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STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrators and Counselors

FROM: Sandy Garrett

DATE: June 4, 2009

SUBJECT: ACE Exceptions and Exemptions – Oklahoma Administrative Code 210:10-13-16

The Oklahoma State Board of Education has approved new rules in Oklahoma Administrative Code (OAC) Title 210:10-13-16 relating to the *Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE) Act of 2005 as Revised in 2006*. These rules have been approved by the Oklahoma State Legislature and Governor Henry; therefore, they carry the weight of law. A brief summary of the rules relating to ACE Exceptions and Exemptions can be found below.

In order to help districts and schools implement the ACE Exceptions and Exemptions requirements, an ACE Implementation Guide has been placed on the State Department of Education Web site, <www.sde.state.ok.us>. If you have already received or downloaded an ACE Implementation Guide, you will find revised pages on the Web site, including new frequently asked questions and answers and information related to OAC 210:10-13-16. These pages should replace those of the July 2008 guide.

Brief Overview of Rules Related to ACE Exceptions and Exemptions

OAC 210:10-13-16(a) and 210:10-13-16(b)

- Explains means by which students (beginning with students entering the ninth grade in 2008-2009) may graduate from high school;
- Explains the process for utilizing end-of-instruction retakes, alternate tests, and/or End of Course Projects for demonstrating mastery;
- Explains procedures for students not receiving instruction in an Oklahoma public school, such as students transferring from out-of-state, private schools, and home schools, or students who received course credit through proficiency based promotion;
- Explains procedures for students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- Explains procedures for students with extenuating circumstances;
- Explains procedures for students who do not have an opportunity to take the required exams without extending the date of graduation; and
- Explains district reporting responsibilities related to exceptions and exemptions.

OAC 210:10-13-16(c)

- Explains district responsibilities related to monitoring student progress toward meeting the graduation requirements of the *Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE) Act of 2005 as Revised in 2006*; and
- Explains district responsibilities related to documentation on the student transcript of meeting the graduation requirements of the *Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE) Act of 2005 as Revised in 2006*.

Summary of Amendments Related to ACE Exceptions and Exemptions

ACE Exceptions and Exemptions Process

Beginning with students who entered the ninth grade in the 2008-2009 school year, in order to graduate from a public high school with a standard diploma, students must demonstrate mastery in the state academic content standards for Algebra I, English II, and two of the following five: Algebra II, Biology I, English III, Geometry, and United States History. Students may demonstrate mastery by attaining at least a satisfactory or proficient score on the end-of-instruction exams. Students who do not attain at least a satisfactory or proficient score on the end-of-instruction exams may demonstrate mastery as described below.

Step One: Remediation offered by the school district and either:

- a. Retake the end-of-instruction test; or
- b. Apply a score from a previously administered alternate test; or
- c. Take an alternate test.

Students who do not attain a satisfactory or proficient score through step one may proceed to step two.

Step Two: Remediation offered by the school district and either:

- a. Retake the end-of-instruction test; or
- b. Apply a score from a previously administered alternate test; or
- c. Take an alternate test; or
- d. Complete an End of Course Project.

Students who do not attain a satisfactory or proficient score through step two may continue to repeat step two as necessary until a satisfactory or proficient score is attained and mastery is demonstrated in the required content areas.

A flowchart portraying these steps is enclosed and included in the ACE Implementation Guide on the State Department of Education Web site, <www.sde.state.ok.us>.

ACE Alternate Tests

The State Board of Education approved an initial list of alternate tests on October 30, 2008. The State Board of Education will be setting minimum score requirements for each of these tests based on the recommendations of the ACE Steering Committee. Once minimum scores are set, students may use an alternate test from the approved list to demonstrate mastery in a required content area if the student does not receive a satisfactory or proficient score on the end-of-instruction test. The approved list of alternate tests is enclosed.

Alternate tests may be administered before or after the administration of the end-of-instruction exam. A single alternate test may only be used to meet one testing requirement, but students may take more than one alternate test to meet the requirements of passing Algebra I, English II, and two of the other five tests. Examples of various administration scenarios may be found in the ACE Implementation Guide on the State Department of Education Web site, <www.sde.state.ok.us>.

ACE End of Course Project

End of Course Projects will be developed with assistance from Oklahoma educators and outside organizations and will be approved by the State Board of Education. Projects will encompass the key components of each course in order for students to demonstrate mastery in the content area by “integrating and applying the knowledge and skills gained throughout a course to address a practical, real world challenge” (OAC 210:10-13-16(a)). Rubrics for evaluating End of Course Projects will be developed and approved by the State Board of Education. Subject to the availability of funds, projects will be assessed at the state level.

Students in Various Circumstances

The rules also explain the procedures for students in various circumstances to demonstrate mastery as required by law. These circumstances include:

- Students who transfer from out-of-state schools, private schools, or home schools after completing instruction in a required course;
- Students who earn credit for a required course through proficiency based promotion without receiving instruction in the course;
- Students who do not have the opportunity to take an end-of-instruction exam upon completion of instruction without extending the date of graduation;
- Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and
- Students with extenuating circumstances, “which are unexpected, significantly disruptive, beyond a student's control, and which may have reasonably affected his/her academic performance” (OAC 210:10-13-16(a)).

Reporting of Exceptions and Exemptions

School districts will be required to report annually through the Oklahoma School District Reporting Site (SDRS) on the number diplomas issued to students based on exceptions and exemptions. This report will be completed by school site and will include the category of exception or exemption provided.

ACE Demonstration of Mastery Cumulative Record

Beginning with students who entered the ninth grade in the 2008-2009 school year, scores of satisfactory and above on end-of-instruction tests will be recorded on the students' transcripts. School districts will keep a cumulative record for students who do not attain a satisfactory or proficient score on any of the required end-of-instruction exams to document the student's progress toward meeting graduation requirements. Information may be kept on the uniform document provided by the State Department of Education or in the school's student information system. The ACE Demonstration of Mastery Cumulative Record is enclosed, and an

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electronic version may be found on the State Department of Education Web site, <www.sde.state.ok.us>.

Student Transcripts

For each student who meets the graduation requirements of 70 O.S. § 1210.523 (Algebra I, English II, and two of the other five), the student's transcript shall read, "The student has met the graduation requirement of demonstrating mastery in the state academic content standards" (OAC 210:10-13-16(c)).

If you have questions regarding ACE Exceptions and Exemptions or ACE Demonstration of Mastery Cumulative Record, please contact Kerri White, Executive Director of High School Reform, Office of Standards and Curriculum, at (405) 522-8618, or via e-mail at <Kerri_White@sde.state.ok.us>.

SG:kw

Enclosures