

GMHS Star Quarterback: Baker Bowden

Amaya Warfield

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It's 7 p.m. on a Friday night at Groveport Madison High School. The student parking lot has a long, winding line of cars as students begin walking through the metal detectors, the football stadium becoming packed on the home and away sides. Take a look at the track, as cheerleaders are yelling and dancing to the music of the band. The bleachers are full of friends, parents, teachers, and loved ones coming to sit down or leaving to go to the concessions. The blow of a whistle sounds off in the distance, and cheering erupts from the crowd as the Cruisers score their first touchdown of the season.

Groveport Madison is kicking off the year with its football season, and people are expecting great things out of the Cruisers. They are 2-1 currently as they enter conference play this week at home against Newark.

Much of the weight falls on the shoulders of our star quarterback, Baker Bowden.

Bowden is a senior this year at GMHS, and he has been playing football all four years of attending this school. However, this wasn't the start of his love of football. He first touched the field at age six and instantly fell in love with the feeling. "My dad threw me into a lot of sports from around three to five years old to see what I liked. I never messed with baseball or soccer, but as soon as I put the pads on, it was love at first sight."



Quarterback is definitely a hard role to take on, but Bowden does it well. He enjoys the leadership aspect and the intensity of being relied on by his teammates. Bowden has set high standards and expectations not only for himself, but also for his peers and underclassmen around him. "I've definitely set way higher standards for myself than other players because I know what I'm capable of as well as my team."

As it is his senior year, this is the end of Bowden's high school career. This is quite bittersweet for Baker, but he is not taking any second for granted. He wants to make his last season his most memorable yet.

Currently, Bowden wishes to make this season feel like the playoffs from his sophomore year. It was a really big deal for him and the team in general, a huge win in front of family and friends that really solidified his love for football.

AP & CCP: Teachers & Students Share Perspectives

Melat Yainemisa

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Advanced Placement (AP) and College Credit Plus (CCP) courses at GMHS have been playing tug of war in recent years, and students have been leaning towards one more than the other. Both AP and CCP classes provide some value to students depending on their needs, however, what are those needs?

AP classes are a program run by the college board. According to the GMHS program of studies, AP classes are defined to be year long "challenging" courses which give high school students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. Students can get high school credit as long as they pass the class; however, in order to receive credit for college, students are expected to pass the end-of-year exam with at least a three. Credits earned through AP are able to transfer to out of state colleges depending on what scores the school is willing to accept.

By contrast, CCP classes are coordinated between the high school and a local college, Columbus State in the case of GMHS. In CCP classes, students from seventh to twelfth grade are eligible to take college-level classes and earn college credit. These classes are taught by a high school facilitator along with a college professor who is the teacher of record for the course. Credit is almost guaranteed as long as students pass the class and are attending in-state colleges.

Teachers at GMHS generally report that students are leaning towards CCP courses more often than AP.

Adam Davidoff is the college and career advisor who has worked at GMHS for 25 years. He taught social studies for 14 years; however, he has never taught an AP or CCP class himself. As a college advisor, his job currently involves helping students navigate CCP classes at GMHS or online.

When asked if AP classes are being replaced with CCP he responded, "The trend was shifting away from AP to CCP a few years ago, and I thought the AP program was going to die on the vine, but it has made a bit of a comeback. I don't know if that is due to increased recruiting by AP teachers to keep their classes alive, but the reality is that the percentage of college credits earned in CCP versus AP is significantly higher. In AP classes, [the credit] students earn is entirely based on their scores on the AP exams."

If a student does not receive a score of three or higher on the end-of-year AP exam, they do not receive college credit. Additionally, some colleges and universities require a four or five for credit in some circumstances.

Davidoff also points out some benefits of taking CCP or AP, and how each course can meet students' needs based on what the student values. "The benefit to taking CCP over AP is that they are semester-long classes, so you can move through classes faster, and thus earn more college credits. But I also think that, since AP classes are year-long, you learn more in them, and I think the rigor will prepare students better for college."

