

Section I:

**Instructional
Goals and
Objectives**

Knox County Board of Education Policy

Descriptor Term:

**Graduating with Honors or
Distinction**

Descriptor Code:

I-373

Issued:

3/13

Reviewed:

8/23

Revised:

10/23

1
2 Students who meet the graduation requirements for a regular education diploma may graduate with honors
3 or distinction by meeting the criteria established for the Tennessee diploma with honors or distinction.

4
5 **TENNESSEE DIPLOMA WITH HONORS OR DISTINCTION**

6
7 **HONORS**

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9 Students who score at or above all of the subject readiness benchmarks on the ACT or equivalent score
10 on the SAT will graduate with honors.¹

11
12 **DISTINCTION**

13
14 Students will be recognized as graduating with “distinction” by attaining a B average and completing at
15 least one of the following:

- 16
17 1) Earn a national and/or state recognized industry certification
18 2) Participate in at least one of the Governor’s Schools
19 3) Participate in one of the state’s All State musical organizations
20 4) Be selected as a National Merit Finalist or Semi-Finalist
21 5) Attain a score of 31 or higher composite score on the ACT or SAT equivalent
22 6) Attain a score of 3 or higher on at least two Advanced Placement exams
23 7) Successfully complete the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme
24 8) Earn 12 or more semester hours of transcribed postsecondary credit

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29 Some of the data used to identify students as graduates with honors or distinction may not be available
30 prior to commencement. Therefore, all students who potentially meet the requirements will become
31 candidates for a diploma with honors or distinction and will be recognized at individual schools’
32 ceremonies. A final classification of all candidates will be completed once all relevant data is received.

33
34 **TRI-STAR SCHOLAR**

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36 Students who meet the graduation requirements for a regular education diploma will be recognized as
37 graduating as a Tri-Star Scholar by achieving:

- 38
39 1) 19 ACT or SAT equivalent and
40 2) Capstone industry certification
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1 Schools will recognize a student's scholar status in the graduation ceremony with a diploma credential or
2 wearable cord with a notation on the program.²
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4 **INDUSTRY 4.0 DIPLOMA DISTINCTION**

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6 Students who are interested in pursuing a career in a high-need, high-skill industry after graduation may
7 earn an "Industry 4.0 diploma distinction". The student's school shall include on the student's transcript
8 the Industry 4.0 distinction if the student fulfills all Industry 4.0 distinction requirements upon graduation.
9

- 10 1. Each high school shall notify ninth (9th) grade and tenth (10th) grade students enrolled in the high
11 school of the opportunity to pursue an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction no later than ten (10) days
12 after the first day of each semester of the school year.
13
- 14 2. A high school student interested in receiving an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction shall before the
15 end of their tenth (10th) grade year:
 - 16 a. Notify the student's counselor or school principal of the student's intent to pursue an
17 Industry 4.0 diploma distinction;
18
 - 19 b. Provide the student's counselor or school principal with documentation signed by the
20 student's parent or legal guardian indicating that the student's parent or legal guardian is
21 aware of the requirements for the parent's or legal guardian's student to obtain an Industry
22 4.0 diploma distinction and consenting to the student's participation;
23
 - 24 c. Register with a regional American Job Center or other career counseling or community
25 partner approved by the student's school; and
26
 - 27 d. Enroll in at least one (1) work-based learning or dual enrollment course for the student's
28 eleventh (11th) grade year.
29
- 30 3. Beginning in the student's eleventh (11th) grade year, a student pursuing an Industry 4.0 diploma
31 distinction shall meet, no less than once per month, with a career coach who has been approved
32 to provide career coaching services by the student's school. The career coach must:
 - 33 a. Be an American Job Center career coach, a career coach from a career counseling or
34 community partner approved by the United States Department of Labor's regional office
35 for the state of Tennessee, or a licensed school counselor or an educator who holds a work-
36 based learning certificate provided by the Department of Education; and
37
 - 38 b. Meet, no less than once per month during the school year, with students assigned to the
39 career coach by the student's school principal to assist students in:
 - 40 i. Developing the personal attributes required for success in the workforce, which
41 include, but are not limited to, time management, networking, communication,
42 teamwork, creative thinking, and conflict resolution;
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 - 44 ii. Applying for dual enrollment grants or other available financial aid opportunities,
45 including, but not limited to, grants and scholarships administered by the
46 Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation;
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iii. Identifying the best combination of dual enrollment, work-based learning, and internship opportunities available to the student; and

iv. Preparing for standardized assessments such as the ACT.

- 4. Before the end of the student's eleventh (11th) grade year, a student pursuing an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction shall enroll in work-based learning or dual enrollment courses for the student's twelfth (12th) grade year.
- 5. A student receiving an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction shall successfully complete all coursework required for graduation for their diploma type.
- 6. A student pursuing an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction may earn at least one (1) science credit and at least one (1) math credit through course substitutions approved by the State Board, including, but not limited to, dual enrollment and work-based learning courses that are aligned to a student's chosen career path. Work-based learning course substitutions may only fulfill a student's third (3rd) credit of science and/or fourth (4th) credit of math.
- 7. A student receiving an Industry 4.0 diploma distinction shall earn nine (9) credits of dual enrollment or work-based learning in grades nine (9) through twelve (12), which may be satisfied by the student's successful completion of dual enrollment coursework, work-based learning experiences, on-the-job training, or other mentorships or structured educational experiences that allow the student to apply the student's knowledge and skills in a work environment to develop an understanding of workplace expectations.³

Legal References:

- 1. Tennessee State Board of Education High School Policy 2.103.
- 2. T.C.A. § 49-6-6010.
- 3. T.C.A. § 49-6-420.

Approve as to Legal Form
By Knox County Law Director 8/21/2023
/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director