

**OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**  
**May 17-18, 2012**

**OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION**

- 39C. Approval to establish State Board Policy 3802 – Graduation Requirements – Policies for Carnegie Unit Credit  
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with public comment)

On February 2, 2012, the Commission on School Accreditation approved the deletion of State Board Policy 3800 – Graduation Requirements. State Board Policy 3800 will be divided into two new policies and will include revisions: 1) State Board Policy 3801 – Graduation Requirements – Policies for Subject Area Testing and 2) State Board Policy 3802 – Policies for Carnegie Unit Credit. The heading 3800 – Graduation Requirements will remain in the Table of Contents in the State Board of Education Policy Manual.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

**Proposed State Board of Education Policy 3802**  
**Approved by the Commission on School Accreditation February 2, 2012**  
**Approved by the State Board of Education February 17, 2012**

DESCRIPTOR TERM:	CODE:
<b>Graduation Requirements – Policies for Carnegie Unit Credit</b>	<b>3802</b>
ADOPTION DATE:	REVISION:
<b>February 17, 2012</b>	

**STATE BOARD POLICY**

**Policies for Carnegie Unit Credit**

Enrollment in a non-public school/program (to include, but not limited to: private schools, parochial schools, home schools, virtual schools, summer schools, independent study / correspondence programs, etc.) shall not be used to circumvent participation in the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System or students meeting the graduation requirements outlined in this policy.

1. Any Mississippi public school student shall not be awarded Carnegie unit credit unless the core objectives identified in the Mississippi Curriculum Framework have been mastered. .
2. For students entering a Mississippi public school from a public school in another state for which the school did not award a credit for the successful completion of a course, the district may accept the course as meeting the requirement for the *Required Subjects* for a diploma in the state of Mississippi provided the district determines that the content of the course taken is comparable. However, the total *Carnegie Unit* requirement for the *Curriculum Area* remains the same.
3. For students entering a Mississippi public school from a regionally accredited private school for which the school did not award credit for the successful completion of a course, the district may accept the course as meeting the requirement for the *Required Subjects* for a diploma in the state of Mississippi provided the district determines that the content of the course taken is comparable. However, the total *Carnegie Unit* requirement for the *Curriculum Area* remains the same.
4. Students entering a public school in Mississippi from any regionally accredited public or private school that awarded a Carnegie Unit for the successful completion of a course, the district may accept the course as meeting the requirement for the "Required Subject" in Appendix A of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*.
5. Any student previously enrolled in a Mississippi public school who failed a SATP exam and later transfers credit for the same SATP course from either a private school that is accredited regionally or by the state of Mississippi or an out-of-state public school must take and pass the exam in order to earn a standard diploma.
6. Any course that is required for subject area testing as a requirement for graduation from a public school in Mississippi is not eligible for dual credit. (MS Code 37-15-38(11))

**From:** Leigh Mobley [lmobley@amory.k12.ms.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 24, 2012 5:02 PM  
**To:** Policy; Patrick Ross; Paula Vanderford  
**Subject:** Public Comment concerning Proposed State Board of Education Policies 3801 and 3802  
**Attachments:** ASD Granting Alternative High School Diploma Final.DOCX

Please accept the following public comment concerning Proposed State Board of Education Policies 3801 and 3802:

Dear Mrs. Vanderford:

Upon review of the April 20, 2012 Memorandum concerning Revisions to the Mississippi State Board of Education Policies I would like to express some concerns about one of the policies for code 3802, Graduation Requirements- Policies for Carnegie Unit Credit.

The policy states:

**6. Any course that is required for subject area testing as a requirement for a public school in Mississippi is not eligible for dual credit. (MS Code 37-15-38(11))**

Many students are often not successful at taking standardized tests but are able to complete rigorous curriculum. Many other states offer students the opportunity to gain a high school diploma with multiple measures such as portfolio assessments, ACT scores, PSAT scores, or SAT scores. Allowing students the option of getting their Carnegie units through a dual credit course would level the playing field for Mississippi students when competing with those from other states.

Additionally, Mississippi has currently adopted a pilot program for high school drop-outs where said drop-outs can attend a community college and earn credit and a high school diploma without passing the SATP. This drop-out pilot program seems contradictory to the new proposed policy 3802. Why would the same opportunities not be afforded to a student in a dual credit course? If a bright student is able to receive credit for a robust college level course in Algebra I, English II, Biology, or US History, then surely the course should also count for high school Carnegie units and in lieu of the SATP.

Currently, MS Code 37-16-15 states "Any person who has withdrawn from high school before graduation may be granted a diploma from the Mississippi public high school that the person last attended if the person has:

- (a) achieved the equivalent requirements for high school graduation that existed at the time at the student would have graduated;

The Amory School District has adopted the attached policy based on this state law. The Amory School District policy has been read and reviewed by MDE staff. This policy does allow students who have withdrawn to come back to the high school they were attending and receive a high school diploma by applying college credits to earn Carnegie units. This policy does not necessitate such students to pass the required state assessments.

Policy 3802 appears to penalize students who are high achieving by not allowing them the possibility of gaining Carnegie units for college level courses that would be equivalent to Algebra I, US History, Biology, or English II. While in turn, we make accommodations for those struggling students who are dropouts.

At this time, I would like for this policy to be reconsidered.

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**Amory School District (ASD) is dedicated to a comprehensive system of support that will challenge our students to reach high levels of academic achievement as determined by local, state and national standards.**

**In the situation where a student has withdrawn from high school prior to graduation the Mississippi Code of 1972 (37-16-15) as Amended states the following:**

**High School diploma granted to persons who withdrew from school before graduation and later achieved the equivalent requirements for graduation.**

Any person who has withdrawn from high school before graduation may be granted a diploma from the Mississippi public high school that the person last attended if the person has:

- (a) Achieved the equivalent requirements for high school graduation that existed at the time that the student would have graduated; and
- (b) Made a written request to the public high school district that includes relevant transcripts of course work

**In view of this provision Amory School District will accept successful completion of college level course work in a core subject toward a high school diploma to any student having met the requirements below:**

- College course work will be the equivalent level of rigor for the high school graduation requirements that existed for high school graduation at the time the student would have graduated (a remedial level college course will not meet this requirement)
- The student and parent submit a written request for a high school diploma to the Amory High School Principal or the Amory School District Superintendent
- The student provides an official college transcript
- The student receives a passing grade in the required course
- College course work for purposes of this policy shall be defined as college courses from an accredited college, university, community college, career school, trade school, or similar equivalent. The determination of whether or not a particular college is sufficiently accredited lies solely within the discretion of the Amory School District. Students who wish to submit college course work from an institution other than an accredited college, university, or community college are encouraged to seek pre-approval of the course work to determine if such course will be accepted by the Amory School District.
- This provision applies to students who have withdrawn from school and are lacking credits or have all the Carnegie units and have not passed the SATP.

**Should a student withdraw from school and complete the college level work required before the end of their senior school year he/she may participate in the scheduled high school graduation ceremony with their cohorts.**

**Otherwise, upon completion of all of the requirements stated above the student will have the option to attend a ceremony/reception for the student and their parents. At this time the student will be granted a high school diploma by the Amory School District.**