

Muskegon Area Intermediate School District

Michigan's

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# High School Graduation

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requirements

Guide for Parents



## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Information is subject to change.

For the most current information, go to [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool)

# LETTER TO PARENTS

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Dear Parents,

We urge you to delve deeply into this guide to learn more about what is required for high school graduation and the numerous pre-college and career programs available. Pre-college and career programs allow high school students to test drive careers, discover new interests, and find college opportunities that best fit their needs. Finding the best fit for your child can set the foundation for a successful college search or career adventure. Below is a quick summary of the many free or low-cost options available:

## **Muskegon Area Career Tech Center (MACTC)**

High school juniors and seniors select from 16 different career areas to study during high school. Students earn high school academic credit and in some cases they earn college credit/course waivers as well.

## **Direct Credit**

High school students take college-level classes offered at their high school during the school day and earn an actual college transcript.

## **Early College Muskegon County**

Students earn their high school diploma and associates degree, technical certification, or 62 college credits from Muskegon Community College during a 5-year program.

## **Dual Enrollment**

Students take classes at their high school and degree-granting post-secondary institutions. Students must have a qualifying ACT Plan, PSAT, or MME score to participate.

## **Advanced Placement**

Nationally designed courses are available in school or online in 19 different subjects. College credits are granted based on test scores.

My vision is that every student in Muskegon County graduates from high school with a plan for their future. If our students, parents, educators, and counselors work closely together, we will be successful at connecting our students' passions and interests to the brightest of futures!

Sincerely,



John Severson, Ph.D.  
Superintendent  
Muskegon Area Intermediate School District

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

*It is the policy of the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District that no staff member, candidate for employment, program participant, or recipient of services shall experience discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category (collectively "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. The MAISD is an equal opportunity employer.*

*Inquiries related to issues of discrimination on the basis  
of disability should be directed to:*

**Assistant Director of Special Education**

630 Harvey Street, Muskegon, MI 49442, 231-767-7249

*All other discrimination inquiries or requests for special accommodations to  
participate in a program, event, or activity should be directed to:*

**Director of Human Resources**

630 Harvey Street, Muskegon, MI 49442, 231-767-7213

# What you need to know about Michigan's

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# High School Graduation requirements

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## Introduction

The Class of 2011 was the first of Michigan's graduates to complete high school having met the graduation requirements set forth in Michigan's Merit Curriculum (MMC). Introduced by the State Board of Education in 2005 and signed into law by the Governor in 2006, the MMC became mandated requirements for all high school students.

Since that time, several new legislation revisions have affected these requirements, with the most recent being passed in June 2014. All of these mandatory changes are reflected in this revised guide.

The state's requirements are among the most rigorous in the nation and are a cornerstone for high school reform in Michigan. In satisfying these requirements, graduates will meet and often surpass the most stringent entry requirements for all colleges and universities in the state and will provide the academic and applied learning skills business and industry leaders state they need in their workforce.

The MMC sets the number of required credits for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health/Physical Education, the Arts (Visual, Performing and Applied), World Language (required beginning with the class of 2016), and Online Learning.\* Local districts can establish additional requirements for the students graduating from their schools. It is essential that you fully understand all the state and local requirements so you can guide your child toward high school graduation by making sound academic decisions.

\*See page two for At-A-Glance Chart.

This parent guide outlines the current Michigan Graduation Requirements and provides basic information. **However, the issue of high school graduation requirements is complex and, as addressed in this guide, there already have been several changes since the requirements were enacted. The Michigan Department of Education continues to address the most recent changes.**

As updates occur, you will be able to find the new information at [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool)

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**For questions specific to your child or for further information, contact your school district’s curriculum administrator, assistant superintendent of instruction, or your building principal.**

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Information is subject to change.**

For the most current information, go to

[www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool)

*This guide was adapted with permission from Macomb Intermediate School District.*

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# Key concepts

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## to help you understand the high school graduation requirements

Listed below are ten key concepts to help you understand the high school graduation requirements. This is the lens through which to focus on the requirements and understand how to help all children succeed in school.

