

REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

College Preparatory Studies Certificate

The Missouri State Board of Education awards the College Preparatory Studies Certificate (CPSC) to Missouri students who successfully complete a rigorous academic program in high school. The certificate is awarded in addition to the regular high school diploma granted by local school districts. Created by the Board in 1985, the certificate is designed to provide incentive and recognition for public and non-public high school students who exceed the state's minimum graduation requirements. **Because the certificate is awarded by the state, local schools may not add additional requirements for students to qualify.**

In 1994, the State Board of Education revised its requirements for the CPSC in order to align with the "Core Curriculum" standards recommended by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education as a basis for college admissions in Missouri. This flier outlines the revised criteria. These guidelines will be used in awarding certificates to qualified high school students, beginning in 1996.

Awarding the College Preparatory Studies Certificate is voluntary on the part of school districts, and meeting the requirements is voluntary on the part of the students. While the certificate is primarily intended as an incentive for college-bound students, those who are not planning to enter college also may wish to work toward earning the award. School officials are encouraged to use the program to encourage ALL students to pursue excellence in their high school studies.

To be eligible for the certificate, a student must meet these requirements:

1. Complete a rigorous high school program cooperatively planned by the school, the student and the student's parents. The program must include at least these units of credit:

Subjects	Units
Communication Arts -----	4
Mathematics -----	4
Science -----	3
Social Studies -----	3
Fine Arts -----	1
Practical Arts -----	1
Personal Finance -----	.5
Health -----	.5
Physical Education -----	1
Electives (<i>see Guidelines</i>) -----	7
TOTAL	25

2. Earn at least a 3.0 grade point average (GPA), on a 4.0 scale, in the combined subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The school may calculate GPAs for its students at the end of the seventh or eighth semester of high school.
3. Score at or above the prior year's national composite average mean on the American College Test (ACT) or on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). This criterion is revised annually to reflect the latest national averages from the ACT and SAT. *Check the current year's certification forms for the required minimum scores.*
4. Maintain a 9-12 attendance rate of at least 95 percent.
5. Complete a strong academic program, as specifically outlined in the section that follows.

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

Courses taken by middle/junior high school students may be counted as satisfying the high school core curriculum requirement if the content is equivalent to high school courses and if subsequent courses in the subject are shown on the high school transcript.

Communication Arts

At least four units, one of which may be speech or debate, and two units of which must be in courses emphasizing composition or writing skills.

Interpretative Notes: Courses in foreign language, 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 communication-arts credit. Scholastic journalism may be counted for communication arts credit, but only if it is taught by a certificated English teacher.

Mathematics

At least four units from the following: algebra I, plane geometry, algebra II, precalculus, trigonometry, analytic geometry, calculus, math analysis, and statistics.

Interpretive Notes: Applied Mathematics may be counted only if the student successfully completes a standard algebra II course. Standard algebra courses that have been subdivided, e.g., algebra I is divided into algebra IA and IB, may be counted only as one course unit. Algebra I taken in the seventh or eighth grade may be counted toward meeting the requirement.

Science

At least three units (not including general science) selected from biology, chemistry, or physics, one of which is a laboratory course.

Interpretive Notes: Examples of courses acceptable toward the three units: Botany, zoology, anatomy and physiology, biology, chemistry, and physics. Applications in Biology/Chemistry and Principles of Technology may be counted. Life science, physical science, and earth science may be counted *only* if it can be demonstrated that they are taught at the high school level with a rigor comparable to biology, chemistry, or physics.

Social Studies

At least three units, including American history, world history, and at least one semester of government.

Interpretive Notes: Examples of courses acceptable toward the three units: World history, American history, American government, civics, principles of democracy, economics, psychology, sociology, political science and geography.

Fine Arts

At least one unit of fine arts courses including the visual arts, music, dance and theatre.

Interpretive Notes: Examples of courses acceptable toward the one unit: Art I, II, III, and IV, sculpture, design, drawing, painting, theatre, oral interpretation, dance, dramatics, band and any other instrumental music, chorus, and any other vocal music courses, and art, music or theatre appreciation courses.

ELECTIVES**Specified Core Electives**

At least three core electives from foreign language (two units of one foreign language are strongly recommended) and/or combinations from two or more of the following course areas: English, mathematics, social studies, science, and fine arts.

Interpretive Notes: 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.

General Electives

At least four units sufficient to meet state and local graduation requirements, including physical education, health and personal finance. The courses should be selected and planned by the school, the student, and the student's parents to develop the student's aptitude and skills. Advanced career and technical courses that have been selected to support and strengthen the student's personal plan of study may be used to fulfill this general elective requirement.

Each year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary education provides forms to all high school principals so they can certify the numbers of prospective graduates who have qualified for the College Preparatory Studies Certificate. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides the appropriate number of certificates at no cost to each school or school district.

For more information, contact

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