

Graduation Requirements for Students in Missouri Public Schools

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Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Table of Contents

Purpose	1
Background	1
Developing a Personal Plan of Study	2
High School Graduation Requirements Set by the State Board of Education	5
End-of Course Assessments.....	6
Variances to the State Minimum Graduation Requirements	6
Placement, Credit, and Variances for Students Who Transfer into a District.....	6
Students Transferring Between Districts with Significantly Different Schedules and Graduation Requirements	8
Credit by Correspondence.....	9
Virtual Education--Courses Delivered Through Electronic Media	9
Credit for Off-Campus Instruction, Other Than Dual Enrollment.....	9
Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment for High School and College Courses.....	9
Embedded Credit	10
Waiver of Required Academic Credit for Students Completing a Career and Technical Program of Studies	11
Substitution of Courses to Fulfill Academic Credit Requirements with a District- Approved Agriculture or Career and Technical Education Course	12
Suggested Points of Discussion Between LEAs and Students and Parents Regarding Additional Agriculture or Career and Technical Credits in Lieu of Required Core Credits.....	12
Competency-Based Methods to Award Credit or for Student Progression/Graduation	13
Proficiency-Based Credit	14
Alternative Performance-Based Graduation	15
Credit Recovery	16
Credit for Alternative Arrangements	16
Policy Considerations for Students with Disabilities Under IDEA	16
Policy Considerations for Students with Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	17
Elementary and Middle School/Junior High School Students Who Complete High- School-Level Courses	17
Restrictions on Use of Missouri's High School Equivalency Test	18
Number of Semesters of Attendance Required	18
Graduation by Adults Who Did Not Complete High School	18
Honorary High School Diploma	19
Appendix A: Specific Requirements and Interpretive Notes for Missouri High School Graduation Requirements	21
Appendix B: Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education High School Core Curriculum Requirement Course Descriptions	25
Appendix C: Required Instruction on U.S. and Missouri Constitutions, American History, and Federal, State and Local Government	28
Appendix D: Policy on Granting Credit for Off-Campus Programs Other Than Dual- Credit College Courses	31
Appendix E: Dual Credit, Dual Enrollment, and Dual Counting for State Aid of High School Juniors and Seniors in College Courses.....	42
Appendix F: Adult High School Diploma Program	45

PURPOSE

This publication is designed to help answer questions for principals, counselors, teachers, students and parents about high school graduation requirements and the options that individual students may have for meeting the requirements. (All major documents related to graduation requirements and standards appear as appendices.) School districts should review this handbook and make sure all staff members are aware of current state requirements and policies. Students should be informed about all requirements in time to properly develop their high school personal plan of study.

The handbook serves as a resource for educators as they blend the traditional graduation requirements with the performance-based expectations contained in the Missouri Learning Standards and Missouri Assessment Program.

BACKGROUND

In 2006, the State Board of Education increased minimum graduation requirements to 24 units of credit for the graduating class of 2010. This includes 4 units of English language arts and 3 units each of mathematics, science and social studies. A half-unit requirement in health education and a half unit in personal finance were also added.

Specific course sequences are not included in these requirements, but core classes should be closely aligned with the Missouri Show-Me Standards and Missouri Learning Standards, which establish learning expectations for each of the following instructional content areas:

- Agriculture and natural resources
- Business and information technology
- English language arts
- Fine arts
- Health and physical education
- Health services
- Human Services
- Industrial and engineering technology
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Local boards of education and school districts have the flexibility to exceed these requirements.

Where current graduation requirements state expectations in terms of passing grades and units of credit (commonly as a measure of time spent in class), the Missouri Learning Standards describe the knowledge and skills students will need to graduate college and career ready.

DEVELOPING A PERSONAL PLAN OF STUDY

Young people and their families make few decisions that affect their lives as profoundly as developing a personal plan of study around their high school experience. Developing an inadequate or inappropriate plan can severely restrict a student's educational and career options after graduation. Developing a rigorous and relevant plan of study, however, can open doors of opportunity that can lead to a lifetime of economic and social productivity. This important decision cannot be left to chance. Local boards of education must develop policies related to graduation that will ensure that every graduate can successfully transition into a postsecondary experience and become a productive citizen.

A fully implemented, comprehensive guidance and counseling program must be available to all students and their parents to provide assistance and support in developing rigorous and relevant personal plans of study, and provide timely access to the full range of information necessary to make effective decisions about those plans including, but not limited to:

- the Missouri Learning Standards,
- the Missouri Assessment Program resources,
- the state and local graduation requirements,
- comprehensive educational and career planning guides that outline information on the full range of learning opportunities for students which include:
 1. graduation requirements
 2. course descriptions
 3. programs of study offered at the high school centered around career paths/career clusters
 4. career and interested related student organizations
 5. age/grade appropriate work based learning experiences
 6. college credit options such as dual credit, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement and, International Baccalaureate
- information about individual academic strengths and weaknesses,

- information about individual interests, abilities and values,
- broad information about careers and high demand occupational fields, and
- entrance requirements for colleges, universities, technical schools, apprenticeships, the military and other post-secondary options.

Developing a rigorous and relevant personal plan of study is not an event that happens in one grade. It is a Pre K-12 process where students have the opportunity through the guidance and counseling program to engage in developmentally appropriate activities to enhance their academic, career, and personal/social development. At the elementary level, students start to become aware of the concept of work and begin to learn about the world of work within six broad career paths. Then, as students progress into the middle grades, schools should be providing career and education exploration activities that culminate in the development of an initial rigorous and relevant personal plan of study. This initial personal plan of study should be developed no later than the end of the 8th grade. With regular review and revision as necessary, the personal plan of study will guide students through high school and on to a meaningful postsecondary experience.

During the middle school years, students explore various career paths and career clusters through coursework and participation in age/grade appropriate career-related activities, such as, but not limited to job shadowing, clubs and organizations, and volunteer work that help them identify personal interests and skills relevant to their career aspirations.

By the end of the eighth grade, all students should have:

- sufficient information to have selected a tentative career path and/or cluster,
- sufficient knowledge of their academic strengths and weaknesses to guide planning for high school,
- sufficient knowledge of their interests, abilities, and values,
- a thorough knowledge of state and local graduation requirements, sufficient information about the courses and programs available in the high school the students will attend,
- sufficient knowledge and understanding of various postsecondary options including on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships, the military, technical schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities, and
- full awareness that plans developed in the 8th grade are flexible and subject to review at least annually and can be revised at any time.

Personal plans of study should reflect not only graduation requirements, but also movement toward a career focus revolving around school-based programs of study developed around career paths and/or clusters. It is imperative that school personnel, students and their parents continuously review these plans and modify them when all agree that changes are desirable. This planning and monitoring process should result in all students completing high school well prepared for their chosen postsecondary experience or entry into the workplace.

Federal and state regulations pertaining to the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) require that transition be addressed for all students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) beginning at age sixteen, or younger if appropriate. Requirements for these transition services are located in the Special Education State Plan (<http://dese.mo.gov/special-education/state-plan-special-education>).

It is expected that all students will transition into a postsecondary experience and they and their parents/guardians will be familiar with the academic and other potential requirements for successful entry into their experience of choice:

- Students who expect to attend four-year colleges or universities should consider following the course of studies necessary to meet the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) High School Core Curriculum Requirement for college admission (see Appendix B). The MDHE core-curriculum requirements are applicable for admission to all Missouri public four-year colleges and universities for all first-time, degree-seeking college students who graduate from high school.
- Students who are interested in career and technical education or in combining the last two years of high school with two years of community college should examine those programs of studies that will allow for the smooth transition to postsecondary education, the workplace, or both.
- Students attending high schools that are designated as “A+” should become familiar with the requirements for certain tuition waivers to community colleges or other postsecondary institutions.
- Students considering the military or registered apprenticeships should be familiar with both the academic and physical requirements of these experiences.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS SET BY STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The State Board of Education establishes **minimum** graduation requirements that are designed to ensure that graduates have taken courses in several different subject areas and that should result in students having mastered essential knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Local boards of education must adopt and disseminate written policies concerning graduation. The policies must clearly set forth all requirements and all allowable variations. Local graduation policies must include at least the state minimum requirements and may exceed the state minimums by requiring more total units of credit, requiring more units within a particular subject, or establishing additional requirements.

The state minimum high school graduation requirements comprise 24 units of credit that must be earned prior to graduation. The requirements are stated in terms of the number of units of credit that must be earned in each of several subject areas. To earn one unit of credit, a student must meet all the course requirements and earn a passing grade in a course that meets for at least 7,830 minutes a year. Half- and quarter-units of credit may be earned for courses meeting proportionately fewer minutes.

Following are the requirements by subject area and, in some cases, specific courses. Interpretative notations for each content area may be found in Appendix A.

Graduation Requirements

Personal Finance/ Elective		Personal Finance/ Social Studies		Personal Finance/ Practical Arts	
Subject Area	Units of Credit	Subject Area	Units of Credit	Subject Area	Units of Credit
English Language Arts	4.0	English Language Arts	4.0	English Language Arts	4.0
Social Studies	3.0	Social Studies* (Personal Finance .5)	3.0	Social Studies	3.0
Mathematics	3.0	Mathematics	3.0	Mathematics	3.0
Science	3.0	Science	3.0	Science	3.0
Fine Arts	1.0	Fine Arts	1.0	Fine Arts	1.0
Practical Arts	1.0	Practical Arts	1.0	Practical Arts* (Personal Finance .5)	1.0
Physical Education	1.0	Physical Education	1.0	Physical Education	1.0
Health Education	.5	Health Education	.5	Health Education	.5
Personal Finance	.5	Electives	7.5	Electives	7.5
Electives	7.0				
Total Credits	24.0	Total Credits	24.0	Total Credits	24.0

* Indicates that the personal finance course may count one half unit of credit towards meeting this requirement.

End-of-Course Assessments

The Missouri Assessment Program assesses students' progress toward mastery of the Missouri Learning Standards. A complete list of the required end-of-course (EOC) assessments is available online at <http://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/assessment/end-course>.

The State Board of Education expects districts to administer the required EOCs for all students prior to graduation with the following exceptions:

- Students whose IEP teams have determined that the MAP-A is the appropriate assessment. These students must take the appropriate assessments for English language arts grade 11, science grade 11, and mathematics grade 10.
- English Language Learners (ELL) who have been in the United States 12 months or fewer at the time of administration may be exempted from taking the English II or English I assessments.

Foreign exchange students are allowed, but are not required to take the assessments. This decision is made by the local district.

VARIANCES TO THE STATE MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The state minimum graduation requirements cannot be applied with absolute uniformity in every case. Students' individual situations sometimes require consideration of variances and alternatives. Following are descriptions of areas in which local boards of education may adopt policies that vary from the state standard minimum graduation requirements. If a local board chooses to allow these variances and alternatives, it must do so through officially adopted policies and through procedures that will ensure a fair and consistent application of its policies.

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

Local boards of education have authority to establish reasonable, nondiscriminatory policies for determining grade placement of transfer students and recognizing credit from their prior schools. The Department recommends the following:

Transferring From	Board Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another public high school in a school district accredited by the Missouri State Board of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept credit, pursuant to 171.171, RSMo, and grade placement as stated on transcript.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nonpublic high school or charter school in Missouri accredited by the AdvancED, Independent Schools Association of Central States (ISACS), or the University of Missouri Committee on Accredited Schools • Private agency placement by public school district for students with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript and equated to the Carnegie unit as defined in Missouri.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A public or nonpublic high school in another state accredited by that state’s department of education, AdvancED or its equivalent, or ISACS or its equivalent agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript and equated to the Carnegie Unit as defined in Missouri.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An unaccredited public or nonpublic high school in Missouri or another state. • A charter public high school that is not accredited by the AdvancED or its equivalent • Home school • Private agency placement by parents/guardians of students with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reported courses and any available achievement test or other performance data. • Interview student and parents. • 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 167.031, RSMo.

