



Department of Policy and Procedures

CPS MINIMUM HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements were written with the intention of preparing our students for success in a variety of experiences after high school. While these requirements align with the entrance requirements for the state universities of Illinois, they were also written to prepare students for a variety of careers right out of high school. There is great flexibility in the exact courses that schools offer and students take to meet these requirements. To see how all courses in CPS' High School Course Catalog align with the graduation requirements below, please visit cps.edu/academics/high-school-course-catalog/.

CREDIT-BEARING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (earned by completing coursework; 24 credits are required in total)	
REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENT
Career Ed / JROTC	1.0 credit in any Career Technical Education and/or JROTC III / IV course
Civics	0.5 credit in Civics or AP Government (must include 1 Service Learning Project)
Computer Science	1.0 credit in Computer Science (recommended in 9th grade)
English / ESL	English I (1.0 credit); English II (1.0 credit); English III (1.0 credit); English IV (1.0 credit)
Fine Arts	2.0 total credits may be earned in the same Fine Arts category or any combination of categories (Dance, Music, Drama/Theatre, Visual Art)
Math	Algebra (1.0 credit); Geometry (1.0 credit); Advanced Algebra/Trig (1.0 credit) Please Note: Students who earned HS competency or credit in elementary school, still need to earn three credits of math while in HS. i.e. Geometry (1.0 Credit); Advanced Algebra/Trig (1.0 Credit); Advanced Math courses (1.0)
PE / JROTC	2.0 total credits must be earned in any PE class. Students must pass Health & Driver's Education. JROTC also satisfies this requirement. However, please note Per CPS Physical Education Policy, all high school students shall be scheduled in a physical education course each semester in every grade level (9–12) <u>except when an exception has been authorized</u>
Science	Biology (1.0 credit); Chemistry (1.0 credit); Physics (1.0 credit)
Social Science	World Studies (1.0 credit); U.S. History (1.0 credit); 0.5 credit minimum in Civics or AP Government (recommended one full year); 0.5 semester in any other Social Science course
World Language	2.0 total credits in the <u>same</u> World Language
Electives	3.0 total credits in <u>any</u> academic courses after meeting graduation requirements
NON-CREDIT-BEARING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (completed as part of coursework or other activities)	
REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENT
District-Wide Assessment (DWA)	<u>Must</u> take the SAT or DLM-AA
Financial Education (Formerly Consumer Ed)	<u>Must</u> complete a course that integrates a unit of study on Financial Education, aligned to state standards, into its curriculum
Financial Aid Application	<u>Must</u> complete the <i>Free Application for Federal Student Aid</i> or the <i>RISE Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid</i> (Public Act 101-0180)
Drivers Ed	<u>Must</u> complete a course that integrates Drivers Education into its curriculum
Health Ed	<u>Must</u> complete a course that integrates Health Education into its curriculum
Postsecondary Plan (Learn.Plan.Succeed.)	<u>Must</u> provide evidence of a plan for life beyond high school
U.S. Constitution	<u>Must</u> complete a course that integrates the U.S. and Illinois constitutions into its curriculum
Service Learning	Two classroom integrated (2) Service Learning Projects; one project <u>must</u> be completed in a Civics or AP Govt course

ENGLISH LEARNER — An English Learner (EL) will take English as a Second Language (ESL) taught by an ELA- and ESL-endorsed teacher and all core content courses are aligned to academic standards and taught by an ESL and/or bilingual-endorsed teacher, according to the EL-program eligibility. Please note that ESL I, II, III, and Transition English I–IV (not ESL Communication) courses count toward the four years of English required for graduation. *When those courses are taught as a double-period, only one of the credits will count toward the English requirement and the other one will count as an elective.* The English Literacy Proficiency Level (LitPL), based on the most recent screener or ACCESS assessment, will determine placement in the ESL course sequence. ELs enrolled in a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program, also receive native language or sheltered English instruction in core content courses, as appropriate. ELs in a Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) receive sheltered English instruction in all core content courses, as appropriate.

