



September

## **ZHS Graduation Requirements and the Michigan Merit Curriculum** **- An Overview**



In 2007, the State of Michigan enacted a set of statewide graduation requirements, known as the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC). In order to graduate from Zeeland East or West High School, a student must accumulate 22 credits. One semester class is equivalent to a half credit. Classes required for graduation include:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of Math (Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and a math-related class in the senior year)
- 3 years of Social Studies (Civics/Economics, United States History and World History)
- 3 years of Science (Biology, Chemistry, and 11th Grade Science)
- 1 year of Physical Education/Health
- 1 year of Applied, Performing, or Visual Art
- 2 years of World Language

Students who do not pass the above graduation requirements will be off track to graduate and may be required to take credit recovery courses outside of the normal school day. Please keep in mind that there are financial costs involved with taking these courses.

There are limited modifications that can be made to the above required curriculum. Through a personal curriculum (PC), students may choose to forgo some requirements by taking an additional English, math, science, or world language credit. Also, students may opt to waive their 2<sup>nd</sup> year World Language requirement by taking an additional credit of Applied, Performing, or Visual Art. Please see your counselor for more information.

### **Practical Tips to Get Organized for School Success**

One of the biggest challenges students will face during their high school years is learning how to manage their time and stay organized.

In high school, students are faced with having multiple teachers, each with their own set of assignments and expectations. Juggling these academic relationships (not to mention their extracurricular activities and social lives) can be overwhelming for some kids. Learning to keep track of their commitments can save frustration, time and lead to a successful high school experience.

Here are some practical ideas for organizing time and school work:

- **Use a planner.** This is an easy place to keep track of all assignments and important class activities. For students who need to write things down on paper, planners can be purchased at office supply stores. Otherwise, online planners/calendars are easily accessible with a student's Chromebook or on their personal device. For instance, through the Google Suite, students can utilize the Google Calendar to record important info. and due dates.

- **Use a three-ring binder to organize papers.** Students should use one, two or as many binders as they need with individual sections for each subject. With everything stored in notebooks, students will more likely have their notes with them once they get home.
- **Create a homework folder** to put all handouts, assignments, and school correspondence received during the day. This can be as simple as a folder that contains two pockets. Label the left pocket “in,” and label the right pocket “out.” All of the homework assignments that students must complete that night can be placed in the “in” pocket upon receipt of the assignment, and after students have completed the assignments, they can be placed in the “out” pocket to be turned in at school the next day. Once graded, the assignments can then be stored in the three-ring binder.
- **Set aside time to get organized.** Empty backpacks and homework folders after school and place items where they belong. Once papers have been sorted by subject, they can be filed in the appropriate section of the binder. Papers that require a parent’s attention can be placed in an "in-basket." Parents can help their children get into the habit of making this a regular practice by sitting with them as they weed through their papers, especially in the beginning of the school year.
- **Create a homework supply box.** An inexpensive storage container with a lid is great for keeping homework supplies together. A homework kit might include paper (loose-leaf, unlined and graph paper), sticky notes, index cards, black and blue pens, pencils, erasers, highlighters, ruler, calculator, stapler, scissors, glue stick, and a three-hole punch.
- **Decide on a regular location to do homework.** Some kids need a very structured and quiet space. Others do fine with a little background noise or in the company of a friend or sibling. By settling on an acceptable location in advance, you’ll minimize daily fights over who sits where and whether or not it’s okay to have the television on "just this time."
- **Set up a daily homework schedule.** Some students want to get through their assignments as soon as they get home; others need a little time to rest and unwind. Regardless, encourage them to set aside a specific block of time each day to complete homework – and then stick to it. This daily routine will teach them how to plan for homework and fit in other activities.



## **Frequently Asked Questions**



**Question:** I have a question for my child’s teacher. How do I contact him/her?

**Answer:** Parents can contact their son/daughter’s teachers via email or phone. Contact information is located on the school’s website – <http://www.zps.org>. Otherwise, one can call the main office. Zeeland East’s phone number is 748-3100 and West is 748-4500.