Some terms are defined in a glossary at the end of this booklet.

1. These requirements apply to all students in public schools. Special education students must satisfy these same standards to receive a high school diploma with the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and, possibly, a Personal Curriculum (PC) determining the appropriate course or courses of study.
2. Local boards of education may add to the requirements but cannot reduce them. Local boards determine the total number of individual district requirements.
3. While, in very limited cases, modifications through a personal curriculum can be made to some credits, there is no “opt out” provision.
4. Students can meet the requirements in any type of school day schedule set by the district, (i.e., six-period day, seven-period day, block schedule, or trimesters).
5. There is room left in your child’s high school schedule for electives.
6. Accelerated, honors, advanced placement, dual enrollment, early college and International Baccalaureate classes will count toward meeting the graduation requirements, if the content matches the Michigan Merit Curriculum credit requirements.

7. Students struggling with or failing required classes can get help to succeed. Parents are encouraged to check with the school about support opportunities available for students, (i.e., intervention strategies, credit recovery, and tutoring).
8. After the student has completed grade 9 and all other options have been attempted, a meeting to determine if a Personal Curriculum (PC) is necessary may be requested by the parents, the student or a teacher.
9. As of June 2006, all public school teachers in their designated content areas were required to meet the No Child Left Behind federal certification and degree standards for highly qualified teachers.
10. Your child should be prepared to take the classes for these requirements. All Muskegon-area districts have a comprehensive plan for K–12 curriculum that is based on the Michigan Academic Standards. These can be reviewed online at [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool). Click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

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**Michigan Merit Curriculum**  
**High School Graduation Requirements (18 credits)**  
**AT A GLANCE**

*(taken from the MMC Frequently Asked Questions)*

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) - 4 Credits**

Proficiency in State Content Standards for ELA (4 credits)

**MATHEMATICS - 4 Credits**

Proficiency in State Content Standards for Mathematics (3 credits)  
Proficiency in district-approved 4th mathematics credit options (1 credit)  
(Student must have a math experience in their final year of high school.)

**ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

Course, Learning or Integrated Learning Experience

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH - 1 Credit**

Proficiency in State Content Standards for Physical Education and Health (1 credit); **Or**  
Proficiency with State Content Standards for Health (1/2 credit) and district-approved extra-curricular activities involving physical activities (1/2 credit)

**SCIENCE - 3 Credits**

Proficiency in State Content Standards for Science (3 credits);  
**Or beginning with the class of 2015:**  
Proficiency in some State Content Standards for Science (2 credits)  
**and** completion of an MDE-approved formal career and technical education program (1 credit)

**SOCIAL STUDIES - 3 Credits**

Proficiency in State Content Standards for Social Studies (3 credits)

**VISUAL, PERFORMING AND APPLIED ARTS - 1 Credit**

Proficiency in State Content Standards for Visual, Performing and Applied Arts (1 credit)

**WORLD LANGUAGE - 2 Credits**

(Effective beginning with students graduating in 2016)  
Formal coursework OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 (2 credits); **Or**  
Formal coursework or an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 (1 credit) **and** completion of a department-approved formal career and technical education program or an additional visual, performing and applied arts credit (1 credit)



## Personal Curriculum Information:

- If a Personal Curriculum is requested, the school district/PSA shall develop a Personal Curriculum. An in-person meeting is not required; however, the parent and school official must still agree on the implementation of a Personal Curriculum. Quarterly follow-ups are no longer required.
- School districts or PSAs shall not discourage pupils seeking and receiving a Personal Curriculum modification.
- A school district or PSA shall annually notify pupils and parents of the Michigan Merit Curriculum and Personal Curriculum modifications; such notice can be provided in a newsletter, student handbook or similar communication that is sent to the pupil's home.
- During the process of developing a student's Educational Development Plan (EDP), school districts and PSAs shall advise students of the curricular requirements and how those requirements can be fulfilled in CTE programs.

## Career and Technical Education:

\*A formal CTE Program is defined in the Michigan Administrative Code. According to R 395.241, Rule 11, an "MDE-approved formal CTE program or curriculum" consists of:

- a) A coherent sequence of courses so that students gain academic, technical, and work behavior skills.
- b) Instruction that includes classroom, laboratory, work-based learning, and leadership opportunities.
- c) Instruction that is supervised, directed, or coordinated by an appropriately certificated career and technical education teacher.
- d) Consists of standards approved by the state board (R395.243, Rule 13).
- e) Must receive approval from MDE/OCTE through an application process (R 395.244, Rule 14).

According to R 395.243, Rule 13, "Successful Completion" means:

- a) Complete coursework covering all state program standards
- b) Take any required technical assessment

 Additional information about Personal Curriculum and Career and Technical Education can be found at [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool)

What you need to know about  
the

# Mathematics requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<p><b>4 credits</b></p>	<p>1 credit – Algebra I 1 credit – Geometry <b>OR</b> 3 credits – Integrated Sequence with same course content 1 credit – Algebra II</p> <p>1 additional math or math-related credit or course in financial literacy. At least one experience in final year of HS (final two years with a PC).</p>
<p><b>Alternative Options without a Personal Curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Algebra II can be taken over two years for two credits; or 1.5 years for 1.5 credits.</li> <li>■ Algebra II can be substituted with an MDE-approved formal CTE Program, provided that the student successfully completes the same content as Algebra II content expectations assessed on the State Assessment in that program.</li> <li>■ Completes same content as Algebra II in two years.</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b></p> <p>Students who (1) complete at least 3.5 total math credits, including Algebra I and Geometry, and (2) complete at least 1 Math credit during his/her final two years of high school may modify the math credit requirement as part of a personal curriculum as follows.</p> <p>Algebra II may be modified if the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Completes the same content as 1 semester of Algebra II, <b>OR</b></li> <li>■ Elects to complete the same content over 2 years with 1 credit awarded for each year, <b>OR</b></li> <li>■ Completes the same content as 1 semester of Algebra II content expectations assessed on the state high school assessment through a formal CTE program or curriculum, <b>OR</b></li> <li>■ Completes 1 semester of statistics, or functions and data analysis, or technical math</li> </ul>	

What you need to know about  
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# Mathematics

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## requirements



- One Mathematics credit, or mathematics-related credit, or experience must be taken in the final year, with no exceptions.
- Students may fulfill their final year math requirement through dual enrollment or an early college program.
- The 4th credit in Mathematics may be earned in a math-related class as determined by the local district. Examples might include: Business Mathematics, Accounting, Engineering, Medical Careers, Construction Trades or Math Support Class, or a retake of Algebra II.



The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

What you need to know about  
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# English Language Arts requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<b>4 credits</b>	Aligned with Michigan Academic Standards, English 9, 10, 11, and 12 courses should include opportunities for students to meet the high school standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and Language.
<b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b> No modification allowed except for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.	

- An English Language Arts (ELA) class can include writing, speaking, listening, reading literature, reading informational texts and language.
- ELA courses can use the grade level Michigan ELA Standards model units of instruction developed by MAISA (Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators) at: <http://gomaisa.org/career-and-college-readiness-standards-project/ela-CCRS-materials>.
- Local curriculum will need to consider the capacities of a literate individual as described in the ELA Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects. These capacities define what it means for students to be career- and college-ready in ELA. Key characteristics of the Michigan ELA Standards include:
  - 1) Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction;
  - 2) Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational; and
  - 3) Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.

✦ The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

What you need to know about  
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**Science**  
requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<p><b>3 credits</b></p>	<p>1 credit – Biology                      1 credit – Chemistry, Physics, <b>OR</b> any science content aligned with the Michigan Academic Standards for high school science without repeating the biology credit.                      1 additional credit in:                      Chemistry, Physics, <b>OR</b> any science content aligned with the Michigan Academic Standards for high school science (without repeating the 1st or 2nd credits)</p>
<p><b>Alternative Options without a Personal Curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The 3rd credit may be an MDE-approved Computer Science Program/curriculum or formal CTE Program (regardless of the CTE program content).</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No modification allowed except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.</li> </ul>	

- The required Science credits may be offered by the district in any order and taken by the student in any sequence.
- Colleges strongly encourage 4 credits in Science.
- The Michigan Academic Standards for High School Science constitute the minimum content for the three required science credits.
- Science courses should integrate the ELA Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects which describes the literacy skills and understandings required for career and college readiness in multiple disciplines.
- Districts are responsible for ensuring that students have the opportunity to learn all the Michigan Academic Standards for high school Science before they are tested on the 11th grade state assessment for science.



The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

What you need to know about  
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**Social Studies**  
requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<b>3</b> credits	1 credit – U.S. History & Geography 1 credit – World History & Geography .5 credit – Economics .5 credit – Civics
<b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ After 2 credits, including Civics, students may substitute the third credit with: 1 additional credit in ELA, Mathematics, Science, World Language <b>OR</b> a formal CTE Program (regardless of content).</li><li>■ Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.</li></ul>	

- The Michigan Social Studies Standards for high school constitute the minimum content for the three required credits in Social Studies.
- There also is a part of the ELA Standards called *Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* which describes the literacy skills and understandings required for career and college readiness in multiple disciplines.
- The Civics requirement cannot be modified.



The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

What you need to know about  
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# Health and Physical Education requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<b>1</b> credit	.5 credit – Health .5 credit – Physical Education

### Alternative Options without a Personal Curriculum

- .5 credit in Physical Education is allowed for participation in extracurricular athletics or related physical activity — note this is already allowed under MCL 380.1502.

### Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable

- May substitute with:  
1 additional credit in ELA, Mathematics, Science, World Language **OR** a formal CTE Program.
- Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.

- The state mandate allows a modification for the Health and Physical Education requirements; however, local boards of education may still require students to take classes in Health and Physical Education.
- Consideration: A previous law remains in effect requiring students who are physically fit and capable to take a Physical Education course (*MCL 380.1502, Sec. 1502(1) Health and physical education for pupils of both sexes shall be established and provided in all public schools of this state. Subject to subsection (2), each pupil attending public school in this state who is physically fit and capable of doing so shall take the course in physical education.*)



The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

What you need to know about  
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# Visual, Performing and Applied Arts

## requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<b>1</b> credit	At least 1 credit in any <b>one</b> category of arts
<b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ May substitute with: 1 <b>completed</b> additional credit in ELA, Mathematics, Science, World Language <b>OR</b> a formal CTE Program.</li><li>■ Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.</li></ul>	

- Students will have room in their schedules to take electives in the visual, performing, and applied arts.



The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.




What you need to know about  
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# World Language requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<p><b>2</b> credits</p>	<p>At least 2 credits, based on MDE guidelines, earned in grades K to 12 in a language other than English (<i>content must be grade appropriate - not H.S. equivalent</i>), <b>OR</b> an equivalent learning experience in grades K to 12 as determined by the district.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Options without a Personal Curriculum</b></p> <p>For 2015–16 through 2019–20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 1 credit may be substituted with a formal CTE Program/Curriculum <b>OR</b> 1 credit may be substituted with additional Visual, Performing or Applied Arts instruction.</li> <li>■ A school district or PSA is “strongly encouraged” to provide at least 1 credit in World Language in Grades K–6.</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b></p> <p>No modification allowed except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.</p>	

- American Sign Language is considered a language other than English and will satisfy these requirements.

 The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

What you need to know about  
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# Online Experience requirements



Requirement	Specifics
<b>Online Learning Experience</b>	Credit may be earned in at least one online course or online learning experience, as MDE approved, <b>OR</b> through an online experience, integrated throughout the high school curriculum.
<p><b>Personal Curriculum Modification – if applicable</b></p> <p>No modification allowed except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed two years of high school out of state or at a non-public school.</p>	

- Students must take an online course or learning experience, or have the online experience incorporated into one or more of the required credits of the Michigan Merit Curriculum.
  
- Every student will have meaningful technology-enabled learning opportunities based on research and best practice that include virtual learning experiences.
  
- As technology quickly advances, there will be expanded opportunities for districts to meet this online learning requirement.
  
- Online learning is defined as “a structured learning activity that utilizes technology with intranet/internet-based tools and resources as the delivery method for instruction, research, assessment, and communication.”



The State of Michigan Standards for the required credits can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on Academic Standards and Credit Guidance.

# Career and Technical Education

## opportunities



- MDE-approved formal Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs\* consist of one or more courses often taken in a specific sequence. Completing such a program may allow students to substitute these CTE credits in place of:
  - 1 credit of Science AND
  - 1 credit of World Language AND
  - 1 credit of Algebra II – only if the CTE program includes the same Algebra II standards addressed on the State assessment
  - The local school district can tell you which CTE programs qualify for this substitution
- CTE courses also may satisfy the following graduation requirements:
  - 1 credit of Visual, Performing and Applied Arts (VPAA) AND
  - 1 credit of a math-related experience required in the final year of high school
  - Note that the local school district is responsible for awarding credit in both of these areas
- Completing a formal Personal Curriculum may allow students to substitute credits in a department-approved CTE program for additional required credits, such as:
  - .5 credit of Health
  - .5 credit of Physical Education
  - 1 credit of Social Studies
  - .5 to 1 credit of Algebra II/Mathematics
- Graduation requirements taken prior to high school, such as Algebra I and World Language, will allow more opportunity for students to complete a CTE program of study before graduating.
- Many CTE programs allow students to earn articulated college credit, industry-recognized certification or both while still in high school.
- Eligible students in a CTE program, as determined by local districts, may be able to gain valuable career experience by participating in work-based learning opportunities, such as job shadowing, internship, externship and/or school-to-registered apprenticeship.
- CTE programs include student leadership opportunities, business/industry partnerships and related local, regional, state and national student competitions.
- Department-approved CTE programs are staffed with professionals who have relevant industry work experience in the program area in which they are instructing.

\* A formal CTE Program is defined in the Michigan Administrative Code. According to R 395.241, Rule 11, a “Department-approved formal CTE program or curriculum” consists of:

- a) A coherent sequence of courses so that students gain academic, technical and work behavior skills.
- b) Instruction that includes classroom, laboratory, work-based learning and leadership opportunities.
- c) Instruction that is supervised, directed or coordinated by an appropriately certificated career and technical education teacher.
- d) Consists of standards approved by the state board (R 395.243, Rule 13).
- e) Must receive approval from MDE/OCTE through an application process (R 395.244, Rule 201414).


According to R 395.243, Rule 13, “Successful Completion” means:

- a) Complete coursework covering all state program standards.
- b) Take any required technical assessment.

For more information about how students may fulfill some of their state-required high school credits through programs at the Muskegon Area CTC, contact the MACTC counselor at 231-767-3609.

More information and CTE-related resources can be found at

[http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530\\_2629\\_70047---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530_2629_70047---,00.html)

 The State of Michigan Career and Technical Education Opportunities can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on **Complete FAQ** and then click on **Career/Technical Education** on page 1.

What you need to know about an

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# Educational Development Plan

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- The first step in developing an individualized approach to learning is the EDP. The EDP documents an ongoing process in which a learner identifies both career goals and a plan of action to achieve them. The EDP does not take the place of either an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Personal Curriculum (PC).