Sometimes transfer students cannot reasonably meet all state and local graduation requirements within the usual four years of attendance. If a transfer student from a Missouri high school is placed tenth grade or above, local policy may permit the student to graduate upon satisfactory completion of a program of studies that would have met the graduation requirements at the school formerly attended. Such students would have to meet the requirements in Section 170.011, RSMo (See Appendix C for a complete discussion of the requirements of Section 170.011).

Transfer students from another state or country or a home school may be graduated upon successful completion of an individualized program of studies which school officials, parents 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.

Students Transferring Between Districts with Significantly Different Schedules and Graduation Requirements

To meet the minimum graduation requirements set by the State Board of Education, a student must earn 24 units of credit. To earn one unit of credit, a student must satisfy all course requirements and earn a passing grade in a course that meets for at least 7,830 minutes a year (or proportionately fewer minutes for half- and quarter-units of credit).

Some school districts offer schedules and graduation requirements that differ significantly from more traditional programs. In these cases, students may spend considerably less time in a given class than the generally required 7,830 minutes, but they are also required to attend more classes in a day. In such programs, students may be issued one unit of credit per course, but they are also usually required to earn 40 or so units in order to graduate.

When students transfer between school districts with significantly different schedule programs and graduation requirements, questions arise about how many units of credits should be issued to students by the receiving school districts (in order to be equitable to students as well as to maintain district graduation requirements). To recognize and accommodate these differences, school districts 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 district, and ensure that students will meet the graduation standards of the receiving district.

Credit by Correspondence

Local policy may recognize units of credit from correspondence schools toward meeting the state and local graduation requirements. To be eligible for recognition, correspondence credit must be from an accredited institution.

Virtual Education

State law enacted in 2006 (Section 161.670, RSMo) required the State Board of Education to establish a virtual public school. This legislation resulted in development of Missouri's Virtual Instructional Program (MoVIP), for K-12 students.

Courses offered by MoVIP use the same course codes and names provided through the state Core Data system. Local school districts are required to accept courses offered through MoVIP as units of credit toward meeting state and local graduation requirements.

Upon successful MoVIP course completion, the Department will report to the Missouri district of residence a percentage reflecting the quality of work/content satisfactorily completed. Successful completion of these courses results in MoVIP credit which also is recognized as meeting state and local requirements. Local districts may not limit the number of credits earned through MoVIP.

MoVIP, like other online vendors, is a tuition-based program. For more information about MoVIP please visit www.movip.org.

Local policy may also recognize units of credit from other sources delivered primarily through electronic media. Please refer to the Core Data and Missouri Student Information System Reference Manual for delivery system information. This manual is available online at <http://dese.mo.gov/data-system-management/core-datamosis>.

Credit for Off-Campus Instruction, Other Than Dual Enrollment

Under some circumstances, students may earn high school credit for off-campus learning experiences, and through the School Flex Program, work-based and/or classroom instructional activities. (See Appendix D for a description of the conditions and limitations.)

Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment for High School and College Courses

Students may earn both high school and college credit for coursework under certain circumstances. Generally, such arrangements fall into two types: (1) dual credit, in which

advanced high school courses are taught on the high school campus by teachers designated as instructors by a college or university; and (2) dual enrollment, in which high school students leave the high school campus and attend regular college classes for part of the school day. (See Appendix E for a description of the conditions and limitations.)

Embedded Credit

School districts may choose to embed competencies from one subject into another class, or sequence of classes, with the potential for awarded credit to students for both the embedded content and the other subject. School districts need to approach the issue of embedded credit with caution. The embedded subject and the other subject should be closely linked. For example, embedding mathematics credit in a building trades class seems a natural fit. Embedding personal finance content into a family and consumer science class is an appropriate link.

While those examples focus on the embedding of core academic or state-required content into career-technical education (CTE) courses/programs, districts need not be limited to that scope.

Because this involves an alternative method for granting credit, school districts choosing to offer embedded credit must notify DESE. The notification must include assurances that the embedded content is closely aligned to the subject in which that content will be taught. The embedded content must also align closely to the Missouri Learning Standards and be rigorous in expectations. The district assurances must also include a plan for determining student competency for the embedded credit as well the acceptable level of student mastery for the awarding of credit.

Embedded credit for a course which requires a Missouri Assessment Program mandatory end-of-course exam is subject to all conditions and requirements for administration of that assessment. Area Career Centers should collaborate with their sending school districts as core or other curriculum is embedded into CTE classes. That collaboration must involve administrators and classroom teachers of the appropriate or impacted content areas, including, as necessary, the highly-qualified and properly certificated teacher of record for the awarding of the credit in each student's district of residence. The collaboration should be ongoing, including an annual process review by all affected teachers and districts. This process review will include the development of the plan to determine student competency.

Districts may wish to consult the Embedded Credit Toolkit for detailed processes for embedding credit in career education classes. (<http://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/career-ed-model-curriculum/administration-school-reform/embedded-credit-0>)

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

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 studies. The three-unit career and technical 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.

There are two exceptions to waiving required academic credit for students who have completed a CTE program of studies:

- Previous legislation passed by the General Assembly (170.011, RSMo) states that school districts 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 the government of the state of Missouri, including local governments and of the government of the United States, and the electoral process. A school district may elect to 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 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 in the electoral process.
- Students must take the end-of-course exam required for any waived course.

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

Legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2014 (170.017 RSMo) provides an opportunity for students to substitute certain courses with agriculture or career and technical education courses. Beginning July 1, 2015, a student may fulfill one unit of academic credit with a district-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 program of study.

Previously passed legislation also applies to the substitution of certain courses with agriculture or career and technical education courses. School districts maintaining a high school shall require each pupil who receives a high school diploma or certificate of graduation after January 1, 1994, to satisfactorily complete a course of study of at least one semester in length, that covers the institutions, branches and functions of the government of the state of Missouri, including local governments and of the government of the United States, and the electoral process (170.011 RSMo).

Suggested Points of Discussion Between LEAs and Students and Parents Regarding Additional Agriculture or Career and Technical Credits in Lieu of Required Core Credits

- The student's personal plan of study 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 institutional admissions requirements
- The number of units of credit a student must earn to graduate from high school

Competency-Based Methods to Award Credit or for Student Progression/Graduation

The traditional method of awarding credit in Missouri high schools has been through use of the time-anchored Carnegie-based unit which establishes 7,830 minutes of student “seat time” during a school year for one unit of credit.

Districts 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 minimally equivalent to that which would be gained in a more traditional class setting.

Multiple avenues may be available for documenting the validity of awarded credit, student progression, and/or graduation from high school. Districts are cautioned to carefully examine alternative approaches before beginning implementation of a system to award competency-based credit to identify issues which could become problems for either the district or students.

	Traditional/Carnegie Units	Proficiency-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	Notify	Permission
Seat Time Requirement	7,830 minutes per year	Not applicable	Not applicable
Credit Basis	Time, course requirements, passing grade	Demonstration of competency mastery	Demonstration of standards mastery
Affect on State Aid	None	Potential	Potential

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 may have an adverse effect on student eligibility for future participation in collegiate athletics.

Proficiency-Based Credit

School districts 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-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.

A proficiency-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 competency-based credit system include:

- Students advance upon demonstrated mastery of content
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, 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

A district that offers credits based on a demonstration of proficiency must have adequate policies and procedures in place to justify the award of credit, and which ensures the integrity of awarding of credit is readily defensible.

When notifying the Department of the intent to award proficiency-based credit, the district must include a description of what will be determined to be an acceptable level of student mastery and the means which will be used to determine that level of competency. If proficiency-based credit is awarded for a course which has a state-required end-of-course assessment (EOC), that exam must be factored into the competency determination.

If the awarding of a proficiency-based credit will be accompanied with the designation of assigned grade, the district must include 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.

Districts that award proficiency-based credit must include assurances in the State notification that the teacher of record will be highly-qualified, certificated in the content area in which the credit is being offered based upon proficiency. Furthermore, the plan must detail the teacher of record’s role in the development of the instructional plan and assessment of student competency.

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 the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to waive the standard graduation requirements for school districts 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 district 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 district.

An alternative, performance-based graduation or progression toward graduation is subject to Department approval.

The Missouri Learning Standards describe the knowledge and skills students need to graduate college and career ready 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 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 at <http://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/curriculum/missouri-learning-standards>.

Districts interested in the use of this alternative should contact the Office of Quality Schools, School Improvement Unit, (573) 751-4104.

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. Since students in the class may be working in a variety of subject areas, the supervising teacher may hold any valid Missouri teacher certificate except a substitute certificate, 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 “Zero Hour,” evening community education programs, centers for at-risk youth, 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.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER IDEA

Each school district 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 (IDEA), 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:

- 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 district'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

School districts 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 (OCR), which is located in Kansas City (816-268-0550).

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

districts 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.

Districts can find specific guidance on the administration of the Algebra I EOC for 8th grade students online at http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/MSIP5_Algebra_1_FAQ_0.pdf.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF MISSOURI'S HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY TEST

School districts may not adopt policies or practices under which students who do not meet the state or local minimum graduation requirements are granted a high school diploma by taking Missouri's High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), except through the Missouri Option Program.

NUMBER OF SEMESTERS OF ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

Traditionally, a high school education has consisted of four years (eight semesters) of attendance. Some students, however, may complete graduation requirements early, and they 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, 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, 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.

GRADUATION BY ADULTS WHO DID NOT COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL

Although adults who did not complete high school may earn a Certificate of High School Equivalence by passing the Missouri's High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), many adults wish to obtain a standard high school diploma. The Certificate of High School Equivalence is

issued by the State Board of Education and may not be exchanged for a high school diploma, except for certain at-risk students who are part of the Missouri Option Program. Students enrolled in the Missouri Option Program are required to demonstrate and document the attainment of the major academic skills and knowledge associated with a high school program of study. The HiSET Score Report is one of the academic components required for the awarding of a high school diploma by the local district, and as such, is to be placed in the student's permanent record. In addition, the HiSET scores may not be used for the purpose of granting credit toward a standard high school diploma. Students requesting examination scores from past General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or HiSET assessments should contact the Adult Learning Unit, Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services at (573) 751-3504.

Local boards of education may establish adult high school diploma programs through which adults may obtain standard high school diplomas by meeting the minimum graduation requirements of the district. (See Appendix H for a description of the conditions and limitations.) All credit earned by the adults during high school and since leaving school should be collected and validated to determine deficiencies, and all deficiencies should be met through coursework meeting current standards for granting credit.

HONORARY HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in cooperation with the Missouri Veterans Commission, administers a program entitled "Operation Recognition," which was established by state law. (See Appendix F.) 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 the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 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 the Department to verify their Missouri address and to identify the school district where the diploma is to be sent. The Department 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 and school administrators are asked to cooperate in the presentation of these diplomas.

APPENDIX A:

Specific Requirements and Interpretive Notes for Missouri High School Graduation Requirements

English Language Arts

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least four units to enable students to master important knowledge and skills in standard grammar and usage; composition; reading widely and deeply in both literary and informational 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.

