

January 25, 2010

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

Subject: Amendments to 19 TAC Chapter 74, Curriculum Requirements,  
Subchapter E, Graduation Requirements, Beginning with School Year 2004-2005, and  
Subchapter F, Graduation Requirements, Beginning with School Year 2007-2008

On January 15, 2010, the State Board of Education adopted amendments to the graduation requirements. The new requirements are effective beginning in the 2010-11 school year. School districts retain the authority to add requirements beyond what is required in state law and rule for graduation. Changes applicable to all three graduation programs include the following:

- Students are no longer required to complete the one-half credit in health.
- Students are no longer required to complete the one credit in technology applications.
- The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Professional Communications course was added as an option for students to satisfy the speech requirement.
- The CTE Principles and Elements of Floral Design course was added as an option for students to satisfy the fine arts credit.
- Students are now required to complete only one credit in physical education (P.E.) and are no longer required to complete the Foundations of Personal Fitness course as part of that credit.
- The following courses will be expanded to be one-half to one credit each: Foundations of Personal Fitness; Adventure/Outdoor Education; Aerobic Activities; and Team or Individual Sports. Students may satisfy the one credit of P.E. by taking any combination of these courses.
- Students may earn credit for any of the P.E. courses listed above through participation in athletics, JROTC, or appropriate private or commercially-sponsored physical activity programs conducted on or off campus for up to four credits toward graduation.
- Students may earn up to one credit for any of the P.E. courses listed above through participation in Drill Team, Marching Band, or Cheerleading. In order for a student to earn credit for one of these activities, the activity must include at least 100 minutes per five-day school week of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Students may no longer substitute Dance or two- or three-credit career and technology work-based training courses for P.E. credit.
- Students who earned their P.E. credit through a Dance or CTE substitution prior to the start of the 2010-11 school year will still get credit for that substitution.
- Credit may not be earned for any P.E. course more than once and no more than four substitutions may be earned through any combination of allowable substitutions.

Changes specific to each of the three graduation programs are summarized below.

#### Minimum High School Program (MHSP)

- A student, the student's parent or other person standing in parental relation to the student, and a school counselor or school administrator must agree in writing signed by each party that the student should be permitted to take courses under the MHSP. A student must also satisfy one of three criteria in order to opt into the MHSP: be at least 16 years of age; have completed two credits required for graduation in each subject of the foundation curriculum; or have failed to be promoted to Grade 10 one or more times.
- A student who was permitted to take courses under the MHSP prior to the 2009-10 school year may remain in the MHSP.
- If an admission, review, and dismissal committee makes decisions that place a student with a disability on a modified curriculum in a subject area, the student will be automatically placed in the minimum high school program.
- Students may satisfy the English IV credit by successfully completing the CTE Business English course, AP English Language and Composition, or AP English Literature and Composition in addition to the courses that were already allowed.
- The following CTE courses were added as options for students to satisfy the third mathematics credit: Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Engineering Mathematics; and Statistics and Risk Management.
- Students who entered Grade 9 prior to the 2010-11 school year will have seven and one-half elective credits.
- Beginning with students who enter Grade 9 in 2010-11, students must complete one fine arts credit and will have six and one-half elective credits.

#### Recommended High School Program (RHSP)

- The following CTE courses were added as options for students to satisfy the fourth mathematics credit: Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources if taken prior to Algebra II; Engineering Mathematics, and Statistics and Risk Management if taken after successful completion of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.
- The following CTE courses were added as options for students to satisfy the fourth science credit: Engineering Design and Problem Solving; Advanced Animal Science; Advanced Biotechnology; Advanced Plant and Soil Science; Food Science; and Forensic Science.
- The phase-out of Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC) was removed allowing students on the RHSP to continue to take IPC as one of the science credits if IPC is successfully completed prior to chemistry and physics. Students on the RHSP must complete a biology credit, a chemistry credit, and a physics credit.
- A student who is unable to comply with all of the requirements for a P.E. course due to a physical limitation certified by a licensed medical practitioner may still earn a RHSP diploma if the student demonstrates proficiency in the relevant knowledge and skills that do not require physical activity as part of a modified P.E. course.
- Students will have five and one-half elective credits.

#### Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP)

- The CTE Engineering Mathematics and Statistics and Risk Management courses were added as options for students to satisfy the fourth mathematics credit after successful completion of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.
- The following CTE courses were added as options for students to satisfy the fourth science credit after successful completion of a biology course, a chemistry course and a physics course: Engineering Design and Problem Solving; Advanced Animal Science; Advanced Biotechnology; Advanced Plant and Soil Science; Food Science; and Forensic Science.

- A student who is unable to comply with all of the requirements for a P.E. course due to a physical limitation certified by a licensed medical practitioner may still earn a DAP diploma if the student demonstrates proficiency in the relevant knowledge and skills that do not require physical activity as part of a modified P.E. course.
- Students will have four and one-half elective credits.

Additional information regarding the graduation requirements, including frequently asked questions, will be posted in the near future on the following website:  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation.aspx>.

If you have questions regarding the graduation requirements, please contact Monica Martinez, Managing Director in the Curriculum Division, at (512) 463-9581 or via e-mail at [monica.martinez@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:monica.martinez@tea.state.tx.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anita Givens".

Anita Givens  
Associate Commissioner  
Standards and Programs

AG/mgm