

**Mississippi Department of Education**  
**Office of Accreditation**  
**Revisions to Footnote 4 of Appendix A - Graduation Requirements**  
**Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2010**  
Public Comments (March 18 – April 11, 2011)

COMMENT	SUBMITTED BY
I don't see the Career and Technical Diploma. What am I missing?	Charles Garrett Received March 21, 2011
I have been combing the accountability standards for an answer to this question. Under the summer school category (standard 19.6) it says that a student may not earn more than one carnegie unit in a summer school for graduation. Does this mean one credit may be earned during the total 4 years before graduation or one unit in one summer? . Also, I thought the accountability rules had something about correspondence courses. We have kids who need to take more than one correspondence course over the course of their 4 years in school in order to fulfill graduation requirements .  I hope you understand what I am trying to ask.  Please clarify on the number of correspondence courses allowed and summer school courses to get required courses for graduation.  Thanks,	Brenda Bolen <a href="mailto:Bbolen1@bellsouth.net">Bbolen1@bellsouth.net</a> Received March 24, 2011
I would like for some allowance on the number or corpesponce courses that may be applied for students to graduate. Now the students may only have one corpesponce course with permission. Some kids get behind or work a job and need the additional corpesponce course in order to graduate. We all want kids to succeed , but sometimes things happen that prevent them from passing all the classes. Sometimes , schools do not offer classes when needed by the senior studnet trying to cvatch up.	Brenda Bolen <a href="mailto:Bbolen1@bellsouth.net">Bbolen1@bellsouth.net</a> Received March 29, 2011

COMMENT	SUBMITTED BY
<p><i>Continued from Page 1</i></p> <p>The online classes are sometimes too hard for students to manage .</p> <p>Also, this is a novel idea, but is there some way that students who must work or need to work could get a credit for performing work with an employer.---</p> <p>We must do something to help students that will be a drop-out if we don't make some exceptions.</p>	
<p>Ms. Paula Vanderford,</p> <p>I would like to submit the following comments regarding the Accountability Policy Revisions:</p> <p>I am a graduate of the public school system and also received my bachelors degree from the University of Mississippi and I want to see Mississippi improve its standards and to do so you must have measures of accountability. However, Policy 20.4 which is set by the direction of the Mississippi Department of Education and is not supported by any MS Code deeply troubles me. The problem I have is in regards to the SATP test being a separate requirement of graduation. I have asked staff at the MDE office for the statistics of how many students have been left behind since the inception of the SATP due to this one policy and I was told data was not maintained. Is the accountability policy in place to hold the school districts accountable or the students?</p> <p>I would like to know the benefits of denying a student their diploma on the basis of a standardized test and not what has been accomplished in the class room. The answer I was given by the MDE was that it held the student accountable to do their very best and if there was no penalty then the tests would not be taken seriously.</p>	<p>Shawn Clayton  <a href="mailto:shawn.clayton@yahoo.com">shawn.clayton@yahoo.com</a>          Concerned Citizen</p> <p>Received April 10, 2011</p>

COMMENT	SUBMITTED BY
<p><i>Continued from Page 2</i></p> <p>I don't disagree that it prevents the tests being taken lightly but should there be other options for students that struggle with standardized tests but pass the course work? This policy places additional obstacles in a student's life because they are denied a diploma and denied the experience of graduation with their peers. The requirement of the SATP in addition to the the course requirements punishes the student in the event the teacher has not prepared that student to be successful on the SATP. An independent audit was done by the Tupelo School District and was released last summer that stated what was being taught in the class room was NOT as rigorous as what was being tested on the SATP tests. If that is the case in one of the better school districts in the state then what is true in the other districts? If this is an accurate assessment then where does the accountability need to be placed? If this requirement prevents only one student from having the opportunity to be successful in life then it is one too many.</p> <p>I understand that SB 2557 establishes a career path alternative for students not wishing to pursue a bachelors degree. I think this is a great piece of legislation except it does not address the separate requirement of the SATP tests in order to receive a standard diploma. I assume since the "State Funded" Community Colleges do not recognize the SATP requirement then the student would not be prevented from receiving a certificate of a vocational skill from the community college but I am not sure how employers will look at that when in most cases a high school diploma is required. Another fact is that without a high school diploma a student can NOT join our military so ask yourself the question, If a student that did not pass the English exam capable of fighting for your freedom? I don't know about you but I don't think a student that misses the test benchmark by a few points should be deemed a failure because they did not receive a high school diploma based on a standardized test result.</p>	

COMMENT	SUBMITTED BY
<p><i>Continued from Page 3</i></p> <p>A diploma should be granted based on their school work for the previous 12 years and not the result of a single standardized test.</p> <p>I believe we have taken this policy too far to try to make sure the school districts are held accountable. Again, the sad thing is that there have been thousands of students over the years since the inception of that requirement and this policy that have struggled with life and I wonder how many turned to crime because they could not get a decent job. Most recently it was reported that there are 3,300 students this year alone subject to not graduating due to the SATP results so how many lives do you want to impact in this way before you decide there is much more at stake than what this policy was intended to accomplish when implemented? We will never know the economic impact on this state and the impact on individual lives this requirement and policy have made but I would guess the cumulative effect would be great. Our great nation was attacked on September 11, 2001 and we lost nearly 3,300 lives that did not deserve to be lost that day. We mourned as a nation and have been fighting ever since then against this ever happening again and I say that to say we as a state are losing students every year to a lifetime of struggles that do not deserve it so what are we doing about it? This has been an issue that has concerned me greatly and as Dr. Martin Luther King once said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." I will continue to stand for what is right and I encourage you will do the same. I ask you this final question, are you proud of what we are accomplishing by having Policy 20.4 and are the results from it worth the cost that is being paid by our children?</p> <p>Best regards,</p>	