Interpretative Notes: Courses in world languages (including American Sign Language, ASL), school publications, yearbook, media, photography, and radio and television may not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements. Speech and debate courses are counted for English language arts credit. Scholastic journalism (mass media) may be counted for language arts credit, but only if it is taught by a certificated English teacher.

Mathematics

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least three units selected to 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.

Interpretative Notes: Courses commonly named “computer math,” the content of which is computer literacy, introductory computer programming, and nominal mathematics applications on computers may not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements in mathematics.

Science

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least three units selected to ensure that students have mastered the unifying concepts, principles and laws common to all the sciences;

can competently apply the scientific practices; and can organize and solve scientific problems in consumer, career and technical environments.

Social Studies

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least three units selected to 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 American history, and the equivalent of one-half unit must be in government.

Interpretative Notes: See Appendix C

Fine Arts

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least one unit, which must be from the following: music, visual arts, dance, or theatre. The content ensures that students master fundamental knowledge of the subject, including history, aesthetics, and criticism, and are able to produce or perform at an introductory level in at least one area of fine arts.

Interpretative Notes: Only music, visual arts, dance, or theatre may be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements. World languages (including ASL), literature, literature appreciation, speech, debate, radio and television, and stagecraft may not be counted. To earn fine arts credit for marching band or drum corps, students must also play musical instruments and participate during times of concert or performing activities.

Practical Arts

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least one unit designed to provide life skills or to contribute to the student's career goals.

Interpretative Notes: Practical arts courses are those in which students learn to integrate academic knowledge and skills with pre-vocational and career technical knowledge and skills, and to apply them in authentic situations. Practical arts courses include courses of general interest such as computer applications, school

publications, and technology education, as well as career technical education courses.

Physical Education

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least one unit that provides students with knowledge and skills necessary for developing and maintaining a lifestyle that fosters physical fitness, participation in recreational activities, and general concern for personal well-being.

Interpretative Notes: Physical education programs must focus on the knowledge and skills needed for the development of cardio respiratory endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and body composition; and stress the importance of physical activity as an important component of lifetime health and wellness. Courses devoted to conditioning for interscholastic sports or practicing for interscholastic sports may not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirement. Courses offered for elective credit may include exercise or learning about team or individual sports.

Health

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least one-half unit that addresses structures of, functions of, and relationships among human body systems; principles and practices of physical and mental health (such as personal health habits, nutrition, stress management); diseases and methods for prevention, treatment and control; principles of movement and physical fitness; methods used to assess health, reduce risk factors, and avoid high risk behaviors (such as violence, tobacco, alcohol and other drug use); consumer health issues (such as the effects of mass media and technologies on safety and health); and, responses to emergency situations.

Personal Finance

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least one-half unit that addresses the Missouri competencies in the areas of income, money management, spending and credit, and saving and investing. It is recommended that the Personal Finance course be completed after the ninth grade because of the specific content and its relevance for persons reaching the age at which they must begin to assume financial responsibilities. However, grade level

designations are not included in the Rule, so the grade level at which Personal Finance may be taught is ultimately an individual school district's decision. Although the Graduation Handbook does refer to specific grade levels at which the course is to be offered, that document is meant for technical assistance only.

Electives

Missouri high school graduates must earn at least seven units selected to ensure mastery of important basic academic knowledge, skills and competencies which may otherwise not have been mastered; to extend and enhance mastery of advanced academic skills; to prepare students with employment skills; and, for students not pursuing postsecondary education, to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to prepare for employment in current and emerging fields.

Interpretative Notes: Every elective should be chosen because the knowledge and skills taught in the course will strengthen a student's career-education preparation and increase the student's probability of succeeding in postsecondary education. Students should not be permitted to select electives randomly or simply to accumulate the required number of units of credit.

APPENDIX B:

Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education High School Core Curriculum Requirement Course Descriptions (Approved 10-13-94, Revised 7-14-06)

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) has established a recommended 24-unit high school core curriculum guideline for students who plan to enroll in a Missouri college or university. 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. Students are expected to demonstrate competency in high school core content. Failure to do so may result in placement in developmental/remedial coursework at additional time and expense to the student.

The CBHE encourages governing boards at Missouri's postsecondary 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, world language study is required for admission to some institutions. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss admissions requirements and placement practices with staff at Missouri institutions in which they may be interested in enrolling.

For students graduating from high school having earned the minimum requirement of 24 credits, the CBHE recommends a core curriculum which includes units by content area as follows:

CBHE-Recommended High School Core Curriculum

English Language Arts - 4 units

Social Studies - 3 units

Mathematics - 3 units

Science - 3 units

Fine Arts - 1 unit

Additional Coursework - 3 units *

Electives - 7 units **

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

** All students should complete at least 3 elective units total in world language and/or other courses within high school core content areas defined below. Two units of a single world language are strongly recommended.

For each high school core content area, descriptions follow that provide illustrations of coursework acceptable and unacceptable for the high school core curriculum.

English Language Arts

- English language arts coursework (4 units) which emphasizes reading both literary and informational texts, writing across genres, speaking and listening skills. Speech and debate courses may be included.
- Coursework not acceptable for the high school core curriculum emphasizes student publications, broadcast media, or theatre.

Social Studies

- Social studies coursework (3 units) emphasizes American history, Missouri government and Missouri history as required by state statute, geography/world civilizations, and other content of comparable or greater rigor.
- Coursework not acceptable for the high school core curriculum emphasizes family/human development or consumer education.

Mathematics

- Mathematics coursework (3 units) emphasizes algebra and other content of comparable or greater rigor. Students who complete algebra prior to the freshman year would be expected to complete 3 additional units in grades 9-12.
- Coursework not acceptable for the high school core curriculum emphasizes pre-algebra, computer math/programming, consumer/basic math, or business math/accounting.

