

# 2015-2016

# Missouri Option Program

# Information & Application



## **FRANCIS HOWELL MISSOURI OPTION MISSION**

The Francis Howell School District has implemented the Missouri Option Program for those students who, for whatever reason, are not able to graduate with their cohort group. Also, the program is for those who would like to come back and re-enroll as a student to achieve their high school diploma. The FHSD Missouri Option Program is committed to helping those students who have realized the importance of earning a high school diploma achieve their dream of being a high school graduate.

**Mr. Rob Gaugh, Principal**  
**Mr. Zack Sheets, Teacher Leader**  
**Mr. John DeSpain, Program Coordinator and Instructor**

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(636) 851 - 4862

**Francis Howell Union High School**

**1405 Highway D**

**St. Charles, Missouri 63304-2217**

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## Student Eligibility

- **Age** - Student's must be at least *17-years old*, at least in their *senior year* and *no more than 20 years of age*.
- **Credits** - Students must be *at least one year's credit behind their cohort group (class)*, or for other significant reasons identified in the local plan, be unable to complete their diploma with their cohort group. Cohort is defined as the year that a student enrolled in Kindergarten
- **Locator** - Students must have *at least an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading and math level*. There may be exceptions pending the student's strengths and needs. This is identified by administering a locator test (TABE).
- Students must be officially enrolled in one of the four Francis Howell High Schools (Francis Howell High, Francis Howell Central, Francis Howell North, Francis Howell Union) to enroll in the Missouri Option Program – the student does not need to be enrolled to apply, but once the student is accepted, they must enroll, obviously – the student must live within the FHSD boundaries, however.

## Enrollment Process

- Students must fill out The Missouri Option Program (MO OP) Application located in the back of this information packet.
  - o Students, along with their parent(s) or guardian(s), must complete Parts I and II and sign The Missouri Option Program Contract.
  - o The sending school's guidance counselor and the student's principal will complete and sign Part III.
  - o The sending school's finance secretary will sign off that the student has paid all fines and all textbooks have been returned.
    - **It is not the responsibility of the MO OP Coordinator to collect fines. It is up to the sending school to collect any fines due.**
- The completed application is then sent to the MO OP Coordinator by the students counselor / principal
- After the MO OP application is reviewed, the student will take part in an interview with the Missouri Option Coordinator.
  - o During this time the student will also take a locator test over reading and mathematics to determine if the student is at an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level.
- If the student is accepted into the program, they then must enroll at their sending school, *if not already enrolled*.
- If the student has a 504 plan or an IEP, the 504 plan or IEP must be sent to the Missouri Option Coordinator in order for it to be reviewed by the FHU Special Education teacher to determine the type of interventions or accommodations the student will be eligible to receive for the HiSET test.

## Procedure and Requirements for Graduation

- Students completing the Missouri Option Program will receive a Francis Howell School District High School Diploma and will be considered a high school graduate.
- A student will complete the program and receive their high school diploma when they have met the following criteria:
  - o 1 credit in an American Government class
  - o Passing score on the Missouri Constitution test
  - o Passing score on the US Constitution test
  - o ½ credit in a Personal Finance class
  - o ½ credit in a Health class
  - o Successful completion of the HiSET exam
  - o Successful completion of the class hours required in the program
  - o Successful completion of the work hours/volunteer hours required for the program
- **4<sup>th</sup> year senior students** who have all of the criteria for graduation completed before the scheduled graduation date may stop attending class but must bring in, on average, 30 work or volunteer hours per week.
  - o The student will not receive their diploma until their cohort group's graduation date. They may receive a copy of their transcript showing that all coursework is completed and a diploma will be issued in June.
- **Those students whose cohort group has already graduated** and have all of the criteria for graduation completed are eligible to receive their diploma upon completion of the program, regardless of when during the school year that may be. These students are allowed and encouraged to walk in the FHU / MO OP graduation ceremony for that year.

**PLEASE NOTE** – The State of Missouri has phased out the GED exam in favor of the HiSET exam. The HiSET is similar to the GED in regards to the actual test itself, but the HiSET is much more cost effective and is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The HiSET will be replacing the GED in January 2014. The HiSET serves the exact same purpose as the GED, it is simply a different test by a different publisher.

