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Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction Overview and Requirements

Overview

The Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction is a diploma distinction that allows students to pursue a career in a high-need, high-skill industry while in high school, as outlined in [T.C.A. 49-6-420](#). The Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction was developed for high school students who are interested in pursuing a career in a high-need, high-skill industry after graduation.

Students who earn the Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction will complete at least nine dual enrollment or work-based learning (WBL) credits aligned to their career goals. They will receive monthly career coaching and counseling to better prepare them for the transition into the workforce. Additionally, they will have the option to substitute a WBL or dual enrollment credit, as approved by the State Board of Education, for one math credit and one science credit.

The Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction was codified into law on April 29, 2022. In order to ensure students and parents are well-informed about this opportunity, and to allow students to complete the requirements for the Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction, all public high schools, including public charter schools, are required to fulfill specific obligations for students in different grades beginning in the 2022-23 school year. The requirements for each grade are outlined below.

Grade 9

School Requirements

Each high school must notify all grade 9 students of the opportunity to pursue an Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction no later than ten days after the first day of each semester of the school year.

Grade 10

School Requirements

Each high school must notify all grade 10 students of the opportunity to pursue an Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction no later than ten days after the first day of each semester of the school year.

Student and Parent Requirements

Students interested in pursuing an Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction must provide the counselor or school principal with documentation signed by the student's parent or legal guardian indicating that the parent or legal guardian is aware of the requirements for the student to obtain the diploma distinction and consenting to the student's participation. Students must also register with a regional American Job Center (AJC) or other career counseling or community partner, known as a **career coach**, and enroll in at least one WBL or dual enrollment course for the student's junior year.

Career Coach Requirements

A career coach must be one of the following:

- An AJC career coach; or
- A career coach from a career counseling or community partner program approved by the US Department of Labor's regional office for the State of Tennessee; or
- A certified licensed school counselor; or
- An educator who holds an active WBL certificate provided by TDOE

A career coach must meet no less than once per month during the school year to help the student develop personal attributes required for success in the workforce, assist the student in applying for dual enrollment grants and other available financial aid opportunities, identify the best combination of dual enrollment and WBL courses, and help the student prepare for standardized assessments. A combination of stakeholders who meet the career coach requirements may collaboratively provide these services to students.

Grade 11

Student Requirements

The student must be enrolled in at least one WBL or dual enrollment course and enroll in WBL or dual enrollment courses for the student's senior year. The student must also meet no less than once per month during the school year with a career coach.

Grade 12

Student Requirements

The student must successfully complete all coursework required for graduation for his/her diploma type. Students may earn at least one science credit and at least one math credit through course substitutions approved by the State Board of Education, including, but not limited to, dual enrollment and WBL courses aligned to a student's chosen career path. These substitutions may only fulfill the student's third credit of science or fourth credit of math. A list of WBL and dual enrollment courses that qualify as science and math substitutions will be published upon State Board of Education approval.

By the end of the students senior year, the student must earn at least nine credits of dual enrollment or WBL, meet no less than once per month during the school year with a career coach, and fulfill all other graduation requirements to earn the Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction.