

Memorandum

I. Background

The new High School Readiness metrics on the middle school Progress Report will award middle schools credit for preparing students for high school. These metrics include (1) the percentage of all 8th graders who have earned high school credit by the end of 8th grade, and (2) the percentage of the middle school's former 8th graders who met the criteria for the high school Progress Report's credit accumulation metric for the first year of high school. While these metrics are correlated with high school success, they do not take into account the full range of coursework in our City's middle schools that prepares students for high school.

Therefore, the NYC DOE is launching a High School Preparatory Course Certification (HSPCC) process to recognize middle school courses that build high school readiness skills and expand the range of courses for which middle schools can earn credit on the High School Readiness metrics. The HSPCC certifies a specific course, not a school or a teacher.

II. Requirements for HSPCC Eligibility

1. The course must have **high standards** as defined by the New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and demonstrate results—it should contribute to a greater likelihood of success in early high school for students passing the course.
2. The course must not be a middle school accelerated course (*i.e.*, a high school level course culminating in a Regents exam or state Language Proficiency Exam or an approved high school credit-bearing course), as these courses are already included in the High School Readiness metrics. Examples of middle school accelerated courses include: U.S. History, Global History, Integrated Algebra, Geometry Year 1, Living Environment, Earth Science, English Composition, French year 1, Latin year 1, Spanish year 1, and Italian year 1. Additional information on middle school accelerated courses is available [here](#).
3. The course must be established and have been taken by **at least 25 students who enrolled in a NYC DOE high school by October 31, 2011 and remained enrolled in high school through the end of their 9th grade year**.
4. The course must be **taught in the 2012-13 school year**, and there should be **plans to continue** offering the course in the future.
5. The course must serve predominately **eighth graders**.
6. There must be a range of **student work and teacher work (assignments and assessments) as well as a comprehensive curriculum and/or scope and sequence document on file** from the course.
7. If multiple sections of the course are offered, all sections should be **horizontally aligned** with similar expectations, assignments, and grading policies. The school must be willing to have a **classroom visitation** by a trained reviewer to observe the course and student work (not the teacher).

III. Process

There are two parts to the HSPCC application process involving quantitative and qualitative evaluations. Schools may nominate **up to four** courses for HSPCC.

Part I of the application (**used for the quantitative evaluation**) may be submitted on a rolling basis from **December 3, 2012 to December 14, 2012**. The **quantitative evaluation** employs a statistical analysis to evaluate the relationship between passing the course and success in early high school, controlling for student characteristics to ensure fair comparisons. For a course to pass this evaluation, it must be at least as rigorous and associated with high school success as are the courses that already count toward the High School Readiness metrics (a high school level course culminating in a Regents exam or state Language Proficiency Exam or an approved high school credit-bearing course). Schools will be informed of the results of the quantitative evaluation during the week of **January 7, 2013**. **Schools will be invited to submit Part II of the application only for courses that pass Part I.**

Part II of the application (**used for the qualitative evaluation**) may be submitted on a rolling basis from the week of **January 7, 2013 to February 1, 2013**. The **qualitative evaluation** looks at the quality and rigor of a course as measured by the CCLS and how a course develops the academic and personal behaviors necessary for success in high school. The evaluation is based on the information and instructional artifacts provided in Part II of the application. Course observations may further inform the review process.

Courses that pass both the quantitative and qualitative evaluations will be certified. Schools will be notified of final HSPCC decisions by spring 2013.

Courses certified through the HSPCC process will receive either a one-year certification or a three-year certification, depending on the strength of the application. Schools certified for three years must verify in the second and third years of certification that the offered course is not substantially different from the course submitted for certification. Once the certification expires, a course must be nominated for re-certification using a modified application process. More information on the re-application process will be available in fall 2013.

Courses that do not receive certification are invited to reapply in subsequent years, though we strongly encourage schools to work with their network team and other support providers to investigate why the course was not certified and to increase the rigor of the course before reapplying.

Random reviews of courses may occur to ensure that the offered course is comparable to the submitted course.

IV. Modified Application Process for Special Circumstances

Please see below for modified application instructions for new schools and schools that have adopted a previously certified course from another school.

Category	Description	Special Instructions
New school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My school opened in 2008; <i>and</i> • Nominated course has NOT been taken by at least 25 students who graduated 8th grade by August 2011. 	Please send an email to HSPCertification@schools.nyc.gov for a possible exception to the 25 student rule. For a course to pass this evaluation, it must be at least as rigorous and associated with high school success as are the courses that already count toward the High School Readiness metrics (a high school level course culminating in a Regents exam or state Language Proficiency Exam or an approved high school credit-bearing course). Exceptions will be granted on a case-by-case basis.
Adopted a certified course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School adopted a HSPCC-approved course from another school. 	Please send an email to HSPCertification@schools.nyc.gov to obtain a waiver of Part I – Quantitative application and for instructions on how to submit a modified Part II – Qualitative application.

V. HSPCC Implications

Schools will earn credit on the Progress Report High School Readiness metrics for students who pass courses certified through HSPCC. Courses that are not approved as part of HSPCC will not appear on the Progress Report, nor will any indication of the course's application for HSPCC.

VI. Supporting Schools

As we prepare for the implementation of the CCLS, the DOE will feature materials and courses surfaced through these applications. By submitting an application, schools grant the DOE permission to share their work. Materials from both courses that are certified and those that are not may be shared on the Common Core Library and the Progress Report website and in professional development sessions to support schools in deepening their understanding of effective course design.

Any student work shared will be done so anonymously. To reference the current Common Core-aligned tasks and instructional supports, visit: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/CommonCoreLibrary/SeeStudentWork/default.htm>.

VII. Timeline

Date	Milestone
December 3, 2012	Application Part I opens
November 29, 2012 (Brooklyn) December 3, 2012 (Webinar) December 6, 2012 (Bronx)	Trainings for Network Performance Points and Network Instructional Points
December 14, 2012	Application Part I due by EOD
Week of January 7, 2013	Schools notified of Part I decisions/schools invited to submit Application Part II for courses that pass the quantitative evaluation
February 1, 2013	Application Part II due by EOD
Spring 2013	Schools notified of final HSPCC decisions

Please visit the [Progress Report Website](#) for resources such as Frequently Asked Questions, qualitative evaluation rubrics, and a learning activity. For questions related to your HSPCC application, please contact your [Network Performance Point](#) or email HSPCCertification@schools.nyc.gov.