### Cost

The Missouri Option Program costs nothing to attend. However, there is a cost associated with the HiSet. The cost for the HiSet is \$95 (\$60 registration fee and \$7 per sub section). The Francis Howell School District will pay for each student to take their first full test. If the student needs to take a retest, they will be responsible for that cost themselves (a student only needs to retake those subtests they fail, not the entire HiSET, so \$7 per subtest they fail). Please feel free to contact the Missouri Option Program Coordinator about any questions or concerns about this cost.

**\*IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT EACH STUDENT HAVE A VALID STATE ISSUED ID (DRIVERS LICENSE, PERMIT, NON-DRIVERS PHOTO STATE ID, PASSPORT). A STUDENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO TEST WITHOUT A STATE ISSUED PHOTO ID!**

## Attendance Procedures

- Students are required to attend 15 hours of school per week (3 hours per day).
- **All missed hours or absences must be made up before a student will be allowed to GRADUATE.**
- **If a student is absent,** please call the Missouri Option Coordinator at the following number: 636-851-4862.
- If a student begins to accrue a large amount of missed hours, the parent or guardian will be contacted and a plan of action will be discussed to decrease the number of unexcused absences.
- If a student acquires 30+ missed hours, the student will be put on an attendance contract. The bulk of said contract will stipulate that if a student acquires one more unexcused absence, he or she will be dropped from the Missouri Option Program.
- Each student is allowed to be enrolled in the Missouri Option program for a *maximum of 2 years*, if the requirements for graduation are not met in that time, the student will be dropped from the program.

## Late (Tardy) Arrivals

- Promptness is a requirement! Being on time is the responsibility of the student just as it would be for a job.
- Students who arrive late will be required to make up any time missed.
  - o Students are required to make up time missed by either coming early, staying late, or continuing to come after all other requirements for graduation are met, until the missed hours are made up.

## Work Requirement

- **Students will be required to have proof of a job, community service, or other supervised activity before they are admitted into the program.**
- Students will be required to work **a minimum of 15 hours a week.**
- Having a job is not the only option for this requirement, a student may do volunteer work, participate in a club or a sport, as long as it is a supervised out of school activity and gives the student at least 15 hours a week.
- Students will be required to stay at the same employment during the duration of this program unless legitimate and/or unplanned circumstances occur that forces the student to leave or quit.
  - o Being fired is not an option.
  - o If a student does not abide by this, he or she will be removed from the program
- **STUDENTS MUST HAVE ALL OF THEIR WORK HOURS UP TO DATE BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO GRADUATE.**

## **Program Location**

- The Missouri Option program is located at Francis Howell Union High School in room C211.

## **Student Regular Full Day Schedule**

- Morning session: 7:30 – 10:30
- Afternoon session: 11:15 – 2:15

## **Lunch**

- In general, lunch is not provided to Missouri Option students. Please speak with the Missouri Option Program Coordinator if you have special circumstances.

## **All Discipline Issues**

- Discipline issues will be handled by the Missouri Option Coordinator, Teacher Leader, and/or the Principal of Francis Howell Union High School.
- If discipline issues become disruptive to the positive learning environment, the student will be removed from The Missouri Option Program.

## **School Closing Due to Inclement Weather**

- If a decision is made by the Francis Howell School District Office to close school due to bad weather or for other emergency reasons, the district official in charge of this decision will contact local radio and television stations of such closings.

## **Parking Information and Regulations**

- Students who are enrolled in the Missouri Option Program have access to a school bus only one way.
  - o If they are in the morning session they may ride the bus to school; if they are in the afternoon session they may ride the bus home
  - o The student must provide their own transportation for the other leg of the trip.
- Missouri Option Program students who drive are required to obtain a parking pass. All past fines from their home school must be paid before a student is eligible for a parking pass.
  - o Parking is not permitted in the bus loading zone or in front of the school. These spaces are reserved for FHHS students leaving before the end of the school day.
  - o Students who do not have a valid parking permit will not be permitted to park at Francis Howell Union High School.