Put simply, "It depends on a student's goals. Do you want to learn more and be better prepared for college? Then take AP classes. If you want to maximize the number of college credits you earn in high school, then CCP is the way to go."

Essentially, AP courses equip students with the level of thinking, critical listening, and analysis needed to succeed in college, along with the AP exam that assesses these skills. CCP does the same, but at a faster pace with material being covered within a semester rather than a year long AP course, which tends to dive deeper into content.

Benjamin Weinhold, an English teacher, has taught both CCP and AP at GMHS for 15 years. He suggested, "There is a lot of overlap between [the CCP course] Comp and AP Lang, but I would argue that AP Lang pushes critical thinking and reading a bit more. Overall, the rigor of AP courses is higher than CCP, but CCP is also a legit college class, so they are similar. Ideally, a student who wants to push himself would take both since they work different skills. Great athletes do cardio and weight lifting. AP is like weight lifting and CCP is like cardio. I think they

FAQs about College Credit Plus (CCP) Courses and Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

What is the difference between the credit earned for CCP courses vs. AP courses?	
CCP: The credit is transcripted. Students receive the credit for that specific course, and it will be on a transcript from the university. When you take a CCP course, you are technically already accepted to a university, and your credit can transfer to other universities.	AP: The credit is articulated. Once students are accepted to a university, that university will determine the specific course for which you will earn credit. Oftentimes the course is based on whether a student scores a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP exam.
Do the courses transfer to colleges in Ohio? Transferology: https://www.transferology	
CCP: The courses transfer to ALL public universities in Ohio, and to MOST private universities in Ohio. Students can create an account with Transferology to determine the college courses to which CCP courses transfer.	AP: The courses transfer to ALL public universities in Ohio, and MOST private universities in Ohio. Some universities require scores of 4 or 5 for specific courses. If students earn a 3 on an AP exam, some colleges will only give general elective credit. Scores of 1 or 2 earn NO college credit. AP credits hinge entirely on a student's AP Exam scores.
Do the courses transfer to colleges out-of-state? Transferology: https://www.transferology	
CCP: The CCP courses we offer at GMHS will transfer to many out-of-state universities. Students can create an account with Transferology to determine the college courses to which CCP courses transfer.	AP: The AP courses we offer at GMHS will transfer to many out-of-state universities, but students are often required to earn a 4 or a 5. Create an account with Transferology to determine the college courses to which AP courses transfer.
Do any of GMHS courses transfer to the same college course? Transferology: https://www.transferology	
CCP: The CCP courses offered at GMHS will all be transcripted credit for different Columbus State courses, which are likely to transfer to courses at other universities.	AP: It depends. For example, English Language and Composition and English Literature and Composition transfer to the same course at most public Ohio universities. Some universities may decide to give credit for two courses; there is no guarantee. Students could take two years of AP English but only receive credit for one university course.
What is the success rate of Ohio and Groveport Madison students?	
CCP: Over the past five years, GMHS students have had the course passage rate of 92.4% for CCP courses. Over the past five years, the success rate for CCP courses is over 90% in Ohio.	AP: Over the past five years, GMHS students have had an exam passage rate of 39%. Of those exams, 15% earned a 4 or a 5. On the same AP exams taken over the past five years, Ohio students had a passage rate of 65% (earned a 3, 4, or 5).
Does CCP or AP transfer to more advanced courses?	
AP credit articulation is not higher than the CCP transcripted credit. In many cases, students must earn a 4 or 5 on the AP test to earn the same credit as our CCP courses. If a 3 is earned, the student may receive a general elective credit per the university's expectations.	
Does it cost anything?	
CCP: State law requires that the district pay the costs of CCP tuition and books. The district WILL seek reimbursement from families if a student fails a CCP course, or if a student drops a course after 14 days from the start of class. If a student is identified as economically disadvantaged, per OAC 3333-1-65.6(B)(2), they will not be billed.	AP: Families will be responsible for all Advanced Placement course fees including testing fees. The current cost per AP Exam is \$98. The College Board provides a \$36 fee reduction per AP Exam for eligible students with financial need. Students should see their counselors regarding fee waivers for AP Exams.
What are the enrollment requirements?	
CCP: Students with a 3.0 GPA from high school classes, college ready ACT or SAT scores, or a passing score on the ACCUPLACER Test. (See your School Counselor to learn how to schedule an Accuplacer Test.)	AP: AP courses have varying prerequisite requirements, as indicated on the charts for each content area in the Program of Studies. Typically a teacher's recommendation in that subject area is required.
Are there summer requirements for the courses?	
CCP: No, students will receive the course syllabus and expectations when the course begins.	AP: Summer reading and/or assignments are an understood expectation of Advanced Placement courses.

