



NJDOE News

Contact: Richard Vespucci
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New Rules Add Practical Arts to Graduation Requirements

High school students throughout New Jersey will have greater flexibility in meeting state graduation requirements as the result of new state regulations adopted today by the State Board of Education.

The revised rules add practical arts to the visual and performing arts as a high school graduation requirement. Specifically, the amendment requires five credits in the visual, performing and/or practical arts for students entering ninth grade before the 2001-02 school year. Ninth graders in 2001-02 will be required to complete at least 10 credits in visual, performing and/or practical arts.

"The State Board's action today officially makes the practical arts part of our graduation requirements," said Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. "By amending our regulations, we are giving students an option to choose among a larger group of course offerings to fulfill their diploma requirements.

"Many students benefit from the learning experiences that the practical arts provide," Dr. Gagliardi continued. "The new rules will allow time for the State Board of Education and the Department of Education to determine how best to include the practical arts in the Core Curriculum Content Standards."

The practical arts include courses such as technology in education and family and consumer science. Prior to the adoption of the Core Curriculum Content Standards in 1996, the practical arts were linked to the visual and performing arts in the state's graduation requirements.

During the process used to develop the Core Curriculum Content Standards, a determination was made to integrate practical arts into a skills and knowledge area called the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards. Those standards describe skills and knowledge that span subject areas and grade levels. Examples include developing career planning and workplace readiness skills, and using technology, information and other tools.

Since graduation requirements are not specified for the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, the place of the practical arts in the high school curriculum has been questioned.

State regulations require the Department of Education to re-examine the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Following the review which begins this spring, Department of Education staff will recommend the appropriate placement of the practical arts in the Core Curriculum Content Standards.