

Prior law provided that the minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) required for a student to be eligible for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) Opportunity, Performance, or Honors award must be calculated using only the grades obtained by the student in courses contained in the TOPS core curriculum as defined by prior law. New law additionally provides, beginning with students graduating in the 2017-18 school year, that this GPA calculation shall utilize a five-point scale for grades earned in certain Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), gifted courses, and dual enrollment courses as approved by the Board of Regents and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Provides that for such courses, five quality points shall be assigned to an "A", four quality points shall be assigned to a "B", three quality points shall be assigned to a "C", two quality points shall be assigned to a "D", and zero quality points shall be assigned to an "F".

Prior law provided for a specified core curriculum applicable to students graduating from high school during certain past time periods and provides that subsequent changes in the TOPS core curriculum do not apply to these students. Further provided specifically for the eligibility standards for the Performance award for the 1997-98 school year. New law retains prior law.

Prior law provided that beginning with students graduating in the 2013-14 school year, an otherwise eligible student must successfully complete at least 19 units of high school credit from the courses contained in the TOPS core curriculum as follows:

- (1) English - Four Units
 - (a) English I.
 - (b) English II.
 - (c) English III.
 - (d) English IV.
- (2) Mathematics - Four Units
 - (a) Algebra I (one unit) or Applied Algebra 1A and 1B (two units).
 - (b) Algebra II (one unit).
 - (c) Two units from the following: Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, or comparable Advanced Mathematics.
- (3) Science - Four Units
 - (a) Biology (one unit).
 - (b) Chemistry (one unit).
 - (c) Two units from the following: Earth Science, Environmental Science, Physical Science, Biology II, Chemistry II, Physics, Physics II, Physics for Technology, or Agriscience I and II (both for one unit).
- (4) Social Studies - Four Units
 - (a) American History (one unit).
 - (b) Two units from the following: World History, Western Civilization, World Geography, or History of Religion.
 - (c) Civics and Free Enterprise (one unit combined) or Civics (one unit, nonpublic).
- (5) Foreign Language - Two Units
Two units in a single language.
- (6) Art - One Unit
One unit from the following: Fine Arts Survey (one unit or substitute one unit of a performance course in music, dance, or theater; or substitute one unit of a visual art course; or substitute one unit of a studio art course).

New law retains the TOPS core curriculum defined in prior law through the 2016-17 school year but provides that beginning with students graduating in the 2017-18 school year, an otherwise eligible student must successfully complete 19 units of high school credit from the courses contained in the TOPS core curriculum as follows:

- (1) English - Four Units
 - (a) English I.
 - (b) English II.
 - (c) One unit from the following: English III, AP English Language Arts and Composition, or English III IB (Language A or Literature and Performance).
 - (d) One unit from the following: English IV, AP English Literature and Composition, or English IV IB (Language A or Literature and Performance).

- (2) Mathematics - Four Units
 - (a) Algebra I (one unit), Geometry (one unit), and Algebra II (one unit). Integrated Mathematics I, Integrated Mathematics II, and Integrated Mathematics III may be substituted for this sequence.
 - (b) One unit from the following: Algebra III; Advanced Math Functions and Statistics, Advanced Math-Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, or Math Methods I IB (Mathematical Studies SL); Calculus, AP Calculus AB, or Math Methods II IB (Mathematics SL); AP Calculus BC; Probability and Statistics or AP Statistics; IB Further Mathematics HL; IB Mathematics HL.

- (3) Science - Four Units
 - (a) Biology I.
 - (b) Chemistry I.
 - (c) Two units from the following: Earth Science; Environmental Science; Physical Science; Agriscience I and Agriscience II (one unit combined); Chemistry II, AP Chemistry, or IB Chemistry II; AP Environmental Science or IB Environmental Systems; Physics I, AP Physics B, or IB Physics I; AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, AP Physics C: Mechanics, or IB Physics II; AP Physics I and AP Physics II; Biology II, AP Biology, or IB Biology II.

- (4) Social Studies - Four Units
 - (a) One unit from the following: US History, AP US History, or IB US History.
 - (b) One-half unit from the following: Government, AP U.S. Government and Politics: Comparative, or AP US Government and Politics: United States.
 - (c) One-half unit chosen from the following: Economics, AP Macroeconomics, or AP Microeconomics.
 - (d) One unit of Civics may be substituted to satisfy the combined subject matter requirements in (b) and (c) above.
 - (e) Two units from the following: Western Civilization, European History, or AP European History; World Geography, AP Human Geography, or IB Geography; World History, AP World History, or World History IB; History of Religion; IB Economics.

- (5) Foreign Language - Two Units

Two units in the same language, which may also include the following: AP Chinese Language and Culture, AP French Language and Culture, AP German Language and Culture, AP Italian Language and Culture, AP Japanese Language and Culture, AP Latin, AP Spanish Language and Culture, French IV IB, French V IB, Spanish IV IB, and Spanish V IB.

- (6) Art - One unit

One unit chosen from the following: Performance course in Music, Dance, or Theatre; Fine Arts Survey; Art I, II, III, and IV; Talented Art I, II, III, and IV; Speech III and Speech IV (one unit combined); Talented Music I, II, III, and IV; Talented Theater Arts I, II, III, and IV; AP Art History; AP Studio Art: 2-D Design; AP Studio Art: 3-D Design; AP Studio Art: Drawing; AP Music Theory; Film Study I IB; Film Study II IB; Music I IB; Music II IB; Art Design III IB; Art Design IV IB; or Theatre I IB.

New law requires that, beginning with students graduating with the 2017-2018 school year, any core curriculum course that is taken by a student identified as gifted pursuant to BESE policy and that is taken in fulfillment of the student's Individualized Education Plan is to be considered a gifted course and requires that it fulfill the core curriculum requirement in its given subject area.

Prior law required the administering agency for TOPS to establish guidelines and procedures by which to update the course name and establish course equivalencies for any course included in the TOPS core curriculum. Provided that such guidelines and procedures include a requirement that such changes be done by rule and requires the administering agency to consult with and seek written comments and recommendations from BESE and the Board of Regents prior to issuing a notice of intent to consider any such rule.

New law retains the requirement that changes in course names and course equivalencies be done by rule but requires that the administering agency obtain approval from BESE prior to updating course names or establishing course equivalencies for any course included in the TOPS core curriculum. Retains requirement that the administering agency consult with and seek written comments and recommendations from the Board of Regents prior to issuing a notice of intent to consider any such rule change.

Effective upon signature of the governor (June 17, 2013).

(Amends R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(b)(ii), (c)(ii), (d)(ii), (e)(intro. para.), (f), and (g) and (C)(2)(e); Adds R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(h))