are both essential classes for students, especially those who might have different academic goals.”

For students who are looking to pursue a four-year university experience and further their education afterwards, AP is the way to go, many teachers suggest. “I strongly recommend kids take AP courses. I have had many students of mine that came back to visit me and said that AP courses, such as my own, were the only classes that truly prepared them for what college would be like. I’ve also had dozens of students who have taken both types of courses and said they felt better prepared because of the AP classes and would rather have them because they know that the work will pay off in the end,” says Jared Painter, who has been teaching AP Government at GMHS for 14 years.

Students who have taken CCP classes share their opinions for upcoming freshmen looking to take CCP classes at GMHS.

Aubree Barnett, a current sophomore at GMHS, has a lot of experience with the CCP and AP programs already: “I have taken four CCP classes and one AP class. I took CCP Composition I, Composition II, Psychology, and Women in Literature. I am currently taking AP English Language and Composition. I would recommend taking CCP classes to students who are sophomores or older, especially Composition I and II. Both of these classes were easy to follow along with and were good introductory classes to the college workload.”

Nova Laga, a junior at GMHS, suggested, “I would definitely recommend these courses to other students if they’re trying to grow in their comprehension skills or writing skills. I would even suggest it if they’re simply trying to get their credits earned faster. They would just need to be aware of how much work it takes to earn a year’s worth of credits in only one semester—and the semester starts later and ends earlier than GMHS’, so it’s not really even a full semester. Last year when I was enrolled, I spent nearly every Sunday night pushing past my bedtime just so I could get in the essays that were due that week.”

Students get the opportunity to take CCP classes at GMHS both online and during the school year. Several students take advantage of this. Students can sign up for online classes they are interested in that are available at Columbus State, but not at GMHS. This appears to be one of the reasons why students gravitate toward CCP courses to complete their credits for college. For instance, GMHS has a CCP version of Medical Terminology class, but not an AP version. In other cases, there might be a class that is offered in the AP version but not CCP, such as Statistics. For students looking to get into CCP classes, they sign up for CCP classes online to meet their credits.

Aubree Barnett, who took CCP classes online over this past summer, suggested, “I would not recommend taking any classes over the summer, whether you are busy or not. I attempted to take Psychopathology and Women in Literature during the same summer semester, and it really just takes away all of the free time that you have over the summer.”

According to the Program of Studies, GMHS has multiple AP classes available for students to take each year. However, whether students are actually signing up for them is another question. If too few students sign up for an AP class, that class might not actually be offered.

Supriya Mishara, a junior at GMHS, has taken six CCP classes and is currently taking her first two AP classes. "I definitely think our school could use a lot more APs. We have a good amount of CCP classes. The ones we don't have can be taken online. But AP, which has way less options, is an actual in-person class, meaning we have less APs available to us. Another thing that affects our ability to take certain APs is the constant removal of those classes. From my experience, I feel that the class of 2028 has been pretty unlucky with that. As a sophomore, you are expected to take an American history class, so I signed up for AP US History. This class ended up getting removed that year, constraining me to take a CCP instead. Then for junior year, I had registered for AP Government, as that is what most juniors take, but that class ended up getting removed as well. I think this is a big issue at our school since it limits students' class options."

AP and CCP classes both provide college credits. However, how one gets those college credits differs. In an AP course, college credit is entirely reliant on an end of year exam. A CCP course relies on your ability to get a passing grade in that class throughout the semester. Both CCP and AP classes provide specific advantages; the right course for you depends on your needs and plans after high school.

Dress is in the Details

Taze Owens

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On Thursday, Aug. 14, 2026, at 8:48 a.m. the Groveport Madison High School sent out an email stating, "Head coverings are not permitted to be worn inside school buildings during the regular school day, this includes bonnets, do-rags, hats, knit hats, ski-masks, head caps, etc."

This email created panic, chaos, and confusion among students. While this policy was later reversed, the confusion remained.

The school administration believes dress code is very important, claiming you have a dress code in a professional setting, so you should in schools. Assistant principal Mackenzie Park, speaking for the administrative team, said, "I just think there is a lot of merit in dressing for the job you want."

Personally, this explanation of a dress code in schools has never made sense to me. I would like to be independently wealthy and never have to work again, and that job does not require a dress code. As a journalist writing for the school newspaper, I know many journalists do most of their job writing from home in their pajama pants. Just as the job someone wants is subjective to the person, so too is the dress code itself.

Beyond the headwear, another big point of subjectivity is the rule that states, "Shoulder straps on sleeveless shirts or dresses must be the width of at least three fingers."

Everyone has different-sized fingers. Is it the principal's fingers, your own fingers, or is there a standard finger size?

Assistant Principal Park is less worried about the specific language in the dress code; instead, she wants to focus on the grander vision of a dress code. "If you have to ask yourself, 'Is this inappropriate?' then it probably is," she stated.

However, even that guidance might differ from student to student. Some students are more self-aware than others. Additionally, how does one define inappropriateness in a minor, and does that change with age? Is this from a male's gaze or a female's, an adult or a fellow student? Gender, age, and mentality play a large role in this.

Ultimately, the dress code limits students' abilities to express themselves freely.

“When you are preparing women to go out in the world, you are seen and subjected to a harsher level of criticism as a woman, and you have to be prepared for that,” Park said.

The earliest form of dress code would date back to medieval times, where the ruling classes used clothing to separate themselves from lower classes of people in society. This means dress codes inherently come from a place of discrimination and oppression. Given this history and subjectivity of dress codes, it seems unlikely for a truly fair dress code to ever exist.

The complete dress code, as outlined in the student handbook created by the GMS school board, reads:

Students must observe general guidelines for dress and appearance including adhering to the following:

- Shorts or skirts that are at least four inches from the inseam;
- Shirts and blouses must not expose the midriff area or inappropriate cleavage;
- Tops and waistlines of bottoms must overlap;
- Pajama pants and/or pants designed for lounge pants, slippers (of any kind), or blankets are not allowed;
- Shoulder straps on sleeveless shirts or dresses must be the width of at least three fingers;
- Dress that promotes hate, profanity, vulgar or negative messages, anything advertising or related to alcohol, tobacco and drugs, or anything sexually explicit is not allowed;
- Transparent garments, open mesh garments, or garments with large open sides are not allowed;
- Shoes must be worn and must not present a safety hazard;
- Lower garments are to be worn at waist level; if a belt is worn, it must be of proper length; undergarments are not to be exposed;
- Items that could be dangerous to persons or destructive to school property such as chains or spikes, will not be allowed;
- Gang- or cult-related items of any kind are not allowed;
- Clothing with holes in inappropriate locations is not allowed;
- Sunglasses, masks, or other items that block the face, are not permitted; *unless, masks are required for public health purposes.
- Headwear of any type that obstructs one's identity or makes it difficult to identify an individual will not be allowed;
- Hooded articles of clothing are permissible only if hoods are down;
- When any dress or grooming interferes with the cleanliness, health, welfare or safety of students, or when any dress or grooming disrupts the educational process by being distracting, indecent, or inappropriate to the educational process, it is prohibited (as determined by the building administrator).