

Creating a High School Road Map

This lesson is designed to help students create a high school course plan based on their favorite subjects, skills, and interests.

OBJECTIVES

Students will...

1. Learn how courses align with graduation requirements and post-high school plans
2. Learn about CTE programs and determine if they will go to a vocational or technical high school
3. Learn about MassCore requirements
4. Review their favorite subjects
5. Start to develop their course schedule based on graduation requirements and post-high school plans

ACTIVITIES

PART 1

Content Knowledge

Lead a class discussion about graduation requirements. Explain that each high school has its own graduation requirements and students need to take certain required courses each year to graduate.

Ask students if they have considered a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. Explain that CTE programs offer students opportunities to explore and develop vocational and technical skills in a variety of career and technical fields. Through a sequence of technical and academic courses, students develop a foundation of knowledge and skills to help them transition into postsecondary education or work.

Next, explain to students what MassCore is. MassCore is a state-recommended program of study intended to align high school coursework with college and workforce expectations.

The MassCore program of study includes completion of:

- 4 units of math
- 4 units of English
- 3 units of lab-based science
- 3 units of history
- 2 units of the same foreign language
- 1 unit of the arts
- 5 additional “core” courses

Grade Level: 8

MEFA PATHWAY SECTIONS
WITHIN THIS LESSON:

- Favorite Subjects

DOMAIN:

- College & Career Exploration
- Academic Skills

TIME:

- 45 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet connection to work with the MEFA Pathway website

FUTURE READY SKILLS:

- Organization
- Time-Management
- Research

VOCABULARY:

- MassCore
- Unit
- CTE

Email any questions to:
k12support@mefa.org



LESSON PLAN

Explain to students that a “unit” represents a full academic year of study. Remind them that completing MassCore requirements increases the chance that students meet admissions requirements for Massachusetts 4-year public colleges and the University of Massachusetts colleges. Additionally, it will also improve their chances of admission to private colleges.

PART 2

Applying Information

Have students research programs that are offered at the high school they will be attending by visiting that high school’s website. Will they attend a traditional or vocational/technical high school?

Have students identify courses that are graduation requirements of their future high school and meet MassCore requirements.

PART 3

Evaluating Information

Have students log in to MEFA Pathway and navigate to *Career Discovery Zone* under the *Discover Careers* tab. Students should then select the *Favorite Subjects* assessment. Have students select their favorite subject; this will bring up examples of high school courses related to this subject. Encourage students to hover over each course to learn more.

Next, have students navigate to *Digital Portfolio* under the *About Me* tab. Students should update their favorite subjects, interests, skills, technology skills, and future path by clicking the *EDIT* button within each of these categories. These selections can be changed as the student grows and develops a postsecondary plan.

PART 4

Critical Thinking/Creative Application

Instruct students to document their findings by creating a journal entry by clicking on the pen icon in the lower right corner. The journal entry should include a list of the high school courses related to the subjects they enjoy and a framework for their course plan. Once students are in 9th grade, they can add courses to their *Course Planner* in MEFA Pathway.

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MassCORE Requirements

MassCore Framework Massachusetts High School Program of Studies		
SUBJECT	UNITS	NOTES
English Language Arts	4 Units	
Mathematics	4 Units	Including completion of Algebra II or the Integrated Mathematics equivalent. A mathematics course during senior year is recommended for all students. Students may substitute one unit of Computer Science that includes rigorous mathematical concepts and aligns with the Digital Literacy and Computer Science standards for a mathematics course.
Science	3 Units of lab-based science	Coursework in technology/engineering courses may also count for MassCore science credit. Students may substitute one unit of Computer Science that includes rigorous scientific concepts and aligns with the Digital Literacy and Computer Science standards for a laboratory science course.
History and Social Science	3 Units	Including U.S. History and World History.
Foreign Language	2 Units	Of the same language.
Physical Education	As required by law	"Physical education shall be taught as a required subject in all grades for all students" (M.G.L. c.71 §3).
Arts	1 Unit	
Additional Core Courses	5 Units	Other additional coursework (including Career and Technical Education) or any of the above.

*A unit represents a full academic year of study or its equivalent in a subject that covers all the standards contained in a specific Curriculum Framework.

** Students enrolled in a state-approved Career and Technical Education program of studies have the option of opting out of Foreign Language and Art and still fulfill MassCore.

*** districts may designate students with demonstrated fluency and literacy in language(s) other than English as meeting the MassCore recommendations for foreign language

MassCore is a recommended program of study Massachusetts high school students need to excel in college, career, and civic life. Developed by an advisory group from elementary and secondary education, higher education, nonprofits, and the private sector, MassCore maintains flexibility for students while letting districts set additional graduation requirements. Courses included in MassCore should be rigorous, engaging, and based on appropriate learning standards for high school or beyond. Fulfilling MassCore is just a start. Students should also engage in a full range of additional learning opportunities, such as: accelerated/advanced coursework; capstones or senior projects; dual enrollment courses; online courses; service learning; work-based learning; clubs and student organizations; varsity and intramural athletics; and part-time employment.

Creating a High School Road Map Grading Rubric

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CATEGORY	EXCELLENT 4	GOOD 3	SATISFACTORY 2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 1
Sequencing of Information	The information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Some information is logically sequenced.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Effectiveness	The entry includes all material needed to give a good understanding of the topic.	The entry is lacking one or two key elements.	The entry is missing more than two key elements.	The entry is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies.
Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (size, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formats have been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Conventions. Student uses proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The entry has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	The entry has 1- 2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	The entry has 1- 2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	The entry has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors.