

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR STUDENTS ENROLLING IN THE NINTH
GRADE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE 2002-03
SCHOOL YEAR AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS

Date: **February 14, 2006**

1. PURPOSE

The Columbia County Board of Education recognizes the importance of assuring an adequate educational opportunity for each Columbia County student. This goal is to be supported by quality secondary school programs which promote personal development, academic growth, and career preparation. Such programs are to be based on a broad, flexible curriculum which addresses each student's needs, interests, and abilities. Students are required to be in attendance for the full 180 day school calendar. Students are expected to attend class daily except in cases of excusable absences as defined by local Board of Education policy.

This policy will be effective for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time in the 2002-2003 school year and for subsequent years.

2. DEFINITIONS

- (I) Core courses – courses identified as “C” or “R” in Rule 160-4-2-.03 list of state-funded k-8 subjects and 9-12 courses for the specified program of study. For diploma seals with distinction, fine arts courses are also considered core.
- (II) Elective courses – any courses identified as “E” in rule 160-4-2-.03 list of state-funded k-8 subjects and 9-12 courses that a student may select beyond the core requirements to fulfill the unit requirements for graduation.
- (III) Program of study – selected courses as specified by the State Board of Education that, when successfully completed, will result in a specific seal of endorsement on the high school diplomas.
 - 1. College Preparatory (CP) Program – a program of study requiring 22 units. Completion of this program is signified by a high school diploma with a College Preparatory Seal.
 - 2. College Preparatory With Distinction (CP+) Program – a program of study requiring 24 units and a grade-point average in the core courses of 3.0 or above on a four-point scale or 80 numeric grade-point average or above. Completion of this program is signified by a high school diploma with a College Preparatory Seal of Distinction.
 - 3. Technology/Career-Preparatory (TC) Program – a program of study requiring 22 units. Completion of this program is signified by a high school diploma with a Technology/Career-Preparatory Seal.
 - 4. Technology/Career-Preparatory With Distinction (TC+) Program – a program of study requiring 24 units and a grade point average in the core courses of 3.0 or above on a four point scale or 80 numeric grade point average. Completion of

this program is signified by a high school diploma with a Technology/Career-Preparatory Seal of Distinction.

- (IV) Required courses – specific courses identified as “R” in Rule 160-4-2-.03 list of state-funded K-8 subjects and 9-12 courses that each student in a program of study shall pass to graduate from high school.
- (V) Seal – an attachment placed on a high school diploma indicating the successful completion of one or more programs of study.
- (VI) Secondary School Credential – a document awarded to students at the completion of the high school experience.
 - 1. High School Diploma – the document with appropriate seal(s) awarded to students certifying that they have satisfied attendance requirements, unit requirements and the state assessment requirements as referenced in Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
 - 2. High School Certificate – the document awarded to pupils who do not complete all of the criteria for a diploma or who have not passed the state assessment requirements as referenced in Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment, but who have earned 22 units.
 - 3. Special Education Diploma – the document awarded to students with disabilities assigned to a special education program who have not met the state assessment requirements referenced in Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment or who have not completed all of the requirements for a high school diploma but who have nevertheless completed their Individualized Education Programs (IEP).
- (VII) Unit – one unit of credit awarded for a minimum of 150 clock hours of instruction or 135 hours of instruction in an approved block schedule.
- (VIII) Unit, Summer School – one unit of credit awarded for a minimum of 120 clock hours of instruction.

In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, a student must be eligible for one of the above listed credentials. The commencement program shall make distinction between graduates receiving diplomas and those receiving certificates.

3. REQUIREMENTS

- (A) The Columbia County Board of Education shall provide secondary school curriculum, instructional and support services that reflect the high school graduation and state assessment requirements and assist all students in developing their unique potential to function in society.
- (B) The Columbia County Board of Education shall require that

1. Students who enroll from another state meet the graduation requirements for the graduating class they enter and the state assessment requirements as referenced in Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
2. Students who enroll in the ninth grade for the first time in the 2002-2003 school year and withdraw shall meet the graduation requirements specified in this rule and the assessment requirements specified in Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
3. **Students shall complete a Senior Project while enrolled in any Senior Core English course taught on the high school campus. Transfer students who enroll after the initial start of school shall complete the portions in progress at the time of entry. The Senior Project shall count 25% of the student’s grade each nine weeks as established in the Senior Project Manual. Students who choose to participate in approved Dual and Joint Enrollment (ACCEL) Senior English will not be required to complete a Senior Project. On-line Senior English is only available for remediation (i.e. course was taken previously with a non-passing score earned.)**

4. UNITS OF CREDITS

(I) The Columbia County high schools shall make available to all students the program of study for the required College Preparatory, College Preparatory With Distinction, Technology/Career-Preparatory and Technology/Career Preparatory With Distinction Programs of study.

(II) **A course shall count only once for satisfying any unit of credit requirement for graduation. See the following chart.**

(III) Areas of Study

	CP	CP+	TC	TC+
(1.) English/Language Arts*	4	4	4	4
(2.) Mathematics*	4	4	3**	3**
(3.) Science*	3	3	3	3
(The Columbia County School System requires one unit of physics, one unit of biology, and one unit of chemistry for graduation.)				
(4.) Social Studies*	3	3	3	3
(5.) Health and Physical Education	1	1	1	1
(6.) Computer Technology and/or Fine Arts and/or Technology/Career-Preparatory and/or Foreign Language	1	1	1	1
(7.) Foreign Language*	2	2	0	0**
(8.) Technology/Career-Preparatory Units*** (From Core Technology/Career-Preparatory Courses)	0	0	4	4
(9.) Locally Required or Elective Units	4	4	3**	4**
(10.) State Electives from Core Areas- and/or Fine Arts	0	2	0	1

Total Units (Minimum) 22 24 22 24

*Core Courses

**Technology/Career-Preparatory students may want to utilize an elective unit as foreign language or as a fourth unit of mathematics depending upon the student’s program of study and the student’s intentions to enter a University System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution.

***Technology/Career-Preparatory includes Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC).

- (IV) Dual Seal: To receive the College Preparatory (CP) or College Preparatory With Distinction (CP+) and the Technology/Career-Preparatory (TC) or Technology/Career-Preparatory With Distinction (TC+) Seal, a student shall complete the requirements a **specified in this rule for each seal.**

5. COURSE CREDIT

- (I) Unit credit shall be awarded only for courses that include concepts and skills based on the **state-adopted curriculum** for grades 9-12 or those approved by the State Board of Education. Unit credit may be awarded for courses offered in the middle grades that meet 9-12 **state curriculum** requirements. For example, a student who takes an Algebra I course in the middle grades that meets 9-12 **state curriculum** requirements may be awarded unit credit. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall specify whether core courses taken as part of an IEP shall receive core unit credit.
- (II) Completion of a program of study does not necessarily qualify students for the HOPE scholarship program.

6. AREAS OF STUDY.

- (I) Courses that shall earn unit credit in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, Foreign Languages, Military Science, Music, Visual Arts, Dance, theatre arts, computer science, education, humanities, Personal/Interpersonal/Social Skills and Technology/Career-Preparatory are listed in Rule 160-4-2-.03 list of state-funded K-8 subjects and 9-12 courses.
- (II) Any student may select any course listed in the course listing rule. The one exception to this provision is where the letter “R” appears with course names. These courses are required. They must be successfully completed and cannot be substituted with any other course. Any course identified as “C” is a core course and may be selected to count as one of the core unit requirements. Courses identified as “C” in Technology/Career-Preparatory areas will count as one of the four core Technology/Career-Preparatory courses for a T/C or T/C+ program of study. A course identified as “E” is an elective course that may be selected beyond the core requirements to fulfill the unit requirements.

English/Language Arts: At least one-half unit of credit in American Literature/composition shall be required. All courses that may satisfy the remaining units of credit are identified with a “C”. The other courses identified with an “E” are electives. Grammar/Composition shall be a component of all courses and shall be integrated into the course of study, not isolated. **Student enrolling in Senior Core English taught on the high school campus shall be required to complete a Senior Project.**

- (2.) Fine Arts: One elective required of all students may be selected from courses in Fine Arts. For students working toward diplomas with distinction, two additional elective units are required for College-Preparatory (CP) programs and one additional elective unit is required for Technology/Career-Preparatory (T/C) programs. These electives may be chosen from fine arts.
- (3.) Foreign Language: Two units of credit of the same Foreign Language shall be required for the College Preparatory (CP) and College Preparatory With Distinction (CP+) Programs Of Study. Students whose native language is not English may be considered to have met the Foreign Language requirement by exercising the credit in lieu of enrollment option if they are proficient in their native language. A formal examination is not necessary if other evidence of proficiency is available. One elective required of all students may be selected from courses in Foreign Language.

For a student who is hearing impaired, American Sign Language may be taken as an elective or as a core course to fulfill the requirements of the College Preparatory (CP) or College Preparatory With Distinction (CP+) seal. If American Sign Language is to be used to fulfill the College Preparatory requirement of two units of the same Foreign Language, adherence to the requirements in the following paragraph is required.

For the purpose of fulfilling the Foreign Language requirement for a College Preparatory (CP) or College Preparatory With Distinction (CP+) seal, a demonstrated proficiency in American Sign Language shall be accepted as a Foreign Language if it is determined that a deaf student has a hearing loss which significantly impacts upon the student’s ability to learn a foreign language. The IEP committee shall state in the IEP that American Sign Language is substituting for two units of Foreign Language.