- Parking violations are subject to a \$10.00 fine for the first, second and third incident. Subsequent violations will be assessed a \$20.00 fine. Parking in a faculty, visitor or handicapped space is a \$30.00 fine. Students who continue to park illegally on campus will have their vehicle towed at their expense.
- Upon applying for a parking permit, all students are required to enroll in the random drug testing program.
- The school assumes no liability for theft, damages, or accidents occurring on school property. Parking is at the owners' risk.
- Missouri Law requires proof of Liability Insurance to operate a motor vehicle. Proof of insurance and drivers license must be presented with this application before it can be processed.
- **Francis Howell Union High School reserves the right to enter and inspect the interior/exterior of a vehicle without consent.**
- Francis Howell reserves the right to revoke a driver's permit for any reason. If such instance occurs, the student(s) will have to be dropped off and picked up from school.
- **IF A STUDENT HAS AN ISSUE WITH ANY OF THE ABOVE STIPULATIONS, HE OR SHE DOES NOT NEED TO PARK ON CAMPUS.**

## **The 5 Subject-areas on the HiSET exam**

### **1. Language Arts - Writing – 2 parts**

- a. Part I has 50 multiple-choice questions (75 minutes). Test includes the following: Organization of ideas (20%), Language Facility (25%), and Writing Conventions (55%)
- b. Part II is an essay (45 minutes).

### **2. Language Arts - Reading**

- a. This subtest has 40 multiple-choice questions (65 minutes). This test includes the following: literacy texts (60%) and informational texts (40%).

### **3. Mathematics**

- a. This subtest has 50 multiple choice questions (90 minutes). Content of the test includes Numbers and Operations of Numbers (19%), Measurement/Geometry (18%), Data Analysis/Probability/Statistics (18%), Algebraic Concepts (45%)  
- a calculator will be provided for the entire math subtest.

### **4. Social Studies**

- a. This subtest has 50 multiple-choice questions (80 minutes). This test includes the following: natural history (25%), economics (20%), civics and government (25%), world history (15%), and geography (15%).

### **5. Science**

- a. This subtest has 50 multiple-choice questions (80 minutes). This test includes the following: life sciences (25%), physical science (25%), earth science (50%).

# Frequently Asked Questions

(Partially taken from: [http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/Missouri\\_option\\_faq.htm](http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/Missouri_option_faq.htm))

The Missouri Option Program is available in participating public school districts and eligible agencies during the regular school year. To offer this program, local schools must meet requirements established by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Participation is voluntary for schools and students.

## **What is the Missouri Option Program?**

The Missouri Option Program is designed to target students who have the capabilities to complete Missouri High School Graduation Requirements, but for a variety of reasons lack the credits needed to graduate with their class and are at risk of leaving school without a high school diploma.

The program specifically targets those students who are 17 years of age or older and are at least one year behind their cohort group or for other significant reasons identified in the local Missouri Option Program plan.

**Note: For the Missouri Option Program, cohort is defined as when a student started kindergarten, not high school.**

## **Does the military accept the Missouri Option Program diploma?**

Yes, but with some caveats:

- **Marines** – Accepted, but cannot start until diploma is issued
- **Army** – Accepted with an ASVAB score of 50 or higher
- **Navy** – Accepted
- **Air Force** – Accepted

## **Do Colleges / Universities accept the Missouri Option Program diploma?**

Yes, but not all. I have contacted a number of universities in the area to request their entrance requirements for Missouri Option Program graduates; below are a couple of examples. If you are interested in attending a college / university and you would like me to check on their specific entrance requirements, I'd be happy to, just let me know.

- **University of Missouri, Columbia (Mizzou)** - At least a 500 on each GED subtest
- **Lindenwood University** – Admissible on a case by case basis
- **University of Missouri, St. Louis (UMSL)** – At least a total score of 2500 on GED and a 24 or higher on ACT
- **Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO)** – At least a 500 on each GED subtest AND at least an 18 on the ACT

\*These are based on GED scores, I am in the process of contacting the schools to update their requirements with HiSET specific scores (the HiSET grading scale is different than the GED), but to give you an idea, I kept the GED requirements. Please contact the Missouri Option Program Coordinator should you have any questions or concerns.