Science

- Science coursework (3 units) emphasizes biology, chemistry, and other content of comparable or greater rigor. Science coursework should include at least one laboratory course.
- Coursework not acceptable for the high school core curriculum emphasizes general or consumer science.

Fine Arts

- Fine arts coursework (1 unit) emphasizes visual arts, instrumental or vocal music, dance, theatre, or other content of comparable or greater rigor. Critical analysis, theory, or "appreciation" courses may be included.
- Coursework not acceptable for the high school core curriculum emphasizes speech, debate, or broadcast media.

Specified Core Electives

Three units selected from world language (two units of one world language are strongly recommended) and/or combinations from two or more of the following course areas: English language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, visual and performing arts. A computer science course with a prerequisite of at least Algebra I is permissible as a mathematics elective. State and/or international history courses are permissible as social studies electives.

Related Considerations

Dual-Credit Courses — Courses taken in high school for both high school and college credit may be counted toward satisfying the core curriculum requirements.

Middle/Junior High School Courses — Courses taken by middle/junior high school students in mathematics and world language may be counted as satisfying the high school core curriculum requirement if the content is equivalent to high school courses (e.g., World Language I and Algebra I) and if subsequent courses in the subject are shown on the high school transcript (e.g., World Language II and Algebra II).

These courses are listed merely as examples of curricular opportunities which may be provided to middle grade/junior high students but taught at a level equivalent to high school content, and are exclusively the only such examples which may exist.

APPENDIX C:

Required Instruction on U.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 grade 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.

Students must also receive 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. The required content may be taught in an entirely new course of at least a semester in length or may comprise time equivalent to at least a semester within an existing course or courses.

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 at some time(s) during grades 7-12. The design, content and passing criteria for the test(s) are at the discretion of local school districts.

Students must also pass the course or courses designated as containing the required instruction in the institutions, branches and functions of federal, state and local government and in the electoral processes.

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 citizenship or civics, government, and current affairs or contemporary issues. One or a combination of those classes

should be considered first. Other courses may be designated, but the required content must be clearly identifiable.

School districts may not designate courses as meeting this requirement that are required to be taken for graduation. For example, districts may not designate American history as the only course in which the required content is taught.

To devote an entire semester of a one-unit American history course to governmental functions and the electoral process would reduce the time available for American history instruction to only one semester. Such a course could not be counted as a full unit toward meeting the Missouri School Improvement Program curriculum standards or for any other program or purpose requiring a full unit of American history.

Grade Levels at Which Studies of Governmental Functions and the Electoral Process Must Be Provided

The statute, as amended, specifies that courses designated as including instruction in governmental function and the electoral process must be taken and passed during grades 9-12. Instruction on the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions must, however, begin by grade 7 and continue.

Notification of Students and Parents

Notification of parents and students of these requirements is especially important since all students must take and pass the test(s) on the provisions and principles of the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions; and, all students must, during grades 9-12, take and pass the course or courses designated as containing the required instruction on governmental functions and the electoral processes.

It is essential that parents and students be notified before enrolling for ninth grade, and periodically thereafter, of the requirements, the specific courses designated as meeting the requirements, and their individual status with respect to meeting the requirements. No students or their parents should be surprised to learn too late that the requirements for graduation have not been met. All staff members who engage in academic counseling should actively help keep students and their parents informed.

Documentation of Compliance with Statutory Requirements

Districts 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 available for review.

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 for review.

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 for review.

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.

APPENDIX D:

Policy on Granting Credit for Off-Campus Programs Other Than Dual-Enrollment College Courses

Many students who are juniors and seniors in high school can benefit substantially from school-directed and supervised paid or unpaid learning experiences that cannot be readily provided within a regular classroom setting – experiences that can be made available through assignment to off-campus locations under cooperative arrangements with business and industry or other institutions. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recognizes and will approve the four types of off-campus programs described below. A school district may offer other types of off-campus programs without Department approval, but the students enrolled in them may not be counted in membership and attendance for state aid purposes with the exception of the School Flex Program, and Service Learning activities aligned to related classroom instruction, and the students may not be granted high school credit for the off-campus experience (Sections 161.092 and 161.122, RSMo).

School districts may enroll eligible students into activities identified for the School Flex Program by state statute (Section 160.539, RSMo) without Department approval and may count those students' participation in program activities for state aid purposes.

Off-campus activity in the form of work-based learning or employment must adhere to the Fair Labor Standards Act (<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>).

Types of Off-Campus Programs Requiring State Approval

1. **Academic Programs** involve students who are enrolled in advanced academic or fine arts classes and have, as their goals, the acquisition of specialized knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge to situations which cannot be replicated in a school classroom.

Related 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.

Credit: 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.

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: 225 minutes 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 for their off-campus experience as part of academic programs. The employment relationship must be established for off-campus experience as part of cooperative career education programs.

Example: A student enrolled in advanced chemistry 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.

Core Data Course Code: 996001-Academic Programs, Off-Campus

2. **Career Exploration Programs** involve 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 that they may develop their own occupational objectives from direct experience.

Related Instruction: Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction as part of the regular high school program. The related instruction will provide students with knowledge of occupational clusters, requisite training and experience 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.

Credit: Elective credit. Credit is awarded as 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 of credit 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: 225 minutes 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 for their off-campus experience as part of their career exploration programs. The employment relationship must be established for off-campus experience as part of cooperative career education programs.

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 reports related to the occupational area and receives credit in the career-exploration class.

Core Data Course Code: 997001-Career Exploration Programs, Off-Campus

3. **Cooperative Career Education Programs** involve students enrolled in a Department approved cooperative career education. The primary goal is authentic assessment of the application of academic and occupation skills. Programs must meet the common program standards established and approved by the Office of College and Career Readiness, Career Education Unit. The program incorporates real world work experience and learning into the student's academic experience.

Related Instruction: Students must be enrolled in a Department 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 the approved program standards.