For students who are not hearing impaired, American Sign Language may be taken for one unit of elective credit or for a third unit of Foreign Language credit.

- (4.) Health and Physical Education: For each program of study, one unit of credit of Health and Physical Education is required. Students shall combine one-half or one-third units of credit of Health (17.011), Health and Personal Fitness (36.051), or Advanced Personal Fitness (36.061) to satisfy this requirement. Health and Physical Education courses may be taken as electives for all programs of study. Courses in Physical Education shall be taken to enhance lifelong fitness and physical activities rather than development of athletic performance.

- (5.) Mathematics: for the College Preparatory (CP) and College Preparatory With Distinction Programs of Study four units of credit of approved mathematics will be required. The student record shall show credit or equivalency for each of the core courses of Algebra I (27.061); Euclidean Geometry (27.063) or Informal Geometry (27.062); and Algebra II (27.064) and an additional course listed in the College Preparatory Mathematics (27.06) or Advanced Mathematics (27.07) categories or Statistics (27.051). For the student who takes Applied Problem Solving (27.045) and Applied Algebra (27.046), the record shall show credit for Applied Problem Solving (27.045), Applied Algebra (27.046), Euclidean Geometry (27.063) or Informal Geometry (27.062) or Applied Geometry (27.047), and Algebra II (27.064). This latter program of study will fulfill admission requirements for some institutions in the University System of Georgia.

The Technology/Career-Preparatory (TC) and Technology Career-Preparatory With Distinction Programs of Study require that a student earn at least three units of mathematics which shall include, as a minimum, Algebra I or its equivalent. To meet the requirements for Algebra I or its equivalent, a student shall earn a unit of credit in (1) Algebra I or (2) a locally developed course equivalent to Algebra I that has been approved by the State Board of Education, or (3) earn two units of credit by passing both Applied Problem Solving and Applied Algebra or (4) two units of credit by passing both Concepts of Problem Solving and Concepts of Algebra.

- (6.) Science: Students shall earn at least three (3) units of credit in science.

Students entering ninth grade in 2002 and beyond, students receiving the College Preparatory (CP), College Preparatory with Distinction (CP+), the Technology/Career-prep. (TC), or Technology/Career-prep with distinction (TC+) diploma seal shall satisfactorily complete one physics, one biology, and one chemistry.

Science courses that meet the science requirements for graduation shall be year-long. All courses meeting the science requirements for graduation must be laboratory-based.

- (7.) Social Sciences: At least three units of credit shall be required in Social Studies. One unit of credit shall be required in United States History. One unit of credit shall be required in World History.

One-half unit of Citizenship Education (Government) shall be required. One-half unit of Principles of Economics/Business/Free Enterprise shall be required.

- (8.) Technology/Career-Preparatory: To receive the Technology/Career-Preparatory (TC) or Technology/Career-Preparatory With Distinction (TC+) seal, a student shall complete at least four Technology/Career-Preparatory units, three of which must be concentrated in one occupational or related program areas. One of the four units may include the Program of Education and Career Exploration (PECE), coordinated Vocational Academic Education (CVAE) or related Vocational Instruction (RVI).
- (9.) Required procedures for awarding units of credit.

- (I) A unit of credit for graduation shall be awarded to students only for successful completion of state-approved courses of study based on a minimum of 150 clock-hours of instruction provided during the regular school year, 135 clock-hours of instruction in an approved block schedule during the regular school year, or a minimum of 120 clock-hours of instruction in summer school.
- (II) Should the Columbia County Board of Education choose to grant Carnegie unit credit for learning that has occurred outside the 9-12 classroom, it shall use the following assessment procedures to award or exempt Carnegie unit credit in lieu of class enrollment: evaluation of the student's transcript for course equivalency and/or a proficiency test and/or actual classroom performance to determine mastered prerequisite skills. Equivalency credit shall be shown on the transcript.

7. LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- (I) The Columbia County Board of Education shall provide instructional support, and delivery services. These services shall include, but are not limited to, the following.
 - 1. A continuous guidance component beginning with the ninth grade. The purposes of the guidance component are to familiarize students with graduation requirements, to help them identify the likely impact of individual career objectives on the program of work studies they plan to follow and to provide annual advisement sessions to report progress and offer alternatives in meeting graduation requirements and career objectives.
 - 2. Record keeping and reporting services that document student progress toward graduation and include information for the school, parents and students.
 - 3. Diagnostic and continuous evaluation services that measure individual student progress in meeting competency expectations for graduation.
 - 4. Instructional programs, curriculum and course guides and remedial opportunities to assist each student in meeting graduation requirements.
 - 5. Appropriate curriculum and assessment procedures for students who have been identified as having disabilities that prevent them from meeting the prescribed competency performance requirements.

AUTHORITY: §Rule 160-4-2-.4

ADOPTED: 07/09/02

REVISED:

PROCEDURE: NO