- The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) legislation (P.A. 141 of 2007) states that, “The board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy shall provide the opportunity for each pupil to develop an educational development plan during grade 7, and shall ensure that each pupil reviews his or her educational development plan during grade 8 and revises it as appropriate before he or she begins high school. An educational development plan shall be developed, reviewed, and revised by the pupil under the supervision of the pupil’s school counselor or another designee qualified to act in a counseling role under section 1233 or 1233a selected by the school principal and shall be based on high school readiness scores and a career pathways program or similar career exploration program. An educational development plan shall be designed to assist pupils to identify career development goals as they relate to academic requirements. During the process of developing and reviewing a pupil’s educational development plan, the pupil shall be advised that many of the curricular requirements of this section and section 1278a may be fulfilled through career and technical education.”

## What you need to know about a

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# Personal Curriculum

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- If a Personal Curriculum (PC) is requested, the school district or PSA shall develop a Personal Curriculum. An in-person meeting is not required; however, the parent and school official must still agree on the implementation of a Personal Curriculum. The team developing the personal curriculum must include a teacher or guidance counselor.
- A school district or PSA shall not limit or discourage pupils seeking and receiving a Personal Curriculum modification.
- A school district or PSA annually shall notify pupils and parents of the Michigan Merit Curriculum and entitlement to Personal Curriculum modifications.

The essential elements of the Personal Curriculum:

- The PC must be consistent with the EDP and IEP. All three should be consistent with student goals and supports.
- The PC must include as much of the MMC as possible.
- Measurable goals and an evaluation process must be clearly stated in the PC.
- The PC must contain a plan for ongoing communication in which a parent communicates with each teacher in the modified content area(s).

Districts **MUST** offer the PC option and respond to PC requests, but are **NOT** required to approve all PC requests.

# Special Education and a Personal Curriculum

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The PC is a process to modify specific credit requirements and/or content expectations based on the individual learning needs of a student. It is designed to serve a variety of students who need to individualize learning to meet the MMC requirements.

Parents of students with an IEP can begin to explore the PC option as early as the 7th or 8th grade when the EDP is being developed. If granted, the PC goes into effect when the student enters high school. Parents of students with an IEP may also request a PC at any point during the student's high school career.

This Michigan Merit Curriculum Law was amended in 2007 to add Subsection (k) [MCL 380.1278(b)(5)(k) (emphasis added)] which states that if the parent or legal guardian of a pupil requests ... a modification of the Michigan merit standard requirements **that would not otherwise be allowed** under this section and demonstrates that the modification is necessary because the pupil is a child with a disability, the school district or public school academy **may allow that additional modification to the extent necessary because of the pupil's disability if ... (a) determines that the modification is consistent with both the pupil's educational development plan ... and the pupil's individualized education program.**

## **What does “not otherwise be allowed” mean under this law?**

It means that exceptions to the limitations on the Personal Curriculum stated in the law for students without an IEP, (e.g., no modifications of ELA, Science, online, etc.) may be allowable for a student with an IEP.

Ultimately, decisions regarding performance standards for earning MMC credit, (i.e., the definition of proficiency in meeting the content expectations that define required MMC credits) and determination of the credit associated with each course, are local district/board decisions.

## **Allowable Modifications for a Student with an Individualized Education Program**

The parent or legal guardian of a student with an IEP may request a Personal Curriculum (PC) to modify the requirements of the MMC not otherwise allowed, providing the PC:

1. Incorporates as much of the Michigan Academic Standards as practicable for the student within the context of the MMC requirements.
2. Aligns with the EDP and is consistent with the IEP.
3. Modifications directly address the effect the student’s disability has on his or her ability to access and/or demonstrate progress in the content.