### **When did the Missouri Option Program begin in Missouri?**

In 2002 the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education initiated the Missouri Option Program. The program is approved by the American Council on Education (owners of the GED Tests) and the Missouri State Board of Education.

### **How does the Missouri Option Program benefit a school?**

School Districts approved by DESE to participate in the Missouri Option Program can continue to receive average daily attendance funds for the participating students. Additionally, students remain in school and are not required to dropout when it is time to take the HiSET. Once the school district issues a High School diploma, participants are then counted as graduates.

**Note: The FHSD Missouri Option Program diploma is a regular high school diploma; it is not “other” or “alternative”. The diploma awarded to graduates of the FHSD Missouri Option Program is exactly the same as a diploma awarded at one of the traditional high schools, the only difference being that it is awarded by the Francis Howell School District, not by a specific high school.**

### **How does the Missouri Option Program benefit a student?**

Students in the Missouri Option Program will be provided guidance and counseling services consistent with the high school program. Ongoing academic/career advisement will be provided by the Missouri Option Program instructor(s), with supplemental guidance and counseling provided, as needed. Students will have access to all educational programs and services available in the school district, have the opportunity to stay in school, receive valuable academic and life-skills instruction, earn a High School diploma, and have the option of taking part in commencement ceremonies.

### **What is required of Missouri Option Program students?**

A minimum of 15 hours of academic instruction per week will be provided. Students must also be enrolled in other school supervised instructional activities (career education courses, elective classes, work experience, etc.) that lead to student's classification by the district as a full-time student. The school district/eligible agency should provide a level and quality of education that ensures the integrity of the Missouri Option Program and locally issued High School diploma.

School districts may have additional requirements when issuing a regular high school diploma that is consistent with what is required of all students. They must take the MAP tests appropriate for their age/grade level. They must take a course in government and the functions of government and pass the required tests related to the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions. In addition, they must participate in appropriate substantive counseling and life-skills training that will assist them with job-readiness, financial management and independent living skills.



**If a student takes the HiSET, what documentation will the district receive from the state verifying the students results?**

The HiSET Tests are designed to measure the major academic skills and knowledge associated with a high school program of study. Students enrolled in the Missouri Option Program take (and pass) the HiSET Tests to demonstrate and document the attainment of high school-level skills. The HiSET score report is one of the academic components required for the awarding of a high school diploma by the local district, and as such, is placed in the student's permanent record. **Since the purpose of the Missouri Option Program is to qualify the student for a high school diploma, the scores are only valid in that context.**

**What happens if a student fails to complete the Missouri Option Program?**

Should a student fail to complete other program requirements even if they have achieved a passing score on their HiSET, they will receive neither a high school diploma nor a certificate of High School Equivalence (HSE). Their status will revert to that of a high school dropout. The student would have to take the HiSET Test as a dropout to be eligible to earn a HSE certificate.

**What are some common misconceptions about the Missouri Option Program?**

The Missouri Option Program is NOT an "early out" program or "easy out" alternative. Schools that attempt to use it for these purposes will be disqualified. It is specifically intended to meet the needs of students who are credit-deficient (for whatever reasons), but who otherwise could be expected to meet regular graduation requirements. This program is NOT just intended to prepare students for the HiSET Test; it must provide substantive academic content aligned with the school's regular curriculum and expectations. Students must attend school regularly and have access to the kind of counseling and support services that are available to all students.

**What are the requirements for the faculty in the Missouri Option Program?**

Teachers working in this program must have a valid Missouri teaching certificate in any secondary-level area or in Adult Education and Literacy (AEL). AEL certification is not required if the educator already has a valid teaching certificate.

**Note:** Mr. DeSpain (Current MO OP Coordinator, 2015) holds a Bachelor's Degree in History and a Master's Degree in Education from Truman State University. 2015/16 will be his 7<sup>th</sup> year with the Missouri Option Program. Prior to his taking over the Missouri Option Program, Mr. DeSpain taught history at FHHS.

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Francis Howell School District  
**MISSOURI OPTION PROGRAM APPLICATION AND  
CONTRACT**

This Application MUST be filled out completely.  
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!!!

