



## **Early College Graduation Policy**

*Colorado Early Colleges' mission is to prepare a diverse population of students for life by developing their mind, body and character through rigorous academic studies and character development activities in cooperation with the community we serve.*

*All students, regardless of background or skill level, will have the opportunity to pursue a growth mindset that will allow them to achieve mastery and will demonstrate that they can succeed in school, in college, and in their chosen career. No exceptions. No excuses.*

### **Colorado Early College Definition**

C.R.S. 22-35-103(10)(a) states, "Early college' means a secondary school that provides only a curriculum that requires each student to enroll in and complete secondary and postsecondary courses while enrolled in the four years of high school such that, upon successful completion of the curriculum, the student will have completed the requirements of a high school diploma and an associate degree, postsecondary credential, or at least 60+ college credits towards the completion of a postsecondary credential. The curriculum must be designed to be completed within four years."

### **Graduation Requirements**

The CEC Governing Board has established the following graduation requirements for all students. The minimum requirement of 20 credits in the categories listed below will result in a high school diploma. All students must earn an associate degree, postsecondary credential, or at least 60+ college credits in addition to meeting the high school graduation requirements to be awarded a CEC diploma:

#### English:

- 4 credits

#### Math:

- 3 credits
- Completion of an Associate of Applied Science degree waives this requirement.

#### Science:

- 2 credits
  - Laboratory classes in science must meet both process and content standards.
  - Required classes must be natural/physical science courses including but not limited to biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, and environmental science.
  - Completion of an Associate of Applied Science degree waives this requirement.

#### Social Sciences:

- 2 credits
  - Social Science credit includes the satisfactory completion of a civics/government course that encompasses information on both the history and culture of the United States and State of Colorado (C.R.S 22-1-104).
  - Students must also take a course that incorporates the new academic standards on Holocaust and Genocide studies as states in Colorado Law (HB20-1336).

### Academic Electives:

- 9 credits
  - Electives include the fine arts, technology, career and technical education, capstone, independent study, work based learning, physical education, and core content electives in English, math, science, social studies, and world languages.
  - World language is highly encouraged for any student planning on applying to a four year university. Students may also pursue the attainment of a Seal of Biliteracy at graduation in accordance with Colorado Senate Bill 17-123.
  - Electives must include a minimum of one .5 credit college/career readiness course, which is a graduation requirement, unless waived by the Head of School. This requirement is exempt for "College Direct students."

The successful completion of a 1000 level college course in English and math satisfies HEAR requirements and thus meets CEC graduation requirements only in **English** and **math** regardless of credits.

The Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) will set out a course of study for each student based on completion of all requirements for graduation. Students are required to participate in and successfully complete the requirements and goals of the ICAP process.

Full-time students transferring from other educational programs must meet CEC's graduation requirements to be awarded a CEC high school diploma. Part-time students do not need to meet CEC's graduation requirements as they are not eligible to graduate from CEC.

To the extent permitted by law, the CEA can waive requirements based on individual student circumstances. All requests must be made in writing to the CEA and must be included in the student's Graduation Plan.

Graduates must demonstrate, at a minimum, College and Career Readiness in English and math through one or more of the following approved options found on the [Menu of College and Career-Ready Demonstrations Fact Sheet](#). Further guidance on postsecondary credentials and the Menu of Options can be found in the "CEC Guidance on Postsecondary Credentials and Menu of Options" document.

### Exceptional Students

Regardless of whether the course work for a student with an IEP is aligned with the Colorado Academics Standards or Extended Evidence Outcomes, CEC will provide *accommodations* to enable the student receiving special education services to reach the same standards as students without disabilities. However, CEC will not modify any standard that any student must demonstrate in college or career readiness on the Graduation Guidelines Menu of Options in the areas of English or math.

### Graduation Ceremonies

To participate in a CEC graduation ceremony, students will be required to:

- Complete all required credits for graduation.
- Complete and submit all school-required graduation forms.
- Pay the appropriate Graduation Fee, if required.
- Return all school property.

#### Diploma Distinctions:

- Honors: 30-59 college credits and one postsecondary or industry certification or 3 postsecondary or industry certifications.
- High Honors: Associate degree or 60+ college credits.
- Cum Laude (with praise): 3.75-3.89 cumulative weighted GPA.
- Magna Cum Laude (with great praise): 3.9 – 4.199 cumulative weighted GPA.
- Summa Cum Laude (with highest praise): 4.2 and above cumulative weighted GPA.

To qualify as the Valedictorian and Salutatorian, a student(s):

- Must graduate Summa Cum Laude based off weighted GPA and with High Honors.
- Must walk in the graduation ceremony.
- The Valedictorian must give a speech or special presentation during the ceremony if the school requires it.
- Must be classified as graduating by the end of the fall semester of current school year, as only grades through the fall semester will be included in diploma distinctions calculations.

## **Early Graduation**

The CEC Governing Board believes that most students benefit from four years of high school experience. However, in some cases, students are ready for continued postsecondary education in a college/university or other opportunities at an earlier age. Therefore, the Head of School may grant permission to students wishing to graduate early, provided the student has met all CEC's graduation requirements in accordance with this policy.