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**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

CHAPTER 43

Statutory Authority: 1976 Code Sections 59-5-60 (2004), 59-5-65 (2004), 59-18-300 (Supp. 2010),

59-18-310(B) (Supp. 2010) and 59-18-320(C) (Supp. 2010)

43-262.4. End-of-Course Tests

**Synopsis:**

The State Board of Education proposes to amend R.43-262.4 in response to requests from parents. Students who take two courses based on the same academic standards for which there is an end-of-course test would take the test for the first course and the score would count as 20% of the final grade. If the student passes the first course, the second course would not be a gateway course for that student. The student would not take an end-of-course test for the second course and the student’s final grade would be calculated without an end-of-course score.

A Notice of Drafting was published in the *State Register* on July 22, 2011.

**Instructions:** Replace in its entirety R.43-262.4. End-of-Course Tests, with the following.

**Text**:

43-262.4. End-of-Course Tests.

I. Courses Tested

A. The following courses in State Board Regulation 43-234, "Defined Program, Grades 9-12," are "gateway" and "benchmark" courses. For the purposes of this regulation, however, these courses shall be referred to only as "gateway" courses.

1. English/language arts: English 1

2. Mathematics: Algebra 1. After completion of Mathematics for the Technologies 2, students shall be administered the end-of-course examination for Algebra 1.

3. Science: Biology 1. After completion of Applied Biology 2, students shall be administered the end-of-course assessment for Biology 1.

4. Social Studies: United States History and Constitution

5. A course by any title for which the instructional basis is the academic standards for any of the abovementioned courses will be considered the equivalent of the appropriate abovementioned gateway course and one for which an end-of-course test must be administered.

B. The end-of-course tests shall be administered to all public school students who take a gateway course for which credit can be applied toward the requirements for a high school diploma, regardless of the grade in which a student takes the course. An exception is when a student takes two courses based on the same academic standards. The student would take the end-of-course test at the end of the first course, and the test score would count as 20 percent of the final grade. If the student passes the first course, the student would not take an end-of-course test for the second course, and the student’s final grade would be calculated without an end-of-course score. The second course would not be a gateway course for that student.

II. Purposes and Uses

The purposes and uses of the end-of-course tests shall be as follows:

A. The tests shall promote instruction in the specific academic standards for the courses, encourage student achievement, and document the level of students' mastery of the academic standards.

B. The tests shall serve as indicators of program, school, and school district effectiveness in the manner prescribed by the Education Oversight Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Education Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA).

C. The tests shall be weighted 20 percent in the determination of students' final grades in the gateway courses.

The test may be used for such other purposes as the State Board of Education may determine to be appropriate and consistent with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (Joint Standards) of the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

III. Content of the Tests

The content of the subject-area tests that are selected or developed pursuant to the provisions of this policy shall be aligned with the academic standards approved by the State Board of Education.

IV. Student Performance Standards

Student performance standards for the tests shall be established by the South Carolina Department of Education.

V. Review of Academic Standards and End-of-Course Tests

The academic standards for the tests shall be reviewed on a schedule that is consistent with the requirements of the EAA. Following any revisions of the academic standards, the tests will be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure their continued alignment with the standards.

VI. Notice to Students

Students who are enrolled in the gateway courses shall be provided with paper copies of the academic standards that pertain to those particular courses. Students will be advised that the final examination for each gateway course will be based on the skills and content represented in the academic standards. District personnel shall provide this information to students not later than the first day of instruction in the course.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:**

No additional state funding is requested. The South Carolina Department of Education estimates that no additional costs will be incurred in complying with the proposed revisions to R.43-262.4.

**Statement of Rationale:**

Students who have successfully completed a gateway course and then take a course based on the same academic standards should not be required to take the same subject end-of-course test a second time.