Additionally, the PC:

1. May modify components of the content expectations within each credit requirement.
2. May modify the credit requirements.
3. Should reflect student strengths and outline how those strengths will be enhanced and utilized.


## What you need to know about

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# How credit is granted

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- A student is considered to have completed a credit if the student successfully completes the Michigan Academic Standards or Guidelines developed by the Michigan Department of Education. Credit can be granted in a variety of ways, (e.g., end-of-course exams; dual enrollment; early college; testing out; accelerated, honors, advanced placement (AP), and/or International Baccalaureate or under rules of Michigan’s Expanded Online Learning Options).
- A student will be given graduation credit for a requirement that is successfully completed prior to high school, as long as it is of the same level of content and rigor associated with the corresponding high school required course. Taking qualifying classes before high school will make room in the student’s schedule to take more electives.
- If a student fails a required course for graduation, no credit is granted and the class must be made up. Since there is little room in a student’s schedule each year for make-up classes, the failed credit can be recovered in various ways, such as summer school or online.

 More information about options for earning credit can be viewed online at: [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool); click on **Complete FAQ** and go to **Earning Credit**.

For more information about the Muskegon County Early College program, contact the Dean at 231-777-0576.

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# Key terms

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**Advanced Placement (AP)** Advanced Placement classes are accelerated classes that, when successfully completed in high school, help determine placement in college. Although a student would not get college credit for the class, by passing the class the student would not have to take that class in college, but could move ahead to the next required class.

**NOTE:** Successful completion of certain AP classes counts toward meeting the high school graduation requirements.

**Career Pathways** Broad groupings of careers that share similar characteristics and whose employment requirements call for many common interests, strengths, and competencies. Students opting for Career and Technical Education elective courses will most likely choose courses that fit the career pathway they have chosen as a general area of interest they wish to pursue.

**NOTE:** Some of these courses, if taught by a teacher meeting the highly qualified standards set by the federal No Child Left Behind initiative, can be applied toward the high school graduation requirements.

**CTE** Career and Technical Education

**Dual Enrollment** When a high school student successfully completes a course as part of dual enrollment through a college or university, the student will get credit for that class at either the high school or higher education level or, in some cases, both.

**NOTE:** Successful completion of certain dual enrollment classes counts toward meeting the high school graduation requirements.

**Early College** An Early/Middle College Program is a five-year high school program designed to allow a pupil to earn a high school diploma and either an associate's degree, the Michigan Early/Middle College Association technical certification or up to 60 transferable college credits at the same time.

**Educational Development Plan (EDP)** An educational development plan documents an ongoing process in which a learner identifies both career goals and a plan of action to achieve them. Every seventh grade student must have an opportunity to develop an EDP and one must be on file before high school. The EDP should be revised periodically throughout the secondary educational experience to reflect the student's career interests and options.



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# Key terms

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**ELA** English Language Arts

**Equivalent Learning Experience** The Michigan Academic Standards and Guidelines provide a useful framework for designing curriculum, assessments, scheduling instructional models, and relevant learning experiences that will allow the student to attain the level necessary to earn the required credits.

**Highly Qualified Teacher** To be deemed highly qualified, teachers must have:

- 1) Bachelor’s degree
- 2) Full state certification or licensure
- 3) Proof that they know each subject they teach

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP)** A document created by an IEP team for special education eligible students identifying what programs and services they need to progress in the curriculum. The IEP document is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

**International Baccalaureate (IB)** The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is designed as an academically challenging and balanced program of education with final examinations that prepare students for success at universities and life beyond.

**NOTE:** Successful completion of IB classes counts toward meeting the high school graduation requirements.

**Michigan Academic Standards** The state academic standards serve to outline learning expectations for Michigan’s students and are intended to guide local curriculum development. They should be used as a framework by schools for curriculum development with the curriculum itself prescribing instructional resources, methods, progressions, and additional knowledge valued by the local community. These standards provide a platform for state assessments, which are used to measure how well schools are providing opportunities for all students to learn the content outlined by the standards.

**Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)** The official title for the current high school graduation requirements is the Michigan Merit Curriculum. To earn a high school diploma from a Michigan high school, students must successfully complete all elements in the Michigan Merit Curriculum. An “at-a-glance” view of the MMC is shown in full on page 2.

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# Key terms

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**Modification** Modifications to a student’s curriculum do not allow for an “opt out” of any requirement. However, in certain instances, modifications can be made to adjust the curriculum in Mathematics, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education, Visual, Performing and Applied Arts, and World Language. NO modifications are allowed in meeting the English, Science and online requirements, except for students with an IEP and for transfer students who have completed two years of high school. Modification allowances must be made as part of a Personal Curriculum requested by the parent/guardian or staff member.

**Online Learning Options** Michigan’s Expanded Online Learning Options as provided for in Section 21f of the State School Aid Act passed in 2013.

**Personal Curriculum (PC)** The parent/guardian of a student or a staff member may request a PC for the student that modifies certain MMC standard requirements. If all of the requirements for a PC are met, then the board of a school district may award a high school diploma to a student who successfully completes his or her PC, even if it does not meet the requirements of the MMC standards.

The use of a Personal Curriculum (PC) modification is allowed by state statute for only four reasons:

- A student wishes to modify the Mathematics requirement.
- A student wishes to go beyond the academic credit requirements by adding more Math, Science, English Language Arts, or World Language credits.
- A student with a disability needs to modify the credit requirements based on his or her disability.
- A student transfers to a district from out of state or from a non-public school.

**PSA** Public School Academy

**Testing Out** High school students may “test out” or be given credit for a high school course they are not enrolled in by exhibiting a certain level of mastery in the course. The student must receive a grade of not less than a C+ on a final exam, and/or other means of basic assessment, in order to receive credit.

**World Language** Any language other than English, including American Sign Language.

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- ✓ Attend Career Tech Center
- ✓ Earn national awards
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## You can too!

Ask your counselor for details.



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# Start • Stay • Succeed



*Creating a college and career-ready culture*

By offering broad-based and intensive support services/initiatives, Muskegon Opportunity intends to develop a support system to help all graduates within the county. Muskegon Opportunity's countywide programs strive to assure our grassroots initiatives are working to create a college and career-ready culture in Muskegon County. Our expectation is that students graduating will be prepared to start, stay and succeed in college.

**Call 231-722-3134 for more information or visit  
[www.muskegonopportunity.com](http://www.muskegonopportunity.com)**

## **GRADUATE** with a high school diploma AND a college degree!

**10th  
Grade**

- Apply to Early College
- Attend ECMC 1-week orientation at MCC

**11th  
Grade**

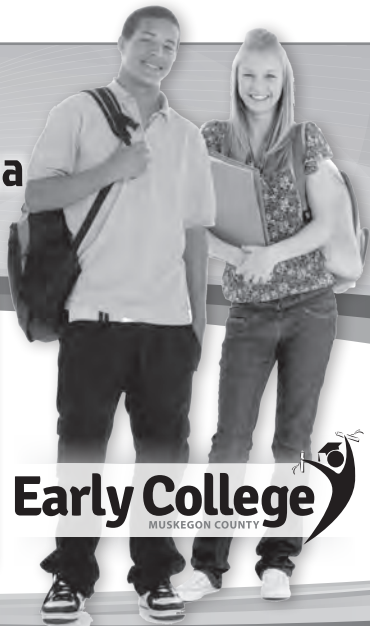
- Attend half day at high school
- Complete 13 college hours
- Complete 3 college hours in the summer

**12th  
Grade**

- Attend 2 hours at high school
- Complete 22 college hours

**13th  
Grade**

- Complete 24 college hours and  
4th year math course at MCC



**Early College**  
MUSKEGON COUNTY

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Intermediate School District

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