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AGENDA
STATEWIDE PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, June 20, 2018 • 10:55 a.m.
Claiborne Building
Thomas Jefferson Room
1201 North Third Street, First Floor
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Consent Agenda
 - A. Approval of Rulemaking
 - B. Approval of Exceptions
- IV. Other Business
- V. Adjournment

Committee Members: T. Jay Seale III, Chair; Jacqueline Wyatt, Vice Chair; Claudia Adley, Marty Chabert, Richard Lipsey, Charles McDonald, Wilbert Pryor, Collis Temple III

**Consent Agenda
Agenda Item III.A.**

The Board of Regents approves the rulemaking to implement Act 671 of the 2018 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, to add course equivalents for TOPS and for TOPS Tech and authorizes the Executive Director of LOSFA to publish a notice of emergency rules, and a notice of intent to make these rules permanent.

BACKGROUND:

Act 671 of the 2018 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature makes the following changes to the TOPS statutes:

- Provides that students are not required to earn credit for both AP Physics I and AP Physics II in order to receive credit towards the TOPS core curriculum science requirement.
- Adds Physics to the TOPS Tech core curriculum.
- Provides that a student may first qualify for a TOPS Award on a test taken after the national ACT test date in April of the year of high school graduation if the student was prevented from taking the test on or before that test due to circumstances beyond his control and which was attributable to the administration of the test. Students must earn a qualifying score no later than August 1 of the year of high school graduation. No penalty will be assessed the students under the provisions of this part.
- Provides that the Board of Regents is responsible for establishing course equivalencies for any course included in the definition of core curriculum and that it must consult with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in establishing such equivalents.

In addition, the Board of Regents and BESE have consulted, and the Board of Regents has determined that the following equivalencies be added to the TOPS Opportunity, Performance and Honors Awards core curriculum for graduates of 2018 and later:

- Digital Image and Motion Graphics, Digital Storytelling, Engineering Design and Development, and Sound Design as equivalents to Art;
- Environmental Awareness as an equivalent to Environmental Science;
- Physical Geography as an equivalent to World Geography
- Statistical Reasoning as an equivalent to Probability and Statistics;
- Principles of Engineering as an equivalent to Physical Science.
- The Board of Regents has also determined, in consultation with BESE, that Transition to College
- Math and Statistical Reasoning should be equivalents to any of the second and third math choices in the TOPS Tech core curriculum.

In addition, BOR has determined that dual enrollment Physical Geography should be added as a course which should be graded on a 5.0 scale for purposes of calculating a student TOPS grade point average.

Staff recommends the above-described changes be implemented in administrative rules.

The use of emergency rules is justified due to the following:

- The core curriculum additions in Act 671 as well as the course equivalencies that are established through the rulemaking are effective with 2018 graduates. As LOSFA is already processing students' eligibility for TOPS, it is essential that the legislation be implemented immediately so that students will be provided with every opportunity to take advantage of these revisions.
- The amendment which allows students to achieve a qualifying score after the national ACT test date in April with no penalty is effective immediately, and staff is aware that at least one April ACT test in Louisiana was canceled due to inclement weather and the fact that the test site is known to flood.

**Consent Agenda
Agenda Item III.B.**

Requests for exception to the TOPS regulatory provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year.

BACKGROUND:

Sections 705.A.6 and 7 of the TOPS administrative rules require TOPS recipients to continue to enroll in the fall and spring semesters of each academic year, to remain enrolled throughout the semester, and to earn the annual credit hours required by the end of the academic year. Section 2103.E authorizes the governing body to grant an exception to these requirements when the "student/recipient has exceptional circumstances that are beyond his immediate control and that necessitate full or partial withdrawal from or non-enrollment in an eligible postsecondary institution."

Three requests for exception were reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting of June 7, 2018. The students have presented facts and circumstances that the students believe justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance.