

GRADUATION HANDBOOK

A Toolkit for Implementing for Missouri's Graduation Requirements



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Missouri Graduation Toolkit

Missouri high school graduation requirements are established by the state legislature and the State Board of Education (Board). In addition, post-secondary opportunities may require that a student meets specific requirements for participation. School counselors, college and career advisors, teachers, and school administrators should familiarize themselves with the contents of this document to assist students in developing a plan to graduate prepared to meet their post-secondary goals.

The Graduation Toolkit provides a complete list of statutory requirements for graduation, as well as:

- Guidance for the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)
- Credits and coursework required for graduation
- Assessments required to be administered by the local education agency
- Guidance for awarding credit when:
 - A student transfers from another LEA, state, or homeschool
 - A student participates in post-secondary learning opportunities
 - A student participates in learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom
 - A student participates in MoCAP or other virtual program
 - A student participates in off-campus instructional opportunities
 - A student earns competency based credit
- Other topics related to awarding credit
- Missouri Option Program

Traditionally, a high school education has consisted of four years (eight semesters) of attendance. However, the Board and the Department of Elementary and Education (DESE) recognize that some students, based on their ICAP, may complete graduation requirements early and may need the challenge of pursuing postsecondary studies. Other students may need more time than the usual four years to complete requirements.

Those students need the support of the school and community, as well as their parents/guardians, to complete high school, even if it requires five or more years. The important goal is finishing high school with a quality education — not graduating within a specific number of years. Local boards of education may, by policy, permit students who have met all state and local graduation requirements to exit high school earlier than the usual eight semesters. The conditions for early exit should be communicated unambiguously to all students and their parents/guardians, and the policy should be followed in the most consistent manner possible. Policies should be flexible enough to permit and encourage part-time attendance and other arrangements for students who may need more than four years to complete a high school education.

Missouri High School Minimum Graduation Requirements and the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education Coursework Recommendations

The Board has established minimum graduation requirements to ensure graduates have taken courses that provide them with the essential knowledge, skills, and competencies to be success-ready upon graduation. The CBHE 24-unit high school core curriculum is designed to prepare high school students for access to and retention/success in collegiate-level work. However, admission and placement decisions are made at the institutional level. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss admission and placement practices with the specific college or university they plan to attend.

In 2006, State Board approved 24 units of credit as the minimum required for graduation beginning with the class of 2010. The requirements include four units of English language arts and three units of credit in mathematics, science, and social studies, one unit of credit for fine arts, practical arts, and physical education. In addition, students must earn a half-unit of credit in health education and a half-unit of credit in personal finance. The remaining seven units are electives. Local boards of education may establish graduation policies that meet or exceed the state minimum requirements.

Missouri Graduation Requirements by Units of Credit

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Minimum Graduation Requirements		Two Institutions-One Goal: Prepare Students for Success	Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education's Recommended High School Course Work (Appendix C)	
Subject	Units of Credit	Additional Guidance for Successful Preparation	Subject	Units of Credit
English Language Arts	4 credits		English Language Arts	4 credits
Mathematics ³	3 credits	Students who take a fourth year of math are often more successful in completing college level math (MDHE).	Mathematics	4 credits
Social Studies ¹	3 credits	Social Studies coursework should emphasize American history, Missouri government, and Missouri history as required by state statute.	Social Studies	3 credits
Science ³	3 credits	Biology, chemistry, and physics with a least one lab class are strongly recommended.	Science	3 credits
Fine Arts	1 credit		Fine Arts	1 credit
Physical Education ^{2, 4}	1 credit		Physical Education**	1 credit
Practical Arts	1 credit		Practical Arts**	1 credit
Health ^{2, 4}	½ credit		Health**	½ credit
Personal Finance	½ credit		Personal Finance**	½ credit
Electives	7 credits	MDHE strongly recommends two units of credit in a single foreign language.	Electives	6 credits
Total:	24 Credits		Total:	24 Credits

** These are additional DESE requirements

Students, with the assistance of educational staff, are expected to develop an Individual Career and Academic plan which creates a road map for meeting the graduation requirements and preparing for success beyond high school. Most jobs in Missouri will require additional training or education beyond high school. Students who graduate and work in Missouri will need skills that meet business, industry, and higher education standards.

Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)

The development and implementation of a student's ICAP is critical in maximizing a student's high school experience and making sure they are on target to complete high school ready for success. Developing a rigorous and relevant ICAP based on career aspirations can open doors of opportunity that can lead to a lifetime of economic and social productivity.

An ICAP is a student's roadmap to his/her future via anticipated coursework, assessments, organizations, and experiences. The foundation for the creation of an ICAP starts at the elementary level, when students start to become aware of the concept of work and begin to learn about the world of work through broad career paths. In the middle grades students should be provided with career and educational exploration activities that focus on career paths and clusters through coursework and various career activities, culminating with the development of an initial ICAP that should be based on a rigorous pathway. This initial ICAP should be developed no later than the end of eighth grade.

An ICAP should not only reflect graduation requirements but also the relevant movement toward career aspirations. Information in addition to the state and local graduation requirements should be utilized to successfully develop a plan include: a knowledge of a student's academic strengths and weaknesses; knowledge of their interests, abilities, and values; knowledge and understanding of various postsecondary opportunities such as technical training, college, etc.; and the requirements for pursuing a certain path, such as a college entrance exam score and/or licensure certificate. Students also need an understanding of current high school courses, programs, and extracurricular activities and their connections to future career aspirations. High school students might choose options, such as participation in an internship or apprenticeship, earning credentials that count toward an associate's degree, or taking college credit-bearing classes such as dual credit, AP, and/or IB.

Federal and state regulations pertaining to the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) require that transition be addressed for all students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) beginning at age 16, or younger if appropriate. Requirements for these transition services are located in the [State Plan for Education Part B](#). It is essential that school personnel, students, and their parents/guardians continuously review and modify ICAPs as appropriate to make sure students are on-target for graduation, transition, and their specific postsecondary plans. The goal of this planning and monitoring process is that all students graduate ready for success.

Number of Semesters of Attendance Required

Traditionally, a high school education has consisted of four years (eight semesters) of attendance. Some students, based on their ICAP, may complete graduation requirements early and may need the challenge of pursuing postsecondary studies. Other students may need more time than the usual four years to complete requirements. Those students need the support of the school and community, as well as their parents/guardians, to complete high school, even if it requires five or more years. The important goal is finishing high school with a quality education — not graduating within a specific number of years. Local boards of education may, by policy, permit students who have met all state and local graduation requirements to exit high school earlier than the usual eight semesters. The conditions for early exit should be communicated unambiguously to all students and their parents/guardians, and the policy should be followed in the most consistent manner possible. Policies should be flexible enough to permit and encourage part-time attendance and other arrangements for students who may need more than four years to complete a high school education.

End-of-Course Assessments (EOCs)

The Missouri Assessment Program assesses students' progress toward mastering the Missouri Learning Standards. The State Board of Education expects local education agencies (LEAs) to administer the required EOCs for all students prior to graduation with the following exceptions:

- Students whose IEP teams have determined the MAP-A alternative is the appropriate assessment must take the MAP-A assessment for English language arts grade 11, science grade 11, and mathematics grade 11.
- An English Learner (EL) who has been in the United States 12 months or fewer at the time of administration may be exempted from taking the English II assessment; however, they will need to be assessed prior to graduation if they are not a senior.
- International exchange students are allowed but not required to take the assessments.

Guidance on Transfer Students and Variances to the State Minimum Graduation Requirements

The state graduation requirements cannot be applied with absolute uniformity in every situation, especially with student transfers; therefore, local boards of education have the authority to establish reasonable, nondiscriminatory policies for determining grade placement of transfer students and recognizing credit from prior schools.

Placement, Credit, and Variances for Students Who Transfer into a School District/Charter

DESE recommends the following:

Transferring From	Board Policy
Another public high school in a school district accredited by the Missouri State Board of Education	Accept credit, pursuant to Section 171.171, RSMo, and grade placement as stated on transcript.
- A nonpublic high school or charter school in Missouri accredited by the Cognia, Independent Schools Association of Central States (ISACS), or the University of Missouri Committee on Accredited Schools - Private agency placement by public school district/charter for students with disabilities	Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript and equated to the Carnegie unit as defined in Missouri.
A public or nonpublic high school in another state accredited by that state's department of education, Cognia or its equivalent, or ISACS or its equivalent agency	Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript and equated to the Carnegie Unit as defined in Missouri.
- An unaccredited public or nonpublic high school in Missouri or another state - A charter public high school that is not accredited by the Cognia or its equivalent - Home school - Private agency placement by parents/guardians of students with disabilities	- Review reported courses and any available achievement test or other performance data. - Interview student and parents/guardians. - Administer formal and informal assessments if records are inadequate. - Make a tentative placement decision based on available information. - If placement is ninth grade, students should be required to meet all state and local graduation requirements. - Parents/guardians of home-schooled children must provide documentation as required in Section 167.031, RSMo.

- If a transfer student from a Missouri high school is placed in grade 10 or above, local policy may permit the student to graduate upon satisfactory completion of their ICAP that would have met the graduation requirements at the school formerly attended. Such students would have to meet the requirements in Sections 170.011, RSMo; 170.345, RSMo; and 170.310, RSMo (See appendix A).
- Transfer students from another state, country, or home school may graduate upon successful completion of an individualized program of studies which school officials, parents/guardians, and students agree will allow the student to graduate college or career ready, even though the program of studies may not include 24 units of credit as defined in Missouri.

- Seniors transferring from other states or countries may be graduated without meeting the requirements of section 170.011, RSMo. **Per Section 170.011, RSMo, a school district may elect to waive the requirement of this subsection for any student who transfers from outside the state to a Missouri high school if the student can furnish documentation deemed acceptable by the local education agency (LEA) of the student's successful completion in any year from the ninth through the twelfth grade of a course of instruction in the institutions, branches, and functions of the state government, including local governments, and the government of the United States, and in the electoral process.** Students must still complete the Civics requirement (Section 170.345, RSMo) and the CPR requirement (Section 170.310, RSMo). Appendix A has more details regarding these statutory requirements.

Students Transferring Between Local Education Agencies with Significantly Different Schedules and Graduation Requirements

When students transfer between LEAs with significantly different schedules and graduation requirements, questions arise about how many units of credits should be issued to students by the receiving LEA (in order to be equitable to students as well as to maintain school district/charter graduation requirements). To recognize and accommodate these differences, LEAs are encouraged to establish a clearly written policy detailing how to manage such transfers when they occur. Such policies should be fair and equitable to students, take into consideration the schedule and graduation requirements of the sending LEA, and ensure that students will meet the graduation standards of the receiving LEA.

Earning High School and College Credit Simultaneously

Students in Missouri schools may be provided the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit through dual credit or dual enrollment. Dual credit classes are taught by high school teachers who have been approved by a college or university to be adjunct professors and are usually taught at the high school or in the LEA. Dual enrollment classes are taught by college or university professors, and the LEA has arranged to award high school credit for the classes. Dual enrollment classes are often taught at the college/university site. Additional information may be found at <https://dhe.mo.gov/cota/dualcredit.php>. College course transferability information may be found at <https://dhe.mo.gov/core42.php>.

Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment Comparison Table

Dual Credit		Dual Enrollment
Instructor	A high school teacher must be approved to be an adjunct professor by the appropriate college or university. The teacher must meet DESE certification requirements and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education's requirements.	The teacher is a college/university professor. The teacher is qualified under Higher Education guidelines but might not be under DESE certification requirements.
Agreement	A written agreement must be in place between the LEA and the college/university.	A written agreement must be in place between the school LEA and the college/university.
Course Fees	Course fees are determined by the agreement between the school LEA and the college/university.	Course fees are determined by the agreement between the school LEA and the college/university.
Curriculum	Set by the college/university.	Set by the college/university.
Textbooks	Determined by the college/university.	Determined by the college/university.
Equating Credit	One unit of high school credit for a 5-hour college class; ½ unit of high school credit for a 3-hour college class; ¼ unit of credit for a 2-hour college class.	One unit of high school credit for a 5-hour college class; ½ unit of high school credit for a 3-hour college class; ¼ unit of credit for a 2-hour college class.
Attendance	Students enrolled in dual credit courses may be counted in attendance at the high school for state aid purposes via Core Data/MOSIS as long as the 1.0 ADA is not exceeded.	Attendance for students participating in dual enrollment classes for state aid purposes will be dependent on the agreement between the LEA and the college/university. The district must follow all state attendance reporting guidelines and must not exceed the 1.0 ADA. The agreement between the school LEA and college must outline how class attendance will be taken and reported to the school LEA. (See next page)*
Core Data/MOSIS Reporting	List the dual credit site as district because the instructor is the district's employee. Remember that the Course Assignment File must have a match in the Educator School File.	List the dual credit site as the college because the instructor is not the district's employee. This is the only record that will not have a match in the Educator School File.

*Counting Attendance for Dual Enrollment

On days when students are attending college classes, their attendance (or absence) must be recorded by the college, transmitted to the high school in accordance with the agreement, and recorded along with all other attendance data.

In order for the LEA to receive state aid on days when the college classes do not meet, the student must be present on the high school campus and engage in homework or independent study under the general supervision of the certificated staff member; or be engaged in similar activities on the college campus, with the college campus person responsible for documenting student absence or presence and transmitting the information to the high school in accordance with the agreement.

Opportunities to Earn Credit beyond the Traditional Classroom Setting

Typically high school credits are defined as seat time by a Carnegie Unit; however, non-traditional methods for earning credit provide unique opportunities for students to get a head start on applying academics to postsecondary goals. Local education agencies may seek to award credit through means other than time-fixed terms, semesters, or school years.

Possibilities may include awarding credit based on demonstration of the knowledge, skills, and competencies deemed equivalent to that which would be gained in a more traditional class setting.

Alternate ways for earning high school credit include virtual education, off-campus programs, proficiency credit, and embedded credit.

Virtual Education

Virtual education is defined as electronically transmitted instruction and may include the internet, an electronic textbook, DVD, etc. Options for virtual education include the Missouri Course Assessment and Virtual School Program (MOCAP), locally created and/or other purchased virtual programs, and online college classes.

Virtual Education:	
Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP)	The Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) is a K-12 virtual, tuition-based instructional program offered by the department. It utilizes Missouri's core data codes and course names. Local education agencies are required to accept and not limit courses offered through MOCAP as units of credit toward meeting state and local graduation requirements. MOCAP, like other online vendors, is a tuition-based program. Additional information including the course catalogue may be found on the MOCAP web page.
Locally created or purchased Virtual Courses	Local education agencies may recognize units of credit from other sources delivered primarily through electronic media. Please refer to the Core Data and Missouri Student Information System Manual for delivery system information.
College Classes	These are dual enrollment classes from a college or university with which the LEA has an agreement.

Off-Campus Instruction

Many students who are juniors and seniors in high school can benefit from authentic school directed and supervised paid or unpaid learning experiences through assignment to off-campus locations under cooperative arrangements with business and industry or other institutions.

There are four Off-Campus programs that require DESE approval prior to implementation. They are Academic Programs-Off Campus, Career Exploratory Programs-Off Campus, Cooperative Career Education-Off Campus, and Work Experiences for Students with Disabilities-Off Campus. The School Flex Program, Academic/Curriculum-Based Service Learning, and the Instruction in a Sheltered Workshop Setting-Off Campus do not require DESE approval.

Recommendations, Requirements, and General Information Regarding Off-Campus

Instruction:

1. LEAs will comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act for any form of work-based learning or employment.
2. LEAs will exercise extreme diligence in complying with applicable state and federal labor laws and regulations in working with the cooperating sponsors as there is a danger of unpaid students replacing paid employees.
3. LEAs will determine their needs for insurance and liability for students in off-campus programs. Students who are receiving pay for work performed in an off-campus program may be covered by the sponsors workers' compensation insurance and general liability insurance. Students in academic programs and career exploration programs, who are not performing productive work and are not paid, may not be covered by the sponsor's workers' compensation insurance and general liability insurance. Therefore, any school district/charter that arranges off-campus academic or career-exploration programs must provide accidental injury and job-related illness insurance for students and liability insurance to cover any injuries or damages caused by students on the sponsors' premises. Liability insurance to protect the supervising teacher and any other school district employees who might be exposed to a liability risk due to the placement of students in off-campus programs should also be provided by the LEA. LEAs should consult with their liability insurance carrier and/or legal counsel on all off-campus program situations.
4. LEAs will provide adequate supervision by school personnel to ensure the LEAs eligibility for state and federal funds and to justify the awarding of high school credit to participating students. School personnel will review safety protocols and avenues for reporting concerns in the off-campus environment. The following general policies will apply:
 - To be counted for average daily attendance for state aid purposes, students must be under the guidance and direction of certificated teachers employed by the LEA whether the instruction (teaching process) is on-campus or off-campus. Students not over 21 years of age and who are under the guidance and direction of public school teachers for less than the standard school day may be counted as part-time students. (Their part-time membership and attendance are computed according to Section 163-011, RSMo).
 - LEAs shall not count students in attendance for any type of off-campus instruction unless they are adequately supervised by the LEAs certificated teachers to the extent the students can be considered "under the guidance and direction of teachers" and for which the LEA is granting high school credit. **LEAs are responsible for students**

during the time they are counted in school membership and attendance for state aid purposes.

5. Obtain approval from the appropriate office within DESE if the students are to be counted in membership and attendance for state-aid purposes, if funding is involved, or if high school credit is to be granted. Proposals for academic and career exploration programs should be submitted to the appropriate area supervisor. Proposals for cooperative career education programs should be submitted to the Coordinator, Career and Technical Education, and proposals for work-experience programs for special education students should be submitted to the Coordinator, Special Education Services. The School Flex Program and the Academic/Curriculum-Based Service Learning do not require DESE approval.

Academic Programs – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus Instruction: Require Prior DESE Approval	
Core Data Course Code = 996001	
Academic programs involve students who are enrolled in advanced academic or fine arts classes and have as their ICAP goals the acquisition of specialized knowledge and the ability to apply knowledge to situations which cannot be replicated in the school classroom.	
Example: A student enrolled in an advanced chemistry class spends part of the school day in a chemical company working with technicians. The student will receive credit in advanced chemistry as well as credit for the off-campus experience.	
Guidelines for this program:	
Required Instruction:	Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction in the regular high school program before credit can be awarded for the off-campus experience.
Elective Credit:	One-half unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly of off-campus experience or one unit of credit per semester for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit may be awarded in any school year.
Teacher Qualifications:	The program or course offering must be under the supervision of a teacher certificated in the area of the off-campus course.
Recommended Supervision Time:	Two-hundred twenty-five (225) minutes of supervision is recommended per week for each 10 participating students.
Written Plans:	There must be a written instructional plan that sets forth specific learner objectives and an evaluation plan for student performance.
Student Pay:	Students may or may not be paid as per the LEA and business/industry agreement.

Career Exploration Program – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus Instruction: Requiring Prior DESE Approval	
Core Data Course Code = 997001	
The career exploration program involves students who have not yet selected occupational goals and who will benefit from exposure to a variety of occupations, as practiced at the job site, so they may develop their own occupational objectives from direct experience.	
Example: A student enrolled in a career exploration program spends nine weeks outside of the school day observing and learning at the job site in an area of occupational interest. The student completes projects and a report related to the occupational area and receives credit in the career exploration class.	
Guidelines for this program:	
Required Instruction:	Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction in the regular high school program. The related instruction will provide students with knowledge of occupational clusters, requisite training and experiences for occupations being studied, and skills related to obtaining and holding a job. Students may spend no more than nine weeks at any one job site.
Elective Credit:	Credit is awarded as a part of the related classroom instruction. One-half unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly of off-campus experience or one unit of credit per semester for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units may be awarded during the school year.
Teacher Qualifications:	The program must be under the supervision of a teacher who provides related classroom instruction in career awareness and related areas.
Recommended Supervision Time:	Two-hundred twenty-five (225) minutes of supervision is recommended per week for each 15 participating students.
Written Plans:	There must be a written instructional plan that sets forth specific learner objectives and an evaluation plan for student performance.
Student Pay:	Students may or may not be paid as per the LEA and business/industry agreement.

Cooperative Career Education Programs – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus Instruction: Requiring Prior DESE Approval	
Core Data Course Code(s): 016780—Supervised Agriculture Experience, Cooperative Experience; 034380—Supervised Business Experience; 040080—Supervised Marketing Experience; 040081—Supervised COE Employment; 096839—Family and Consumer Sciences Occupations, Cooperative Education; 170090—Supervised CIE Employment	
Cooperative career education programs involve students enrolled in a DESE-approved cooperative career education programs. The primary goal is authentic assessment of the application of academic and occupational skills. Programs must meet the common program standards established and approved by the Office of College and Career Readiness, Career and Technical Education Section. The program incorporates real-world experiences and learning into the student’s academic experience.	
Example: A student enrolled in a culinary arts program participates in a work experience component. The student is placed in an off-campus experience such as food preparation in a restaurant. The student earns credit for the culinary arts course and appropriate credit for the supervised experience.	
Guidelines for this program:	
Required Instruction:	Students must be enrolled in a DESE-approved career education program with classes which are concurrent with the off-campus experience. The related instruction may be less frequent than daily but must comply with approved program standards.
Elective Credit:	One-half unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly of off-campus experience, or one unit of credit per semester for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit may be awarded during any school year for the off-campus experience.
Teacher Qualifications:	The program must be under the supervision of a teacher who is certificated in the career and technical education program area and who has completed a course in Coordination of Cooperative Education.
Recommended Supervision Time:	Two-hundred twenty-five (225) minutes of supervision is recommended per week for each 12-15 participating students. The teacher contracts should include an additional week beyond regular teacher contracts for each 12-15 students so that counseling, placement, scheduling, and training station development can be conducted.
Written Plans:	There must be a written instructional plan that sets forth specific learner objectives, an evaluation plan for student performance, and a training agreement signed by all parties involved. Evaluation of students on the job includes occupationally specific skills as well as attitudinal criteria.
Student Pay:	Students may or may not be paid as per the LEA and business/industry agreement.

Work Experience for Students with Disabilities – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus Instruction: Requiring Prior DESE Approval	
The Cooperative Work Experience Program (COOP) is a partnership with local businesses to provide eligible students learning opportunities and hands-on experiences as they transition to the workforce. This program links high school Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) with the student’s career interests and local labor market trends.	
Guidelines for this program:	
Participants:	Participants in COOP are limited to students who are ➤ currently enrolled in high school, ➤ receiving services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), ➤ at least 16 years of age (work permits may be considered for students under 16), ➤ determined eligible for services as clients of the Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and ➤ in the process of developing an employment goal, as specified through an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).
Requirements:	In order to participate in the COOP, students will ➤ demonstrate the skills and abilities to be able to work independently in an integrated, cooperative employment setting, ➤ receive high school credit based on the number of hours they work, ➤ be released from school in accordance with the goals and objectives listed in their IEP at least one hour per day as part of their class schedule or before school, after school, or during the summer months, and ➤ earn at least minimum wage.
Credit:	Before credit can be awarded, the student must: ➤ have signed an IEP through VR that identifies COOP as a service to be provided, ➤ be in and receiving related instruction in the regular public agency program (including high school and State Board operated programs), and ➤ be enrolled in “related vocational and academic instruction in the classroom” (Exception: the IEP indicates full-time work experience).
Course of Study Requirements:	Related Instruction can be instruction provided by a special educator or a general educator. Most special education classes are related instruction because annual measurable goals are written according to each special education service. The Work-Experience Coordinator (WEC) provides or coordinates the related instruction in the regular school program. WEC, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, and the IEP team consider the student’s Course of Study.

Credit:	During the school year, students may be released from school for a minimum of one hour per day. One unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly experience or two units of credit for 20+ hours weekly for experience or twice the number of units for credit for related instruction, whichever is less. Up to four units of credit may be earned during school year for students with a disability if they need additional work experience as per their IEP.
Teacher Qualifications:	COOP work experience must be provided under the supervision of a certified special education teacher who has been designated and approved as the WEC. The WEC would also provide or coordinate the related classroom instruction in the regular school program.
Recommended Supervision Time:	The WEC will designate the required amount of supervision time based upon the individual needs of the student.
Written Plans:	The IEP and IPE must set forth specific measurable objectives to be achieved by the student in this program and describe a coordinated plan for evaluating his/her performance.
Student Pay:	Students participating in COOP must be earning at least minimum wage in an integrated competitive setting in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor Guidelines and the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

The School Flex Program – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus Programs Not Requiring DESE Approval	
Core Data Course Code = 996002	
The School Flex Program (§ 160.539, RSMo) affords schools the opportunity to offer an alternative delivery system for students in grades 11 and 12 who have been identified by their high school principal, parents/guardians as potentially benefiting from an alternative delivery system in order to pursue a timely graduation.	
Example: A qualified junior or senior who has an ICAP focusing on Engineering Technology attends school two hours a day and spends the remainder of the day in a Registered Youth Apprenticeship Program, (For information on Youth Apprentice programs contact the Director of Skilled Technical Sciences at 573-5904.)	
Guidelines for this program:	
Eligible Students:	A principal or a parent/guardian identifies students who are eligible for this program based on school district/charter policies and procedures. Designated school personnel work with each student and his/her parents/guardians to develop an individualized plan that is aligned with the student's written ICAP. The plan must include: ➤ attendance at school for at least two instructional hours per day within the school of residence. ➤ a plan to pursue a timely graduation through enrollment in LEA required classes in order to meet graduation requirements. ➤ evidence of enrollment and attendance at a college or technical school or evidence of employment that is aligned to the student's ICAP. Students may or may not receive pay for employment that is aligned to their ICAP. ➤ the expectations for student attendance and behavior as outlined in Section 160.539, RSMo: 1. The student must maintain a 95% attendance rate. 2. The student must avoid suspension or expulsion while in the program.
Credit:	The awarding of credit for non-class activity related to the School Flex Program is not addressed in the legislation and, therefore, dependent upon LEA policy. It is recommended that local policy justify the awarding of credit to be readily defensible.
Enrollment Limitations:	Student enrollment is limited to a combination of in-class and off-campus School Flex Program activity not to exceed 1,044 hours during a school term. The school term for which program enrollment is active may occur during one school year or over a span of two school years but may not include summer school.
Records:	Enrollment and attendance records for off-campus or employment must be maintained.
Recommended Supervision Time:	Two-hundred twenty-five (225) minutes of supervision is recommended per week for each group of 28 participating students
Written Plans:	Written plans must show alignment with a student's ICAP.
Student Pay:	Students may or may not receive pay. The employment relationship must be established in the off-campus portion of the School Flex Program.

Academic/Curriculum-Based Service Learning – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus Programs Not Requiring DESE Approval	
Academic/Curriculum-Based Service Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.	
Required Instruction:	Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction in the regular high school program before credit can be awarded for the off-campus experience. The related instruction should include clearly articulated learning goals with cross-curricular connections whereby students learn skills and content through varied modalities that meet academic standards and enable the transference of skills and content to new applications.
Elective Credit:	Credit is only awarded as a part of a core curriculum class or elective class. It may not be awarded for stand-alone service learning.
Teacher Qualifications:	The program or course offering must be under the supervision of a teacher certificated in the area of the core curriculum class or elective class.
Recommended Supervision Time:	Typically 100% supervision is recommended; however, there may be times when students work independently.
Written Plans:	There must be a written instruction plan that sets forth specific learner objectives and an evaluation plan for student performance.
Student Pay:	Students are not paid for service-learning projects.

Instruction in a Sheltered Workshop Setting – Off-Campus	
Off-Campus not Requiring DESE Approval	
As addressed under <i>Policy Considerations For Students With Disabilities Under IDEA</i>, students with disabilities who meet the goals and objectives of their IEPs, as measured by the evaluation procedures and criteria specified in the IEP, will have credit transcribed in accordance with the state definition of units of credit. Some of these students may have a need for assessment and/or training from a sheltered workshop in skills appropriate for manufacturing. Off-Campus Instruction at an Extended Employment Sheltered Workshop is limited to students with disabilities whose IEP team has determined that a student should obtain skills assessment and training at a local workshop. Students may receive instruction for developing basic skills to work in the manufacturing and assembly of products. Students may not participate in a work activity at the workshop resulting in a product under contract by the workshop with another business or produced by the workshop for payment.	
Guidelines for this program:	
Participants:	Participants in training provided at a local workshop are limited to students who ➤ are currently enrolled in high school, ➤ are receiving services through an IEP, ➤ are at least 16 years of age, and have an IEP postsecondary transition goal related to employment in industry, assembly, or manufacture of products.
Requirements:	In order to participate in the workshop setting, students will: ➤ receive high school credit based on the number of hours they receive training and ➤ be released from school in accordance with the goals and objectives listed in their IEP at least one hour per day as part of their class schedule.
Credit:	Before credit can be awarded: ➤ student must be in and receiving related instruction in the regular public agency program (including high school and State Board operated programs). student must be enrolled in “related vocational and academic instruction in the classroom” (Exception: the IEP indicates full-time training experience).
Course of Study Requirements:	Related Instruction can be instruction provided by a special educator or a general educator. Most special education classes are related instruction because annual measurable goals are written according to each special education service.
Credit:	During the school year, students may be released from school for a minimum of one hour per day (the number of minutes in a class period). One unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly training or two units of credit for 20+ hours weekly for experience or twice the number of units for credit for related instruction, whichever is less. Up to four units of credit may be earned during a school year for students with a disability if they need additional training as per their IEP.
Teacher Qualifications:	Workshop training must be provided under the supervision of a certified special education teacher. The teacher would also provide or coordinate the related classroom instruction in the regular school program.
Recommended Supervision Time:	Supervision time will be determined by the teacher and local school district/charter.
Written Plans:	The IEP must set forth specific measurable objectives to be achieved by the student in this program and describe a coordinated plan for evaluating his/her performance.

Proficiency (Competency)-Based Credit

LEAs may award high school credit to students upon demonstration of mastery of the competencies for a particular course. Credit may be awarded through a proficiency (competency)-based method which requires the establishment of the level of student learning through a demonstration of knowledge and/or skill without regard for the amount of time taken in the learning process or the structure of instructional delivery. Multiple avenues may be available for documenting the validity of awarded credit, student progression, and/or graduation from high school. LEAs are cautioned to carefully examine alternative approaches before beginning implementation of a system to award competency-based credit to identify issues which could create issues for post-secondary enrollment, military service, or employment.

	Traditional/Carnegie Units	Proficiency (Competency)-Based Credit	Alternative, Performance Based Graduation
Definition	Traditional measure of awarding academic credit	Demonstrated mastery of competencies in each course	Alternative system of measurement which, when met, lead to the diploma
Scope	Per course	Per course	High school
Transcript	Carnegie Unit, per course	Carnegie Unit, per course	Standards Mastered
MSHSAA/NCAA	Eligibility determined by credit status	Eligibility determined by credit status	Lacks basis for eligibility determination
DESE Requirements	Course and Teacher Approval	Competency based Assessment	Permission
Seat Time Requirement	Carnegie Unit	Not applicable	Not applicable
Credit Basis	Time, course requirements, passing grade	Demonstration of competency mastery	Demonstration of standards mastery
Impact on State Aid	None	Potential	Potential

A proficiency (competency)-based learning environment may not resemble the traditional classroom. However, the learning process may result in the awarding of a credit and must align to the Missouri Learning Standards and be rigorous in expectations.

Characteristics of a quality proficiency-based credit system includes the following:

- Students advance upon demonstrated mastery of content.
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, and transferable learning objectives.
- Assessment is meaningful.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies which include application and creation of knowledge.

An LEA that offers credits based on a demonstration of proficiency (competency) must have adequate

policies and procedures in place to justify the award of credit to ensure that the integrity of awarding of credit is readily defensible. When utilizing proficiency (competency)-based credit, the LEA must maintain a description of what is determined to be an acceptable level of student mastery and the means used to determine that level of proficiency (competency). If proficiency (competency)-based credit is awarded for a course which has a state-required end-of-course assessment (EOC), that exam must be factored into the proficiency determination.

If the awarding of a proficiency (competency)-based credit will be accompanied with the designation of an assigned grade, the LEA must maintain a description of how different grade levels are to be determined. If that determination will be based on student performance on a formal assessment, the notification is to include a description of the “cut score” or degree of demonstrated mastery required for a student to earn an “A” as opposed to a “B” or another grade.

School districts/Charters with questions regarding proficiency (competency)-based credit should contact the Office of Quality Schools at 573-751-4426.

Alternative, Performance-Based Graduation

Educators and others have recognized that completing a specified number of units of credit may not ensure that students will obtain the knowledge, competencies, and skills that are considered essential to success in postsecondary studies or a career. The State Board of Education has authorized DESE to waive the standard graduation requirements for school districts/charters that wish to develop and implement performance-based graduation standards as an alternative to the credit-based requirements.

Thresholds necessary for progression and eventual award of a high school diploma through an alternate, performance-based system must be described by the participating school district/charter to demonstrate the veracity of the instructional and learning process. As noted under proficiency-based credit, responsibility for adequate policies and procedures to ensure the integrity of an alternative means of educational progression belongs to the school district/charter.

The MLS describe the minimum knowledge and skills students need to graduate ready for college and career and offer benchmarks necessary to demonstrate such readiness. Additional support for the awarding of a performance-based diploma would be provided through a process which could demonstrate student readiness shown through attainment of Missouri Learning Standards appropriate for a student completing the 12th grade in core academic content areas in combination with a career technical education concentration.

Information about the Missouri Learning Standards is available online on the Office of College and Career Readiness [Curriculum web page](#).

An alternative, performance-based graduation or progression toward graduation is subject to DESE approval. School districts/Charters interested in the use of this alternative should contact the Office of Quality Schools, School Improvement Section, 573-751-4426.

Embedded Credit

Embedded credit is an alternative method for granting credit in which a school district/charter chooses to embed competencies from one subject into another class and award credit to students for both the embedded content and the other subject. The embedded credit content must be closely aligned to the MLS, and a plan for determining proficiency for both subjects must be in place. The instructor must have appropriate certification in both content areas.

This is the suggested process for embedding credit:

- The school district/charter reviews internal policies and procedures related to graduation requirements, transcript protocol, GPAs, class ranking, impact on staffing, etc.
- The school district/charter reviews external protocols related to review of transcripts and acceptance of embedded credit by colleges, area career centers, the NCAA Clearinghouse, etc.
- The school district/charter has the appropriate stakeholders compare and crosswalk the competencies for both courses to determine if they are closely aligned to the standards and cover the standards for both classes. Any missing standards must be added.
- The school district/charter determines how competency and acceptable mastery level for both subjects will be determined. Embedded credit for a course which requires a Missouri Assessment Program end-of-course exam is subject to all conditions and requirements for administration of that assessment.
- The school district/charter sends a one-time notification to the Office of Quality Schools at the address listed below. This notification needs to include school district/charter assurances that the content is closely aligned with MLS and is rigorous in expectations. The assurances should also include a plan for determining the competency level for the embedded credit and the acceptable level of mastery for awarding credit.

Office of Quality Schools—MSIP Director
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education PO
Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480
- Once embedded credit has been implemented, the school district/charters should monitor student performance on a regular basis.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Quality Schools at 573-751-4426.

Alternative Pathway to a Diploma

Missouri Option Program

The Missouri Option Program permits the opportunity to earn a standard high school diploma for full-time, public school-enrolled students who are at least 17 years of age and at risk of dropping out or not graduating with their cohort group. Graduation through the Missouri Option Program is not dependent on Carnegie credit attainment. The Missouri Option Program is competency-based and approved by the State Board of Education. The program utilizes the high school equivalency exam as content mastery for graduation purposes. Missouri Option students successfully passing the high school equivalency exam and completing all other program requirements are eligible to receive a high school diploma. Missouri Option graduates will not be counted in the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for federal accountability purposes. These students will continue to be counted in the graduation rate for purposes of the Annual Performance Report.

Waivers and Substitutions for Academic Programs for Career and Technical Education Programs of Study

Waiver of Required Academic Credit for Students Completing a Career and Technical Education Program of Study

Local board of education policy may permit a waiver of one unit of academic credit (English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies) for students who complete a three-unit career and technical education program of study. The three-unit career and technical education program must constitute a planned program leading to specific career-related competencies, not simply any three units of credit. The academic subject in which the waiver is granted must be one in which the student has received substantial instruction in the career and technical education program. For example, students completing a three-unit agricultural-education program or a health-sciences program might be permitted to waive one unit of science; students completing a three-unit electricity/electronics program might be permitted to waive one unit of mathematics.

- Previous legislation passed by the General Assembly (170.011, RSMo) state that school districts/charters maintaining a high school shall require each pupil who receives a high school diploma or certificate of graduation after January 1, 1994, shall satisfactorily complete a course of study of at least one semester in length that covers the institutions, branches, and functions of government of the state of Missouri, including local governments and the government of the United States, and the electoral process. A school district/charter may waive these requirements for any student who transfers from outside the state to a Missouri high school if the student can furnish documentation deemed acceptable by the school district/charter of the student's successful completion in any year from the ninth through the twelfth grade of a course of instruction in the institutions, branches, and functions of state government, including local governments, and of the government of the United States and the electoral process. This does not exempt the student from participation in the Missouri Civics Initiative outlined in appendix A.
- Students must take the end-of-course exam required for any waived course.

Substitution of Courses to Fulfill Academic Credit Requirements with a School District/Charter-Approved Agriculture or Career and Technical Education Course

Legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2014 (Section 170.017, RSMo) provides an opportunity for students to substitute certain courses with agriculture or career and technical education courses. A student may fulfill one unit of academic credit with an LEA approved agriculture or career and technical education course for any English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies unit required for high school graduation in any combination up to fulfilling one requirement in each of the four subject areas. The substitution may not be made where the course for which the agriculture or career and technical education course is being substituted requires an end-of-course statewide assessment. The policy required under this section shall be in addition to the optional waiver of one unit of academic credit for a three-unit career and technical education program of study.

Suggested Points of Discussion between LEAs and Students and Parents/Guardians Regarding Additional Agriculture or Career and Technical Education Credits in Lieu of Required Core Credits

- The student's ICAP and future career goals
- Academic preparation for postsecondary and work opportunities that may require certain transcribed courses
- NCAA required core courses
- Future postsecondary education, military, and other future training and institutional admissions requirements
- The number of units of credit a student must earn to graduate from high school

Potential issues may include the impact on a student's grade point average or current laws allowing state financial aid to be linked to such a non-time-based awarding of a credit.

Furthermore, unless non-traditional course offerings are structured in a manner consistent with guidelines of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the awarding of proficiency-based credit or the substitutions of courses may have an adverse effect on student eligibility for future participation in collegiate athletics.

Other Credit-Related Topics

Credit Recovery

Credit recovery provides an opportunity for high school students (grades 9-12) who would otherwise fail a course to complete the requirements of the class. The content teacher must outline the deficiencies the student must correct in order to receive credit for the class. The credit recovery teacher acts as a monitor (resource teacher) to students as they work to complete the required coursework. Because students in the class may be working in a variety of subject areas, the supervising teacher may hold any valid Missouri teacher certificate except an early childhood certificate or non-degree vocational certificate.

Credit for Alternative Arrangements

Some students cannot schedule, within the regular school day, all the courses they wish to take and, therefore, take some courses under special arrangements such as, but not limited to, “Zero Hour,” evening community education programs, , or summer school programs. Other students are unable to succeed in conventional high school instruction and pursue secondary programs in alternative settings. Local boards of education may, by policy, recognize high school credit for such classes if (1) the instructors hold valid teaching certificates (2) the course content and performance standards have been reviewed and determined by the staff of the local high school to be equivalent to corresponding high school courses and (3) the instructional time is reasonably equated to the state standard for the Carnegie Unit for purposes of granting units of credit.

Elementary and Middle School/Junior High Students Who Complete High School Level Courses

Academically advanced students in elementary and middle school/junior high school grades may be completing coursework such as Algebra I or the first level of a world language. Please note that those courses are listed merely as examples of curricular opportunities which school LEAs are encouraged to provide for students and not necessarily the only such courses which may be appropriate instructional offerings. The appropriate units of credit should be recorded on students’ transcripts with the notation that those courses have been successfully completed prior to ninth grade and that the students began ninth grade with advanced standing. The advanced standing credit may be counted toward meeting the subject area requirements for graduation (determined locally as part of policies and procedures).

Policy Considerations for Students with Disabilities under IDEA

Each LEA must provide a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities until they are graduated with a regular diploma or attain the age of 21 years.

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, local school boards must establish policies and guidelines that ensure that students with disabilities have the opportunity to earn credits toward graduation in a nondiscriminatory manner within the spirit and intent of that requirement. Provisions include the following:

- Any specific graduation requirement may be waived for a student with disabilities if recommended by the student's IEP Committee.
- Students with disabilities will receive grades and have credit transcribed in the same manner as all other students when they complete the same courses as other students.
- Students with disabilities who complete regular courses modified as indicated in their IEPs will receive grades and have credit transcribed in the same manner as students who complete the courses without modification. The fact that the courses were modified may be noted on the transcript.
- Students with disabilities who meet the goals and objectives of their IEPs, as measured by the evaluation procedures and criteria specified in the IEPs, will have credit transcribed in accordance with the state definition of units of credit.
- Students with disabilities who meet state and local graduation credit requirements by taking and passing regular courses, taking and passing regular courses with modification, taking and passing modified classes, or successfully achieving IEP goals and objectives shall be graduated and receive regular high school diplomas.
- Students with disabilities who reach age 21 or otherwise terminate their education and who have met the school district's/charter's attendance requirements but who have not completed the requirements for graduation receive a certificate of attendance.

Policy Considerations for Students with Disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act Of 1973

LEAs must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ensure that graduation policies do not discriminate against students with disabilities protected under that act. Technical assistance may be obtained from the Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, which is located in Kansas City (816-268-0550).

Special Endorsements

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Certificate

The State Board of Education, in consultation with the CTE Advisory Council, has established minimum requirements for a CTE certificate that may be earned in addition to his or her high school graduation diploma for students entering high school in school year 2017-18 and thereafter.

The requirements are intended to provide students with the necessary technical and employability skills to be prepared for an entry-level career or additional training in a technical field. Students must meet all requirements in order to receive the CTE certificate. It is intended that schools support student efforts to accomplish these requirements through the development and monitoring of the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) of study based on a career pathway.

Students who wish to earn the CTE certificate must do the following:

1. Meet all requirements set forth in state and local board of education policies related to earning a high school diploma.
2. Complete at least three courses in a single career and technical education program of study. A course is defined locally as a series of lessons that equal one credit.
3. Maintain a minimum Grade Point Average of 3.0 on a 4.0 point scale in the CTE area of concentration as defined on the student's Individual Career and Academic Plan.
4. Pass an approved Technical Skill Assessment (TSA) and/or earn a DESE-approved Industry Recognized Credential or Certificate (IRC) aligned with the student's CTE area of concentration.
5. Complete a minimum of 50 hours of appropriate work-based learning experiences aligned with their CTE area of concentration. Work-based learning experiences may include Internships, Registered Apprenticeships, Cooperative Career Education programs, clinical settings, job shadowing, entrepreneurial experiences, school-based enterprises, structured business/industry field trips, service learning, or other opportunities that provide students with real-time, authentic work experiences. This 50 hour requirement would be consistent with the 50-hour unpaid tutoring or mentoring requirement of A+ schools.
6. Maintain at least a 95 percent attendance record overall for grades 9-12.
7. Demonstrate attainment of soft-skills/business skills. The requirement can be met in one of three ways:
 - active participation in a Career and Technical Student Organization such as FFA, FBLA, Skills USA, etc. during the junior or senior year;
 - score of proficient or advanced level on a school district/charter-developed or adopted soft-skill/ethics assessment during the junior and/or senior year; or
 - three or more letters of recommendation from at least three different business or industry employers or other individuals who have knowledge of the student and can assure that the student has a high level of soft-skill efficacy and is career ready. Letters may not be from a relative or student.
8. Achieve a score at or above the state standard on any DESE-approved measure(s) of college and career readiness, for example the ACT[®], SAT[®], ACT[®] WorkKeys, or the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery as determined in the most current MSIP performance standards.

Missouri Seal of Biliteracy

The Missouri Seal of Biliteracy (SOBL) and Distinguished Missouri Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to graduating high school students who have demonstrated achievement in English, a Language other than English (LOTE) and sociocultural competency in school districts/charters with a DESE-approved program. All Missouri students studying any of the world's languages in a DESE-approved program are potential Seal candidates. The SOBL has been recognized by various businesses, organizations, and institutions of higher education. A growing number of Missouri colleges and universities have committed to awarding credits to students earning the SOBL.

Adult High School Diploma Program and Honorary Diplomas

Adult High School Diploma Program

According to Section 171.091, RSMo, the school board of any school district/charter may provide for the education of residents of the school district who are over 20 years of age out of revenues derived by the LEA from sources other than those described in Section 3, Article 9, of the Missouri Constitution (Section 171.091, RSMo).

The adult high school diploma may be granted to adults under the following conditions:

1. Adult education programs must be under the direction of the regular administrative officers of the school and must have the authorization of the local board of education.
2. Adult education programs must be a part of the total school program of the district/charter.
3. Enrollment in the adult high school diploma program may be extended to persons 18 years of age or older who are not enrolled in a regular day program.
4. The adult high school program should approximate the basic distribution of courses required for graduation; however, the program should also encompass the more mature needs, interests, opportunities, and responsibilities of adults. Courses of study should reflect the intellectual, social, vocational, and emotional experience of adults. The adult high school program should offer a flexible course of studies based on schedules that best fit the educational needs, work schedules, and obligations of adults.
5. A unit of credit in an adult high school program shall be awarded for knowledge, skill, or competency equal to that normally required to earn credit in an equivalent course in a secondary school.
6. The awarding of credit encompasses the following:
 - Credits previously earned and documented by transcript at grade 9 or above may be used to meet adult high school diploma requirements.
 - Credit by course or examination - In addition to granting credit toward an adult high school diploma on the basis of length of time devoted to a course, a school may grant credit on a qualitative basis through the administration of an appropriate standardized subject matter test. These tests should cover the content ordinarily included in a regular high school course in the subject.
 - Credit earned while in military service may be counted toward the adult high school diploma for the following types of educational experiences:
 - United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) courses
 - USAFI subject examinations

- High school courses offered through USAFI by cooperating colleges and universities — credit upon transfer from the school offering the course
 - Marine Corps Institute courses
 - Coast Guard Institute courses
 - Basic or recruit training — accepted in lieu of required courses in physical education and health
 - Service school training — credit may be granted as recommended in “*A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*”
 - Schools may accept credit earned by a pupil through correspondence or extension study. Such credit shall be earned through the satisfactory completion of courses offered by an accredited college or university.
 - A maximum of six elective units may be granted for documented federally registered trade apprenticeship programs or other evidence of successful vocational learning or achievement.
 - One unit per semester and up to a total of six elective units may be awarded for regular employment in cooperative work study programs supervised or taught by vocationally certified teacher-coordinators.
7. Graduation requirements in the adult high school program shall be the same as set forth in the regular high school program except that no adult student may be graduated until at least two units have been earned in residence in the adult high school program.
 8. A diploma issued to an adult under the preceding conditions must be designated as an adult high school diploma.
 9. Adults who meet all state and local requirements for a regular high school diploma may be awarded this diploma.

Limited funds do not allow for the use of state adult education funds to finance an adult high school diploma program; however, local funds or tuition may be used. Each school district/charter planning to offer the adult high school diploma program should develop a board of education policy using these guidelines as minimum standards for the granting of an adult high school diploma.

For more information, contact:

Department of Social Services-Work Initiatives

3418 Knipp Drive, Suite D

Jefferson City, MO 65109

Phone: (573)522-2390

Honorary High School Diploma

DESE, in cooperation with the Missouri Veterans Commission, administers a program titled "Operation Recognition," which was established by state law (Section 160.360, RSMo). The purpose of this statewide program is to award honorary high school diplomas to civilian prisoners of war (POWs) and to any veteran who left high school prior to graduation to enter the United States Armed Forces. These individuals have been given this opportunity to receive an honorary high school diploma as a tribute to their military service in answering the call of their state and nation.

Applications may be obtained from DESE, Director of Veterans Education, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services, or the Missouri Veterans Commission. All applications are sent to the Commission for verification of time in service and confirmation that the veteran received an honorable discharge. Approved applications are then sent to DESE to verify their Missouri address and to identify the school district/charter where the diploma is to be sent.

DESE issues an honorary high school diploma on behalf of the State Board of Education to any eligible POW or veteran. These diplomas may be awarded posthumously. School districts/Charters and school administrators are asked to cooperate in the presentation of these diplomas.

Appendix A: Statutory Requirements Related to Course Work and Instruction

¹U.S. and Missouri Constitutions: American History: and Federal, State, and Local Government (Section 170.011, RSMo):

➤ **Schools Subject to Section 170.011, RSMo, as Amended**

All public and private schools serving grades 7 and above, and all public and private colleges other than privately operated trade schools must comply with section 170.011, RSMo.

➤ **Subjects Required to Be Taught**

Section 170.011, RSMo, requires all students to receive instruction on the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions, beginning no later than grade 7 and continuing through high school and college. This instruction may consist of units or entire courses but must be identifiable within each school's curriculum.

➤ **Graduation Requirements Contained in Section 170.011, RSMo**

To be eligible for graduation from high school, a student must satisfactorily pass a test or tests on the provisions and principles of the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions during grades 9-12. The design, content, and passing criteria for the test(s) are at the discretion of local school districts/charters.

Students must also receive and pass the equivalent of at least one semester of instruction in the institutions, branches, and functions of federal, state, and local government, and in the electoral processes sometime during grades 9-12.

➤ **Designation of Courses Containing Required Content**

Typically, content such as the functions of federal, state, and local government and the electoral processes fits within the general scope of courses such as government or civics. One or a combination of those classes should be considered first. Other courses may be designated, but the required content must be clearly identifiable. All courses must be clearly aligned with the MLS, and courses covering the required statutory content for U.S. history and government should be clearly identified.

➤ **Documentation of Compliance with Statutory Requirements**

LEAs should review their entire curriculum for grades 7-12 and identify the lessons, units, and courses in which students will receive the required instruction on the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions. A list of those lessons, units, and courses should be maintained in the district.

The tests to be used to comply with the testing provision, the pass/fail criteria, and other information such as the conditions under which they are administered and the number of times the tests can be retaken should be maintained on file.

The specific courses designated as containing the required instruction on governmental institutions, branches, and functions and on the electoral process should be clearly identified and curriculum guides maintained on file.

Students' permanent transcripts should clearly identify the courses taken and passed (or failed) which are designated as meeting the statutory requirement and the date(s) upon which the required tests have been taken (or retaken) and passed.

¹Missouri Civics Education Initiative (Section 170.345, RSMo):

Any student entering ninth grade after July 1, 2017, (public, charter, or private school) must, as a condition of graduation, pass an examination on the provisions and principles of American civics. As required by law, the required examination shall consist of 100 questions similar to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services examination administered to applicants for United States citizenship. This examination may be incorporated into any other assessment administered on the United States or Missouri Constitution or in American history or American institutions. Public, charter or private schools must adopt a policy to permit a waiver of this requirement, for students with disabilities. The student's IEP committee must recommend the waiver.

²CPR Instruction (Section 170.310, RSMo):

Graduates from any public district or charter school must have received 30 minutes of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction and training in the proper performance of the Heimlich maneuver or other first aid for choking. As required by law, instruction shall be included in the districts or charter school's existing health or physical education curriculum.

Instruction shall be based on a program established by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross or through a nationally recognized program based on the most current national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines.

³Computer Science (Section 170.0180, RSMo):

Districts/Charters may allow a student to fulfill one unit of academic credit for high school graduate with a district-approved computer science course for math, science or practical arts. A computer science class is defined as a course in which students study computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation, and impact on society. In order for a district to allow computer science to fulfill a math or science credit the student must have either taken or, be on track to take courses that require end-of-course examinations for math and science under the Missouri School Improvement Program. Districts/Charters electing to utilize mathematics must communicate that some institutions of higher education may require four units of academic credit in mathematics for college admission.

In addition, the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of each student who chooses to take a computer science course to fulfill a mathematics credit shall sign and submit to the school district a document containing a statement acknowledging that taking a computer science course to fulfill a math credit may have an adverse effect on college admissions.

Sample Computer Science Acknowledgement

To the parent/guardian of a (School Name) Student:

Missouri Statute, (170.018, RSMO) gives local education agencies (LEAs) the ability to create a policy allowing high school students to fulfill one unit of academic credit toward meeting the high school graduation requirements with an LEA-approved computer science course. This can be used for awarding credit for a math, science, or practical arts course. A computer science class, as defined in this law, is one in which students study computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation and impact on society.

As a condition of this law, LEAs must notify students and parents/guardians that some institutions of higher education may require four units of academic credit in mathematics for college admission. As such, the use of computer science as a mathematics credit may have an adverse effect on college admissions. Your child has expressed interest in using computer science for a mathematics credit toward meeting the high school graduation requirements. In signing this acknowledgment, as the parent/guardian and student, you acknowledge you are agreeing for the school to use computer science coursework for a mathematics credit despite the possible adverse effect on college admissions decisions.

As the custodial parent/guardian of a high school student enrolled in (name of school), my student and I acknowledge by signing this form that we understand that using a computer science credit to fulfill a mathematics credit may have an adverse effect on college admissions decisions.

⁴Mental Health Awareness Training (Section 170.014, RSMo):

Section 170.307, RSMo requires LEAs to provide mental health awareness training in Missouri schools. This training must be provided as part of the districts health and/or physical education curriculum.

Students graduating in the 2022-23 school year, and each year after must receive a minimum of two hours of mental health awareness training that aligns with DESE's Social-Emotional Learning Standards and the requirements of 5 CSR 20-200.275 Mental Health Awareness Training. [Mental health awareness training](#) must include the following domains:

- Defining Mental Health
- Identifying Strategies for Achieving and Maintaining Sound Mental Wellness
- Decreasing the Stigma of Mental Health Concerns
- Recognizing How to Connect to Services When Needed

For additional information, contact the School Counseling and Student Wellness section at (573)751-6875.

Appendix B: Coursework Guidance

Subject:	Coursework Descriptors and Interpretive Notes:	Courses that are not recognized as core curriculum by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Ed.*
English Language Arts	Coursework should enable students to master important knowledge and skills in composition to include standard grammar and usage; reading widely and deeply in both literary and information texts; writing routinely for a variety of tasks; purposes, and audiences; speaking and listening using multiple modalities including technology; language skills demonstrating control of the conventions of standard English; and vocabulary acquisition and use. Speech and debate classes may be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements. Mass media may be counted for English language arts credit if it is taught by a certificated English teacher.	Student publications, broadcast media, or theater
Mathematics	Coursework should ensure that students have strong problem-solving skills and a foundation in the mathematical concepts of number sense, geometry and spatial sense, measurement, data analysis, statistics, patterns and relationships, algebraic thinking, mathematical systems, number theory, and discrete topics. Computer science may be counted as a math credit, if the requirements outlined in Section 170.0180, RSMo are met.	Pre-algebra, computer math/programming, consumer/basic math, or business math/accounting
Social Studies	Coursework should enable students to master important knowledge and skills in the areas of civic knowledge and responsibility economic systems and functions, governmental functions, geography, world history, and American history. One of the three units must be in American history, and the equivalent of one-half unit of credit must be in government.	Family and human development courses or consumer education

Science	Science coursework should focus on the mastery of unifying concepts, principles, and laws common to all sciences. In addition, students should be able to apply the scientific practices and organize and solve scientific problems in a variety of situations. Recommended coursework focuses on the earth, life, and physical domains. Computer science may be counted as a science credit, if the requirements outlined in Section 170.0180 RSMo, are met.	General or consumer science
Fine Arts	Coursework may be in music, visual arts, media arts, dance, or theatre. Content should ensure that students master fundamental knowledge of subject, including history, aesthetics, and criticism, and are able to produce or perform at an introductory level in at least one area of the arts. Critical analysis, theory, or appreciation courses may count.	Speech, debate, or broadcast media
Physical Education	Missouri graduates must earn at least one unit of credit that provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for developing and maintaining a lifestyle that fosters regular participation in activities designed to meet personal health enhancement. Physical education is based on national standards and best practices and provides instruction related to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are the foundation for establishing a personalized lifestyle plan for career success, social and emotional well-being, and healthy, active living. Participation in interscholastic athletics, marching band, or other extra-curricular activities may not count for PE credit.	
Practical Arts	Missouri students must earn at least one unit of credit in coursework designed to provide life skills or to contribute to a student's career goals. Practical arts courses are those in which students learn to integrate academic knowledge and skills with career and technical knowledge and skills and apply them to authentic situations.	

Health Education	Missouri high school graduates must earn at least one-half unit of credit in a class consisting of planned learning experiences to acquire information and skills students need to make quality health decisions, provided by qualified and trained teachers. Health education helps students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral skills needed for making health-promoting decisions, achieving health literacy, adopting health enhancing behaviors, and promoting the health of others. Health education curricula and instruction align with national standards and best practices. Instruction is focused on alcohol and other drug use, healthy eating/nutrition, mental and emotional health, physical activity, personal health and well-being, safety and injury prevention, sexual health, tobacco use, and violence prevention. Emphasis is placed on practicing personal behaviors relating to chronic disease management, behaviors that provide protective factors to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality of youth, and behaviors associated with optimal health over the lifespan.	
Personal Finance	Students must complete at least one-half unit of credit that covers the competencies in the area of income, money management, spending and credit, and saving and investing. The .5 units of credit for personal finance may be earned in social studies, practical arts, or as an elective. If earned in social studies or practical arts, the required units of credit in that area are reduced by .5 (i.e., social studies from 3.0 to 2.5) and elective total is increased to 7.5.	
Electives	Elective coursework should build on a student's knowledge, skills, and competencies as it relates to a student's postsecondary goals. The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education strongly recommends a minimum of two foreign language credits. Computer science may be counted as an elective credit.	

*Requirements may vary for admission to Missouri Colleges/Universities. For example, some colleges may require foreign language for admission. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss admission requirements and placement practices with staff at the college or university in which they may be interested in enrolling.

Appendix C: Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education Recommended High School Core Curriculum

English Language Arts – 4 credits

Mathematics – 4 credits *

Social Studies – 3 credits

Science – 3 credits

Fine Arts – 1 credits

Additional Coursework – 3 credits **

Electives – 6 credits ***

* At least one mathematics course should be taken each year. It is particularly important that students take a mathematics course in grade 12.

**Missouri public high school students are required by the State Board of Education to complete credits in practical arts (1), physical education (1), health education (1/2), and personal finance (1/2).

*** All students should complete at least three total elective units in foreign language and/or other courses within high school core content areas. Two units of a single foreign language are strongly recommended.

The CBHE encourages governing boards at Missouri's higher education institutions to incorporate the 24-unit high school core curriculum into admissions processes for all first-time freshmen; however, admissions and placement decisions are ultimately made at the institutional level. Requirements vary for admission to Missouri Institutions. For example, foreign language study is required for admission to some institutions. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss admissions requirement and placement practices with staff at Missouri institutions in which they may be interested in enrolling.

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Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Office of the General Counsel, Coordinator – Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 6th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 651020480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; fax number 573-522-4883; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.