

**160-5-1-.15 AWARDING UNITS OF CREDIT AND ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSFER CREDIT AND/OR GRADES.**

**(1) DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **Accredited School** – an elementary, middle or secondary school accredited by or holding provisional status from the Georgia Accrediting Commission, the Georgia Association of Christian Schools, the Association of Christian Schools International, the Southern Association of Independent Schools and/or one of the accrediting agencies that is a member of the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council, and/or one of the following regional accrediting agencies and their successors:

1. Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)
2. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
3. North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA)
4. Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC)
5. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
6. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
7. The Alabama Independent School Association

The term does not include entities that are accredited as home study programs or non-traditional educational centers.

(b) **End-of-Course Tests (EOCT)** - Assessments administered at the completion of core high school courses specified by the State Board of Education, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-281(f), to measure student achievement in the four content areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

(c) **Home Study Program** – an educational choice option conducted in Georgia in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690(c) or conducted in another state in accordance with the laws applicable to that state.

(d) **Non-traditional Educational Center** – educational institutions that support home study programs or other independent learning initiatives. This term does not include alternative/non-traditional education programs operated by local boards of education.

(e) **Private School** – an educational choice option conducted in Georgia in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690(b) or conducted in another state in accordance with the laws applicable to that state.

(f) **Subject Area Competency** - a unit of high school credit awarded to students based on subject area competency as demonstrated by a pre-defined score on state-adopted or approved assessment instruments, instead of or in combination with the completion of

courses through traditional classroom instructional minutes as described in section (2)(f) of this rule.

(g) **Unit of Credit** – evidence of course completion as demonstrated by a final course grade of 70 or higher on a numerical scale; or competency-based course credit as demonstrated by a pre-defined score on state-adopted or approved assessment instruments.

(h) **Validation** – the process of verifying credits earned at another educational institution.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) **Applicability.**

(1) Local boards of education shall apply the requirements of this rule to all students regardless of the date in which they first entered ninth grade.

(b) **Awarding Units of Credit for Courses Taken in Georgia Public Schools**

1. Local boards of education shall award units of credit only for courses that include concepts and skills based on the state-adopted curriculum for grades 9-12 approved by the State Board of Education.

2. Local boards of education may award units of credit for courses offered in the middle grades that are based on the state-adopted curriculum for grades 9-12 approved by the State Board of Education.

3. Local boards of education shall not award units of credit for courses in which instruction is based on the state-adopted curriculum for grades K-8.

(c) **Awarding Units of Credit for Dual Enrollment Courses.**

1. Local boards of education shall award units of credit to students for high school courses taken through postsecondary institutions as described in the State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.34 Dual Enrollment.

(d) **Awarding Units of Credit for Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses with Embedded Academic Core Standards.**

1. Local boards of education shall award course credit for the CTAE course and course credit for the associated academic core course to students who successfully complete a course or course sequence in the CTAE program of study that includes embedded

standards from an academic core subject area as adopted by the State Board of Education.

2. A student shall not earn more than three units of credit for academic core courses by completing CTAE courses that include embedded standards from an academic core subject area.

3. Units of credit earned through CTAE courses that contain embedded standards from an academic core subject area shall be awarded as outlined in the Georgia Department of Education's *Guidelines for Awarding Units of Credit*.

4. Local boards of education shall administer the appropriate End of Course Test (EOCT) to a student taking a CTAE course with embedded academic core courses of an area for which an EOCT has been adopted unless the student has already passed such EOCT.

**(e) Awarding Units of Credit for Mathematics Courses for Students Receiving Special Education Services Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).**

1. In addition to other provisions of this rule, local boards of education shall award units of credit for mathematics courses that will satisfy the mathematics course requirements in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.48 to a student receiving special education services under IDEA if the student meets all of the following:

(i) Prior to the student entering the ninth grade, the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team identified that the student had a disability that affected mathematics achievement.

(ii) The student successfully earns course credit, in accordance with this rule, for Mathematics I and Mathematics II or GPS Algebra and GPS Geometry or CCGPS Coordinate Algebra and CCGPS Analytic Geometry; and

(iii) The student successfully earns course credit, in accordance with this rule for at least two other state-approved mathematics courses, which may include, but not be limited to, Mathematics Support courses.

2. Local boards of education shall inform parents and students that students who do not complete Mathematics III, GPS Advanced Algebra, or CCGPS Advanced Algebra may not meet the mathematics admission requirements for entry into a University

System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution without additional coursework.