Part I: To be filled out by the applicant along with the parent(s)/guardian(s)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ School ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Referring School: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently have an IEP, 504 plan? YES or NO (Circle one)

If you have an IEP, who is your case manager? \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the name(s) and phone contact(s) of your parent(s)/guardian(s) (if you are your own, please mark that)

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell or Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell or Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the student have any medical conditions that we need to be aware of? YES or NO

If yes, please list (*be sure to turn in the proper medical forms to the FHHS nurse as well*):

\_\_\_\_\_

Which session would you prefer? Please circle one

**Morning (7:30 – 10:30)      Afternoon (11:15 – 2:15)**

What is the student's plan for transportation to and from the program?

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's plan for achieving the 15 hour work requirement:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please state where the student is working and or volunteering:

\_\_\_\_\_

Part II: To be filled out completely by the student / applicant

Please answer each question completely and LEGIBLY!

Why do you feel you are a good candidate for the Missouri Option Program?

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What difficulties have you experienced in school in the past that has stopped you from succeeding?

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Why do you want to enroll in the Missouri Option Program as opposed to getting your MO HSE (Previously known as GED)?

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What do you feel are your strengths and weaknesses?

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**Part III: To be fully completed by the referring school's guidance counselor before sending to the Missouri Option Program Coordinator**

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Cohort Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Referring School: \_\_\_\_\_ Is the student a 4<sup>th</sup> year senior or beyond? \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone extension: \_\_\_\_\_

Current total credits: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer yes or no to the following

\_\_\_\_\_ 1) Has the student ever been retained? If so, how many years and when? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 2) The student is currently enrolled in their home school

\_\_\_\_\_ 3) Parent Contacted?

\_\_\_\_\_ 4) The Missouri Option application and contract is completed and signed by both student and parent / guardian (parent / guardian must approve and sign regardless of student age) with appropriate contact information

\_\_\_\_\_ 5) 1 credit of American Government complete

\_\_\_\_\_ 6) 1/2 credit in Health complete

\_\_\_\_\_ 7) 1/2 credit of Personal Finance complete

\_\_\_\_\_ 8) US constitution test passed \_\_\_\_\_ Missouri Constitution Test passed

Student's plan for achieving the 15 hour work requirement **(be specific as to where the student is working or volunteering):**

Counselor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal / Dean Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Finance Secretary Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*(It is not the Missouri Option Coordinator's or FHU's responsibility to collect fines, it is up to the home school to collect any fines owed, if the student owes fines, please either collect them before sending the application or contact the student directly)\*\*

Please attach a copy of the student's transcript.

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**Missouri Option Program Contract  
Francis Howell Union High School**

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent / Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. All Students will follow all rules of Francis Howell Union High School. By signing this contract you are stating that you have read and understand the student code of conduct and all parking rules and regulations (copies of both may be obtained at parent's request from the FHU main office).
2. By signing this contract you are stating that you have read, understand, and will abide by the rules and guidelines outlined in the Missouri Option Program information packet, especially the sections listed below:
  - Procedure and Requirements for graduation
  - Attendance Procedures
  - Work Requirement
  - FAQs
3. ANY scores received on the HiSET test while in the Missouri Option Program are VOID if the student drops or is dropped from the program. The HiSET scores received while enrolled in the program CANNOT be used to receive a HiSET.
4. The student agrees to do all work assigned by the instructor, stay on task, and not disrupt other students during work times. If the student disobeys a request by the instructor, is off task, or disrupts other students, the instructor reserves the right to remove the student from class that day. Any time missed after being asked to leave for the day must be made up before being allowed to graduate.
  - If the student continues to be off task, not complete the work assigned by the instructor, or disrupts other students, a meeting will be held with the student's parent / guardian to discuss consequences up to and including being dropped from the program.

**PARENTS / GUARDIANS** (parent / guardian must approve and sign regardless of student age):

I give consent for \_\_\_\_\_ to be enrolled in Francis Howell School District's Missouri Option Program. I have read and understand these guidelines and will encourage my son/daughter to follow them.

Parent / Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENTS:**

I have read and understand the guidelines for the Missouri Option Program. I understand that if I violate these policies I will be dropped from enrollment.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_