



## PUTNAM COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #535

### Recommendation for the Board of Education

---

**Meeting:** January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Item:** PCHS Program Requirements (Second Reading & Approval)

**Recommendation:** I recommend the Board of Education approve the program requirements for PCHS programs, specifically the Area Career Center, Work-Based Learning, and PC College and Career Start Programs. These requirements were first presented to the Board of Education for review in December 2025 and shared with all PCHS faculty and staff at the January Institute Day.

Over the past decade, Putnam County High School has expanded learning opportunities for students to create meaningful and streamlined pathways between high school and post-secondary options. These efforts include the addition of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, the expansion dual credit with Illinois Valley Community College (PC College and Career Start), the development of career-focused courses within Career-Technical Education (e.g., Work-Based Learning), and the continued promotion of Area Career Center (ACC) courses. While many students have benefited from these opportunities, we have also seen situations where clearer eligibility guidelines would have better supported student success. Additionally, the purpose of these programs is to expose well-prepared students to post-secondary experiences, not to fully remove them from their high school environment.

In response, we have reviewed and defined eligibility requirements and guidelines both for initial enrollment in these programs and for maintaining continued participation. These expectations also help ensure that students remain connected to PCHS and its school climate.

Key considerations are as follows:

- Establishing the required number of credits a student must earn by the end of junior year to participate in a program during their senior year
- Setting the required number of service learning hours needed by the end of junior year
- Defining academic requirements (e.g., GPA, ACT scores) for participation
- Outlining behavior and discipline expectations for eligibility and maintaining enrollment in programs

Our goal is not to restrict access to these opportunities, but rather to ensure students are appropriately prepared to succeed in them. Also, by clarifying expectations, faculty and staff can more effectively guide students earlier in their educational pathways.