



February

Scheduling

It's always hard to believe, but with the new calendar year comes scheduling for the following school year. In February, counselors will be visiting classes to discuss course selection for next school year. Students will receive a course selection sheet with a listing of possible courses for next fall. Students and parents should make every effort to sit down and dialogue about students' post-secondary and career aspirations. Keep in mind that Zeeland High School requires the following courses based on the State of Michigan's Merit Curriculum:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of Math (Geometry, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and a math or math-related class in the senior year)
- 3 years of Social Studies (Civics/Economics, U.S. History, and World History)
- 3 years of Science (Biology, either Chemistry or Physics, and a science elective)
- 2 years of World Language (Zeeland offers Spanish and Latin.)
- 1 year of Physical Education/Health
- 1 year of Visual, Applied, or Performing Art

The back side of the course selection sheet will list available courses for next school year. If you are in need of course descriptions for some of these courses, please feel free to download the Curriculum Guide from the Zeeland High School Counseling website at <http://counseling.zps.org>.

It can be helpful, also, to map out what four years of a student's high school experience will look like. The 4-year plan below can help one do just that.

TOTAL CREDITS NEEDED FOR GRADUATION: 22 (semester class = ½ credit)

	Math	English	Science	Social Studies	Electives	Electives	# of Credits
HS Credit earned in 8 th grade							
9 th Grade	Geometry Hon Geometry Algebra 1 Hon Algebra 1 STEM	English 9	Biology Honors Biology	Civics Economics AP Government	1 semester - Health/PE (unless taken in 8th gr or summer)	Elective	= 6
10 th Grade	Algebra 1 Hon Algebra 1 STEM Hon Algebra 2 STEM	English 10	Chemistry Honors Chemistry Physics	US History AP US History	Elective	Elective	= 6
11 th Grade	Algebra 2 Hon Algebra 2 STEM Pre-Calculus	English 11-1 (Junior Lit) English 11-2 (Amer Lit) AP English Language	Chemistry Wetlands Physics Intro to Anatomy and Physiology	World History AP World History	Elective	Elective	= 6

			OR see 12 th gr sciences				
12 th Grade	Intermediate Algebra Consumer Finance Pre-Calculus AP Calculus AP Statistics OR Senior Math Related Class	English 12-1 (Senior Lit) English 12-2 (British Lit) AP English Literature	AP Chemistry AP Biology Honors Human Anatomy and Phys AP Physics AP Environmental Science Forensics (1 sem) OR see 11 th grade sciences OR elective	Psychology AP Psychology AP Government Contemporary Issues 20th Century Conflicts OR elective	Elective	Elective	= 6

***The required credits in PE, Foreign Language & VPAA may be earned at any point prior to graduation**

***Colleges recommend at least 4 core classes during the senior year. (Math, English, Science, Social Studies or Foreign Language)**

***See the Curriculum Guide (<http://counseling.zps.org>) for information regarding altering graduation requirements through a Personal Curriculum (PC). Students can modify their Art, PE Elective, and/or Language requirement.**

***Careerline Tech Center is an option for students going into 11th and 12th grade. Students interested in learning more about the programs available should visit CTC's website at <http://www.oaisd.org/ctc>. They will also want to discuss this option with their counselor.**

Advanced Placement (AP)

What is the Advanced Placement Program?

The Advanced Placement Program, administered by The College Board and taught at local high schools, allows students to participate in a college level course and possibly earn college credit while still in high school. Secondary schools and colleges cooperate in this program to give students the opportunity to show mastery in college-level courses by taking the AP exam in May of each school year.

What are the advantages of my child taking an AP course?

The main advantage of taking an AP course is better preparation for college. It has been shown that students master in depth content at the college level more easily after completing AP courses in high school. Students also acquire sophisticated academic skills and increased self-confidence in preparation for college. Additionally, students who take AP exams may receive college credit while still in high school, saving both time and money.

How does an AP class compare to other high school courses?

AP classes are more challenging, and they take more time and require more work. AP classes require energetic, involved, and motivated students.

With the fact that AP classes are more difficult negatively affect my student's GPA?

Students who succeed in AP courses generally do well in college as a result of rigorous academic preparation. Zeeland gives an extra grade point weight for taking an AP course. In this way, a student's GPA is not adversely affected by taking AP courses. Colleges look favorably on students who tackle AP courses. Keep in mind, however, that students must be academically and socially ready to be challenged by an AP class.

What background does my child need in order to succeed in an AP course?

The content of AP courses is more sophisticated than that in typical high school courses. Students should have had practice in analyzing content, drawing comparisons, and reasoning through problems. They must be able to read perceptively and independently. Additionally, students will need to be proficient in writing clear, concise essays. Students who are not skilled in these areas must be even more highly motivated to make up deficiencies at the same time they are taking more rigorous courses. The earlier students prepare for AP or college courses by taking the most rigorous classes available, the more likely will be their success. The keys to success are motivation, self-discipline, and academic preparation.

What AP classes does Zeeland High School offer?

AP English Language, AP English Literature, AP Calculus, AP Statistics, AP Art, AP Psychology, AP United States History, AP Government, AP World History, AP Macroeconomics, AP Microeconomics, AP Biology, AP Environmental Science, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Spanish Language, and AP Music Theory

How much does it cost for my child to take an AP course? Exam?

There are no charges for the courses if they are part of a school's curriculum. The exams cost roughly \$97 each.

Will my child receive college credit?

The AP exams are given every year in May. Scores are reported to the colleges designated by the student and range from 1 (no recommendation) to 5 (extremely qualified). Each college determines the scores to be accepted for credit, but many consider a score of at least 3. Colleges may award three, and sometimes six, hours of credit per test. Students should contact individual colleges to find out about the policy of each. Many colleges have information available on their websites by searching for "AP credit."

Does my child have to take an AP course in order to take an AP exam?

No. However, research indicates that students who take AP courses score higher on AP exams than those students who do not take the courses.