**Question:** Who is my child’s counselor?

**Answer:** Counselor assignments are determined by alphabet, based on a student’s last name.

### East Counselors

Kim Petroelje – last names A-F; [kpetroel@zps.org](mailto:kpetroel@zps.org)  
 Anna Wicks - last names G-M; [awicks@zps.org](mailto:awicks@zps.org)  
 Melissa Drnek – last names N-Z; [mdrnek@zps.org](mailto:mdrnek@zps.org)

### West Counselors

Lara DeWitt– last names A-Hn; [ldewitt@zps.org](mailto:ldewitt@zps.org)  
 Lauren Wondergem- last names Ho-Q; [lwonderg@zps.org](mailto:lwonderg@zps.org)  
 Dawn Collins – last names R-Z; [dcollins@zps.org](mailto:dcollins@zps.org)

**Question:** My student is a Zeeland East student. Does that mean that all of his/her classes will be held at East?

**Answer:** Even though a student is a Zeeland East or Zeeland West student, it does not mean that his/her classes will all be held at his/her home school. Some classes are offered in specific locations depending on the facilities available and teacher certification and expertise. For instance, all of the Engineering Department's classes are held at Zeeland West, while all Performing Arts classes take place at East.

**Question:** My son/daughter's schedule switches at the semester. Is this a problem?

**Answer:** No, it is normal to have different hours (and sometimes even different teachers) each semester. As long as each student has the required graduation classes on his/her schedule, this is not a problem.

**Question:** Can I make requests for teachers or a specific lunch?

**Answer:** The counseling department does not field teacher or lunch hour requests.

### **Counseling Office Website and Facebook Page**

Please visit <https://www.zps.org/schools/grades-6-12/zeeland-hs/counseling/> to explore the counseling office website. There is a wealth of information concerning your student's high school experience as well as post-high planning. We also post pertinent information on our Facebook page. Search for "Zeeland High School Counseling Office" and follow us!

### **Four Year Plan**

The last page of this newsletter contains a 4-Year Plan that students can use to map out courses for their high school career. Feel free to read through the Curriculum Guide, which provides a wealth of information concerning class descriptions, special programs, and other opportunities. The Curriculum Guide can be found on our website at <https://www.zps.org/schools/grades-6-12/zeeland-hs/counseling/>.

### **College Representative/Military Visits to ZHS**

Each fall, representatives from universities, colleges, and the military visit both Zeeland East and West High Schools. Please check the school announcements for a link of opportunities as well as to register. The list will be updated frequently so check back often. Students of all grades are welcome and encouraged to attend! This is a great way to learn more about a multitude of post-secondary options without having to leave the high school campus!

# FOUR YEAR PLAN

## **9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. English 9  | [ ]       |
| 2. Algebra 1 or Honors Algebra 1 (or above)           | [ ]       |
| 3. Biology or Honors Biology                          | [ ]       |
| 4. Civics/Economics                                   | [.5] [.5] |
| 5. PE 9 and Health [.5] / One Semester Elective _____ |           |
| 6. Elective _____                                     |           |

## **10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. English 10                             | [ ] |
| 2. Geometry or Honors Geometry (or above) | [ ] |
| 3. Chemistry/Physics or Honors Chemistry  | [ ] |
| 4. US History or AP US History            | [ ] |
| 5. Elective _____                         |     |
| 6. Elective _____                         |     |

## **11<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. English 11 or AP English Language        | [ ] |
| 2. Algebra 2 or Honors Algebra 2 (or above) | [ ] |
| 3. 11th Grade Science (multiple options)    | [ ] |
| 4. World History or AP World History        | [ ] |
| 5. Elective _____                           |     |
| 6. Elective _____                           |     |

## **12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. English 12 or AP English Literature | [ ] |
| 2. Math elective _____                 | [ ] |

**or**

a Math-related class \_\_\_\_\_

- |                   |
|-------------------|
| 3. Elective _____ |
| 4. Elective _____ |
| 5. Elective _____ |
| 6. Elective _____ |

## **Additional requirements that must be met sometime during the course of high school:**

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| --1 credit of an Applied, Performing, or Visual Arts class (taken at any time) | [ ] |
| --.5 credit of P.E. (one additional semester taken at any time)                | [ ] |
| --2 credits of Foreign Language  | [ ] |

\*Limited modifications may be made to some of the above requirements. Students should meet with their counselor for more information.