

Administrative Memo

Date: November 27, 2018
To: School Administrators
From: Jocelyn Strand, coordinator, School Improvement
Subject: QS-18-005 - Use of Computer Science to Meet Graduation Requirements

During the 2018 Special Legislative Session, House Bill No. 3 was passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Mike Parsons on October 30, 2018.

The passage of this law, Section 170.018, RSMo, gives school districts/charter schools the authority to allow a student to fulfill one unit of academic credit with a district-approved computer science course for math, science or practical arts. A computer science course, as defined in this statute, is a course in which students study computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation, and impact on society.

In order for a computer science course to count as a math or science credit, the student must have completed the appropriate math and/or science course that requires an end-of-course examination or be on track to take all courses requiring end-of course examinations.

School districts/charter schools that elect to use a computer science course for a mathematics unit of credit shall communicate that institutions of higher education *may* require four units of academic credit in mathematics for college admissions. In addition, the parent, guardian or legal custodian of each student who chooses to take a computer science course to fulfill a unit of academic credit in mathematics shall sign and submit to the school district a document containing a statement acknowledging that taking a computer science course to fulfill a unit of academic credit in mathematics may have an adverse effect on college admissions decisions. A sample acknowledgement agreement is included on the second page of this memo.

The [Graduation Requirements for Students in Missouri Public Schools handbook](#) has been updated to reflect this change.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Norma Anderson at Norma.Anderson@dese.mo.gov or 573-751-4426.

Sample Computer Science Acknowledgement

To the parent/guardian of a (School Name) Student:

Missouri Statute (Section 170.018, RSMo) gives school districts/charter schools the ability to create a policy allowing high school students to fulfill one unit of academic credit toward meeting the high school graduation requirements with a district-approved computer science course. This can be used for awarding credit for a math, science, or practical arts course.

A computer science class, as defined in this law, is one in which students study computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation, and impact on society.

As a condition of this law, districts/charter schools must notify students and parents/guardians that some institutions of higher education may require four units of academic credit in mathematics for college admission, thus the use of computer science as a mathematics credit may have an adverse effect on college admissions. The same might be true of science.

Your son/daughter has expressed interest in utilizing computer science for a (math or science) academic credit toward meeting the high school graduation requirements. In signing this acknowledgment, as the parent/guardian and student, you acknowledge that you understand the implications of using computer science toward an academic credit of (math or science) on college admissions decisions.

As the legal parent/guardian of a high school student enrolled in (name of school), my student and I acknowledge by signing this form that we understand that using a computer science class to fulfill an academic credit for a (math or science) credit may have implications on college admissions decisions.

Student's Printed Name

Parent's Printed Name

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

Date Signed

Date Signed