Students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) which determine the civics assessment to be inappropriate shall not be required to pass the civics assessment.<sup>4</sup>

**PROJECT-BASED CIVICS ASSESSMENT**

All LEAs shall implement a project-based assessment in civics at least once in grades nine through twelve.

**CAREER READINESS ASSESSMENT**

All high school seniors shall be provided the opportunity to take one or more nationally recognized career readiness assessments pursuant to the provisions in T.C.A. § 49-6-6001(a)(4)(A).<sup>1</sup>

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Legal References:

- 1. T.C.A. § 49-6-6001.
- 2. T.C.A. § 49-6-6017.
- 3. TSBE High School Policy 2.103.
- 4. T.C.A. § 49-6-408.

NOTE: This policy was suspended on May 13, 2020 for the 2019-2020 school year in response to the current state of emergency caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Approved as to Legal Form  
By Knox County Law Director 8/16/2024  
*/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director*