3. The IEP Team for students who receive Mathematics course credit in accordance with paragraph (2)(e) of this rule shall document that:

(i) The student's disability has precluded the student from achieving grade-level proficiency, as demonstrated by the student's pattern of performance on the state-mandated test in the area of Mathematics;

(ii) The student's progress to date in response to appropriate instruction, including special education and related services designed to address the student's individual needs, is such that, even if significant growth occurs, the IEP team is reasonably certain that the student will not successfully master the standards in Mathematics III, GPS Advanced Algebra, or CCGPS Advanced Algebra, which could include students enrolling in a single advanced mathematics course and receiving instruction over two years. Additionally, the determination of the student's progress has been based on multiple measurements that are valid for the content area of mathematics and that have been collected over a period of time; and

(iii) The student has access to instruction in the state-adopted curriculum and will be required to successfully complete Mathematics I and Mathematics II or GPS Algebra and GPS Geometry or CCGPS Coordinate Algebra and CCGPS Analytic Geometry in addition to participating and earning credit in two additional state-approved mathematics courses, which could include students enrolling in a single advanced mathematics course and receiving instruction over two years. The student's IEP includes goals that are related to mathematics, support access to the content standards, and are designed to promote the student's progress in the content area state-adopted curriculum.

**(f) Subject Area Competency to Receive Course Credit.**

1. Local boards of education shall award a unit of credit to a student when:

(i) The student successfully completes courses of study based on the state-adopted curriculum. As provided in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.13 Statewide Passing Score, the student must receive at least a course grade of 70 to be eligible to receive credit for a course; or

(ii) The student successfully demonstrates subject area competency through a pre-defined score on state-adopted or approved assessment instruments as outlined in the

Georgia Department of Education's *Guidelines for Awarding Units of Credit*. Students may earn no more than three units of credit by demonstrating subject area competency under this paragraph.

**(g) Accepting Transfer Credit and Grades.**

1. Local boards of education shall accept student course credit earned in an accredited school. The school shall have been accredited or holding provisional status at the time the credit was earned.

(i) Local boards of education shall not substitute courses and exempt students from the required secondary minimum core curriculum unless the student transferred from an accredited secondary school or the courses presented for credit shall meet criteria identified in paragraph (2)(b) of this rule and any applicable local policy.

2. Each local board of education shall adopt a policy for validating credit for courses taken at a nonaccredited schools, home study programs, and non-traditional educational centers. The policy shall include the following:

(i) Definitions consistent with this rule;

(ii) Procedures for determining whether transfer courses meet the state-adopted curriculum;

(iii) Procedures for placing transfer students in elementary and middle grades at the appropriate level and for granting units of credit for high school students;

(iv) Procedures for administering EOCT in accordance with the Georgia Department of Education's assessment guidelines and paragraph (2)(h) of this rule; and

(iv) At least one of the following:

(I) A probationary placement based on the student's records in prior school(s), home study programs or non-traditional educational centers and satisfactory performance of the student in a school under the authority of the local board of education for one or more grading periods; or

(II) Student performance on assessments administered by the local board of education. These assessments may be standardized or locally developed and should focus on group placement, subject area and grade level.

**(h) End of Course Test (EOCT) Administration to Transfer Students.**

1. Local boards of education shall administer the EOCT to students enrolled in a Georgia public school while also enrolled in a private school, home study program, or

non-traditional educational center for which they receive graduation credit for one of the required EOCT courses. These students must take the EOCT regardless of the private school, home study program, or non-traditional educational center's accreditation status.

2. Local boards of education shall not require students who enroll from accredited schools to take and pass the EOCT to receive credit for an EOCT course unless the student was concurrently enrolled in a Georgia public school while taking the course at an accredited private school.

3. Local boards of education shall require students who enroll from non-accredited private schools, home study programs, or other non-traditional educational centers to take and pass the EOCT with a minimum of 70 grade conversion score to receive credit for the course. A student enrolling from a non-accredited school will receive one test administration opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in order to earn credit for a course that requires the EOCT. If the student does not pass the EOCT on that administration, the local board of education shall not grant credit for that course. If the course is required to be eligible to receive a high school diploma, the student shall enroll in the course and take the EOCT at the completion of the course.

**(i) Military Dependents.**

1. Notwithstanding any other portion of this rule, local boards of education shall utilize O.C.G.A. § 20-17-2 to award course credit for students who are dependents of military personnel as defined by that code section.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-159.3; 20-2-159.4; 20-2-159.5; 20-2-240; 20-2-281; 20-2-690; 20-3-519; 20-17-2.

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