

§ 115C-83.32. High school diploma endorsements.

(a) The State Board of Education shall establish, implement, and determine the impact of adding (i) college, (ii) career, and (iii) college and career endorsements to high school diplomas to encourage students to obtain requisite job skills necessary for students to be successful in a wide range of high-quality careers and to reduce the need for remedial education in institutions of higher education. The Board shall develop criteria for receiving a diploma endorsement under this subsection that address the following:

- (1) Courses completed by the student.
- (2) Overall grade point average.
- (3) Reading achievement, including the requirement that a student receive on a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test for reading, either administered under G.S. 115C-174.11(c)(4) or as an alternative nationally norm-referenced college admissions test approved by the Board, at least the benchmark score established by the testing organization that represents the level of achievement required for students to have approximately a fifty percent (50%) chance of obtaining a grade B or higher or a seventy-five percent (75%) chance of obtaining a grade C or higher in a corresponding credit-bearing, first-year college course. A student may retake a nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score for reading in order to receive a high school diploma endorsement prior to the student's graduation.
- (4) Any additional criteria deemed necessary by the Board.

(b) The State Board of Education shall establish an arts proficiency high school diploma endorsement to encourage students to obtain a well-rounded, high-quality arts education. The Board shall create any form necessary for students to document their arts participation and shall provide this form to local boards of education. The Board shall develop criteria for receiving a diploma endorsement under this subsection that include the following:

- (1) Completion of a minimum of four arts credits with an unweighted grade point average of 3.0 or higher in each arts credit completed by the student.
- (2) Completion of a minimum of 40 hours of arts-related extracurricular activities. To receive credit for completing these hours, a student shall meet all of the following requirements:
 - a. The student participates in an arts-related extracurricular activity that is approved by the local board of education.
 - b. The student completes all of the required hours outside of instructional hours.
 - c. The student does not receive any course credit for participation in the activity.
 - d. The student documents the hours on the form provided by the Board to local boards of education.
- (3) Any additional criteria deemed necessary by the Board.

(c) The State Board of Education shall establish a citizenship proficiency high school diploma endorsement to encourage students to demonstrate their understanding of the basics of the American government and civic life. The Board shall create any form necessary for students to document their civics participation and shall provide this form to governing bodies of local school administrative units. The Board shall develop criteria for receiving a diploma endorsement under this subsection that include at least a passing score on a civics test composed of questions from the pool of publicly available questions to be used for the civics test given by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as part of the naturalization interview and test issued by USCIS. The State Board shall determine the format of the civics test and the

number of questions to be included in the civics test. The State Board shall require that all local school administrative units offer the civics test created pursuant to this subsection at least once per semester.

(d) The Board shall report annually to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on high school diploma endorsements as required by G.S. 115C-156.2. (2023-134, s. 7.72(a).)