Credit: 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 certificated in the career education program area and who has completed a course in Coordination of Cooperative Education.

Recommended Supervision Time: 225 minutes per week for each 12-15 participating students. The teacher contracts should include an additional week beyond regular teacher contracts for each 12 to 15 students so that counseling, placement, scheduling and training station development can be conducted.

Written Plans: There must be a written instructional plan which 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 must include occupationally specific skills as well as attitudinal criteria.

Student Pay: Students may or may not receive pay. The employment relationship must be established for off-campus experience as part of cooperative career education programs.

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.

Core Data Course Code(s): 016780-Supervised Agricultural Experience, Cooperative Education; 034380-Supervised Business Employment; 040080-Supervised Marketing

Employment; 040081-Supervised COE Employment; 096839-Family and Consumer Sciences Occupations, Cooperative Education; 170090-Supervised CIE Employment

4. **Work Experience for Students with Disabilities** consists of the Cooperative Work Experience Program and Sheltered Workshop Programs.

The Cooperative Work Experience Program (COOP) is a partnership with local businesses to provide eligible students learning opportunities and hands-on experience as they transition into the workforce. This program links high school Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) with the student's career interests, and local labor market needs.

Participation in COOP is limited to students who are:

- Receiving services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Determined eligible for services as clients of the Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Unit (VR)
- Demonstrating the skills and abilities to be able to work independently, and
- Covered by IEPs which reflect the need for work experience in a competitive setting

The IEP and the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) must set forth specific measurable objectives to be achieved by the youth in this program, and describe a coordinated plan for evaluating their performance.

Students may be approved to participate in COOP through one of the following options:

- A release from school at least one hour per day (part of their course schedule) to work in a competitive setting, where job skills learned will be related to the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS); and they will receive high school credit for the number of hours they work, as identified through the goals and objectives listed in their IEP and IPE [please note student must be enrolled in high school and “related vocational and academic instruction in the classroom” to be awarded COOP credit], **OR**
- Learning and applying job skills in a competitive employment setting before school, after school, or during the summer months, as identified through the goals and objectives listed in their IEP and IPE.

Sheltered Workshop Programs for students with disabilities are limited to students with disabilities whose IEP team has determined that a student should obtain skills assessment, training, and/or work experience at a local sheltered workshop.

The student should be certified for sheltered employment in the following ways:

- Referral to the Office of Adult learning and Rehabilitation Services (Vocational Rehabilitation) or Rehabilitation Services for the Blind for certification.
- Referral to the sheltered workshop for certification by an Extended Employment Certification Specialist.

Related Instruction: Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction in the regular public agency program (includes high school and State Board operated programs) before credit can be awarded for the off-campus experience. This restriction does not apply to students with disabilities whose IEPs indicate full-time work experience.

Credit: Elective credit. Credit is awarded as part of the related classroom instruction. One unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly of off-campus experience, or two units of credit for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit, or twice the number of units of credit granted for related instruction whichever is less may be awarded for off-campus experience during the school year.

Note: A student with a disability whose IEP indicates a need for additional supervised work experience to make the transition from school to the world of work may earn up to four units of credit during the school year for off-campus work experience. The additional two units of credit would be based on increments of 20 to 30 hours weekly of off-campus work experience.

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 work experience coordinator (WEC). The work experience coordinator 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 the IPE must set forth specific measurable objectives to be achieved by the student in this program, and describe a coordinated plan for evaluating their 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.
- Students placed in sheltered workshops may or may not be paid during the assessment phase, depending on type of work in which they are involved. The workshop will contract with the school district for assessment costs on an individual basis. Students in training or employed by the sheltered workshop must be paid commensurate wages.

Off-Campus Programs Not Requiring State Approval

1. **The School Flex Program** involves students enrolled in the 11th or 12th grades whose pursuit of timely graduation would benefit from enrollment in the program as determined by their high school principal, parents or guardians.

In order to remain eligible for the School Flex Program the student must:

- Attend school for at least two instructional hours per day within the district of residence
- Pursue timely graduation
- Provide evidence of enrollment and attendance at a college or technical school or provide evidence of employment that is aligned with the student's "career academic plan", which should developed in conjunction with the school district and meet Department criteria for a Personal Plan of Study
- Pursue regular requirements for a high school diploma
- Maintain a 95 percent attendance rate and;
- Avoid suspension or expulsion while in the program

School Flex participants shall be considered full-time students of the school district and shall be counted in the school's average daily attendance for state aid purposes.

Guidelines for students participating in off-campus and dual enrollment programs are outlined in elsewhere in this appendix and in Appendix E. These guidelines may be helpful to schools in developing tenable local policies for School Flex Program administration and practices.

A written career academic plan meeting department criteria for a Personal Plan of Study must be in place for each participating student, setting forth specific graduation and career objectives. Students may or may not receive pay for employment that is aligned with their personal plans.

Credit: The awarding of credit for non-class activity related to the School Flex Program is not addressed in creating legislation, and therefore dependent upon district policy. It is recommended that local policy justifying the awarding of credit be readily defensible, and may benefit from a review of guidelines outlined elsewhere in this appendix addressing the awarding of credit for other off-campus activity.

Teacher Qualifications: Program activity outside of standard classroom activity may feature students working in a variety of subject areas the supervising teacher may hold any valid Missouri teacher certificate except a substitute certificate or an early childhood certificate.

Enrollment Limitation: 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.

Recommended Supervision Time: 225 minutes per week for each group of 28 participating students.

Written Plans: There must be a written instructional plan which 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 must include occupationally specific skills as well as attitudinal criteria.

Student Pay: Students may or may not receive pay. The employment relationship must be established for off-campus experience as part of the School Flex Program.

Records: Enrollment and attendance records for off-campus or employment must be maintained.

Core Data Course Code: 996002 - Off-Campus, School Flex Program.

2. **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.

Related 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 enables the transference of skills and content to new applications.

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; 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.

Additional guidance pertaining to service learning is available online at <http://dese.mo.gov/early-extended-learning/service-learning>.

Insurance and Liability for Students in Off-Campus Programs

Students who are receiving pay for work performed in an off-campus program will generally 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, will not be covered by the sponsors' workers' compensation insurance and general liability insurance. Therefore, any school district 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 school district.

Since there is danger of unpaid students replacing paid employees, the school district and the cooperating sponsor should exercise extreme diligence in complying with applicable state and federal labor laws and regulations.

Attendance Eligible for State Financial Aid

All off-campus programs detailed in this appendix must be well-planned and adequately supervised by school personnel to ensure the school district's eligibility for state and federal funds and to justify the awarding of high school credit to participating students. 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 public school district 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.)

- School districts shall not count students in attendance for any type of off-campus instruction except Department-approved programs, and the School Flex Program, all of which are adequately supervised by the district's certificated teachers to the extent the students can be considered "under the guidance and direction of teachers" and for which the school district is granting high school credit. School districts have responsibility for students during the time they are counted for school membership and attendance for state-aid purposes.

Program Authorization

Written proposals for off-campus programs must be approved annually by the appropriate office within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 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 programs, and career exploration programs should be submitted to the Coordinator, School Improvement. Proposals for cooperative career education programs should be submitted to the Coordinator, Career Education. Proposals for work-experience programs for special education students should be submitted to the Coordinator, Special Education Services.

APPENDIX E:

Dual Credit, Dual Enrollment, and Dual Counting for State Aid of High School Juniors and Seniors in College Courses

Section 167.223, RSMo, authorizes high school students to enroll in courses at colleges or universities, receive both high school and college credit, and be counted in attendance at the high school for state aid purposes under certain circumstances.

Dual Credit

Dual credit courses are postsecondary courses that are taught on the high school campus. These courses are taught by qualified instructors as defined by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education and are of the same quality and rigor as all other college courses available to regular college students. Refer to online guidance from the Missouri Department of Higher Education, at <http://www.dhe.mo.gov/files/policies/dualcreditpolicy.pdf>, for additional guidelines for dual credit.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment is defined as high school students taking postsecondary classes and who are physically present on the postsecondary education campus for those classes.

Articulation Agreements vs. Dual Credit

Articulation agreements are written contracts between a secondary school and a postsecondary institution in which specified high school courses are aligned with corresponding courses at the postsecondary institution. Upon completion of the high school course and the subsequent enrollment of students at the postsecondary institution, students will be awarded college credit as specified within the agreement.

Dual credit courses are courses taught on the high school campus in which the student is concurrently earning both high school and college credit. The student is awarded college credit immediately upon completing the course and the course is placed on the transcript of the college offering the course. Students do not have to enroll in that college after graduation to receive the credit.

Dual Enrollment for State Aid Purposes

The following guidelines establish the conditions under which high school students may be dually enrolled and counted in attendance at the high school for state aid purposes.

1. The students must be enrolled in high school, taking at least one secondary education class offered by the district of residence, and must be taking postsecondary courses at Missouri public community colleges or public or private four-year colleges or universities. In addition, there must be an agreement between the school district and each college or university attended by the high school students. This agreement must outline how class attendance will be taken and average daily attendance (ADA) reported to the high school.

“Postsecondary” in this context means advanced academic and career education courses, the content of which is clearly at the collegiate level. The courses should be the types of courses available to regular college students.

2. 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 districts to receive state aid on days when the college classes do not meet the student must:
 - Come to the high school and engage in homework or independent study related to their high school or college courses, under the general supervision of high school administrators, teachers, counselors or librarians; or
 - Be engaged in similar activities on the college campus, with some responsible person on the college campus documenting the students’ presence and transmitting the information to the high school in accordance with the agreements. Students who are not engaged in such activities are considered absent.
3. High school students cannot be counted in average daily attendance for a full-time equivalency greater than 1.0 (7 hours). For ADA purposes, students may take courses in the evening as long as the combination of day and evening classes does not exceed the 7 hour limit.

4. Districts may choose to transport students to the college campus when they are dually enrolled. However, this is considered a shuttle route and the miles are ineligible for transportation aid purposes.
5. Postsecondary courses in which students are dually enrolled may be counted as part of the high school's curricular offerings only if the district pays the essential costs for the postsecondary student:
 - The district is paying the essential costs of tuition, fees, and books
 - Providing transportation at no cost to the student
6. Dual enrollment during Summer School sessions is not eligible for ADA purposes.

Guidelines that Apply to Both Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment

Equating High School and College Credit

Although it is not possible to equate college courses precisely to high school credit, a reasonable equating would result in recognizing one unit of high school credit for a 5.0 hour college course, one-half unit of high school credit for a 3.0 hour college course, and one-quarter unit for a 2.0 hour college course.

Maximum Number of College Courses Allowed for High School Credit

The statute does not specify a limit. Each local board of education should determine the number of such units it will recognize and modify its policies accordingly.

Course Fees

Course fees may be paid by the school district or by the student, depending on the agreement between the district and the college or university.

APPENDIX F:

Adult High School Diploma Program

The continual advancement of technology and the changing social climate mandates a higher level of educational attainment for many citizens. The public schools should be concerned with the educational needs of all citizens. An adult high school diploma program may be one way to meet the needs of some adults. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approves and encourages the development of adult education program learning opportunities to accomplish diploma completion as well as other desirable adult education goals within limits prescribed by local boards of education.

According to Section 171.091, RSMo, the school board of any school district may provide for the education of persons over 20 years of age who are residents of the school district out of revenues derived by the school district 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.
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. Awarding of credit:
 - 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 courses;
 - United States Armed Forces Institute (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; and
 - 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 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:

Director, Adult Education and Literacy/High School Equivalency
Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0480
Phone 573-751-1249

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