DIVERSE LEARNER – Diverse Learners receiving special education and related services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are expected to graduate with a regular diploma by the last day of the school year within which the student celebrates their 22nd birthday. Diverse Learners are expected to meet the same graduation requirements as their non-disabled peers. Such graduation criteria may, however, be modified by the student's IEP. For additional information regarding curriculum, grades, promotion, and graduation for diverse learners, please refer to the [IDEA Procedural Manual](#). Please reach out to your school counselor or special education case manager with any questions or concerns.

SAMPLE COURSE OF STUDY – The course of study below lists sample high school courses taken during each grade level. The graduation requirements satisfied during each grade level are also listed. The actual courses taken and graduation requirements satisfied annually may differ as this depends on 1) the courses offered at each school and 2) each student's particular goals and interests. Parents and students are encouraged to review CPS' High School Course Catalog at: cps.edu/academics/high-school-course-catalog/ and consult with the school's guidance department to select courses that support their long-term goals. Further information can also be found online at cps.edu/academics/.

SAMPLE PATHWAY				
REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENT			
SUBJECT AREA (CREDITS REQUIRED)	9 TH GRADE	10 TH GRADE	11 TH GRADE	12 TH GRADE
English / English as a second language (ESL) (4)	English I (ESL I)	English II (ESL II)	English III (ESL III)	English IV (Transitional English I)
Mathematics (3)	Algebra	Geometry	Advanced Algebra/ Trigonometry	Pre Calculus/AP Calculus (examples of elective options)
Science (3)	Biology	Chemistry	Physics	Environmental Science/ AP Biology/AP Chemistry/Dual Enrollment Science course (examples of elective options)
Social Science (3) + Service Learning (2)	World Studies	U.S. History (Public Law 195: US Constitution)	Civics 0.5 Civics required (suggested 1.0) (Service Learning Project)	AP US History/ AP Government (examples of elective options)
World Language (2)			French I	French II
Fine Arts (2)		Art I	Art II	AP 2-D Art and Design, AP 3-D Art and Design, or AP Drawing (examples of elective options)
Physical Education <i>OR</i> JROTC + Health/Driver Education (2) <i>All JROTC courses must be sequential</i>	PE I (includes Health)	PE II (includes Driver Ed.)	PE-Strength/Condition I	PE Personal Fitness and Wellness
	<i>or</i> JROTC Level I + 1 semester of Health	<i>or</i> JROTC Level II	<i>or</i> JROTC Level III + 1 semester of Driver Education	<i>or</i> JROTC Level IV
Health and Driver Education	PE I (1 semester of PE/1 semester of Health)	PE II (1 semester of PE/1 semester of Driver Education)		
Career Education (1)		1.0 credit in a CTE pathway, example Health Sciences	2.0 credits (double period), example Health Sciences	2.0 credits (double period), example Health Sciences
Computer Science (1) + Electives (3)	Exploring Computer Science	1.0 credit in a CS pathway, example AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP) (elective option)	1.0 credit in a CS pathway, example AP CSA (elective option)	AP Computer Science/ Dual Enrollment CS course (elective option)
Electives (3)	3.0 total credits in any Academic courses			

Notes:

1. For more information on the Minimum High School Graduation Requirements, please visit: cps.edu/academics/graduation-requirements/.
2. In most cases, 1 credit is equivalent to 1 year in a particular course. However, there are courses in which other than 1 credit may be earned in a particular course. Credits from a previous school may transfer and be applied toward CPS' graduation requirements. If credits are from a school outside of the United States, please contact Beata Arceo at barceo@cps.edu to make an appointment for foreign transcript evaluation.
3. The Dual Enrollment program allows eligible students to earn college credit while attending high school. The college credit earned is transferable to many four-year colleges or universities.
4. Students enrolled in a Career & Technical Education (CTE) program are recommended to start taking these courses in the 10th grade as many CTE programs are 3 years in length.

CPS high school students can take rigorous college-level academic classes and earn college credit at no cost prior to starting their postsecondary education. CPS is committed to helping students get a head start on earning college credit while they are still in high school. Opportunities to study at the college level and earn college credits can help reduce the costs of postsecondary education, prepare students for the overall higher education experience, and enhance college applications. For more information, please visit:

