

Senior Year Plus District Checklist

Under Iowa Code [261E.2](#), districts are to provide students and parents with information regarding participation in Senior Year Plus programming and joint enrollment.

Why this is Important

Missing or inaccurate information in student handbooks inadvertently creates barriers to college-credit access. This violates Iowa Code [261E.3](#), which strictly prohibits placing restrictions or barriers on student participation.

Key Administrative Actions

- **Review Materials:** Audit your current student handbooks and course catalogs immediately. Consider reviewing this annually if that does not already occur.
- **Update Content:** Ensure accurate, detailed information on SYP opportunities, rights, responsibilities, and local policies is clearly stated.
- **Expand Access:** Verify that this information is explicitly shared with charter, nonpublic, public and homeschooled students, who are legally eligible to participate through your district.
- **Use the Checklist:** Review the checklist of key information to include in district handbooks, course catalogs and/or website to ensure no critical policy details are missing.

Important Definitions

- **Senior Year Plus:** This is the umbrella term used to represent the variety of options high school students have for taking college-credit courses while in high school.
- **Joint Enrollment:** Any type of course where a high school student receives both high school and college credit is considered joint enrollment.
- **Concurrent Enrollment:** College-level courses taken through Iowa community colleges for both high school and college credit. Each year, school boards, through a district-to-community college contract, determine which courses will be allowable to take for college credit. All students in grades 9-12 are allowed to participate in concurrent enrollment courses as long as they meet proficiency and prerequisite requirements.
- **Postsecondary Enrollment Option (PSEO):** PSEO courses are college-level courses taken through approved Iowa 4-year colleges or universities, both public and private. Juniors, seniors and talented and gifted students who meet eligibility requirements are allowed to enroll in these courses. PSEO courses are only allowable if the course is above and beyond what is available at any other Iowa community college. These courses must be approved through the district prior to enrollment. PSEO courses will count toward a student's graduation requirements. Failure to successfully complete a PSEO course will require reimbursement of the cost of the course by the student to the district.

Checklist

Below is a checklist of details students should be aware of to be fully informed. How a district states this information in their handbooks is a local decision.

- **Accommodations:** Students with IEPs and 504s may take joint enrollment courses just like every other student. Students and their counselor, will submit IEP/504 information to the postsecondary institution. Each institution's process is different so districts must communicate with the college to determine processes. Students and district staff should communicate with college faculty and Disability Services/Accommodations Office personnel when necessary. It is important to remember that while accommodations are allowed for college-credit courses, modifications are not. Students will not be allowed modifications the district allows – **even for those college-credit courses that take place within the high school.**
- **Allowable Courses:** Board approved joint enrollment courses should be listed in the district's handbook, course catalog and/or website. Students and parents should have access to all joint enrollment information along with Transfer and CTE Pathway alignment.
- **Charter, Homeschool (dual enrollment) and Nonpublic Students:** These students are allowed to take joint enrollment courses through the public district. Nonpublic and dual enrollment students must meet proficiency and prerequisite requirements to participate. These students must be enrolled through the public district in order to be enrolled correctly. Incorrect enrollment could result in being billed directly for the course, not receiving high school credit and inaccurate reporting through the SRI system.
- **Consequences:** Students should be aware that failed and withdrawn classes will negatively impact both high school and college transcripts. Poor performance in college-credit courses impact participation in high school sports, clubs and activities. Multiple failed and/or withdrawn classes may harm the student's ability to receive financial aid and place them on college academic probation right out of high school. Participation in Senior Year Plus programming should be taken seriously with the requisite amount of time and effort put forth to successfully complete each course.
- **Cost¹:** All Senior Year Plus programming is free to high school students including tuition, textbooks, fees, tools etc. Students do not have to pay for failed or withdrawn from joint enrollment courses.
- **Course Limit:** Students may enroll in as many courses as any full-time college student. The only limit is that which is set by the community college for full-time load.
- **Deadlines:** The high school and postsecondary institution are not required to have the same deadlines or follow the same calendar. If a student misses the high school's deadline but not the college's, it may result in an F for that class on the high school transcript and a W on the college transcript.
- **Eligibility²:** All Iowa high school students who meet proficiency and prerequisite requirements in grades 9-12 enrolled in Iowa high schools may participate in joint enrollment courses.
- **Failed/Withdrawn Courses:** Students may re-enroll in the same course or enroll in any other college credit course even if they did not successfully complete a joint enrollment course previously.

¹ Postsecondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) is the exception. Tuition, textbook and fees are still not the responsibility of the student; however, any tools or equipment required for the course are paid by the student. Also, if a student does not return the textbook, they must pay for the cost of the book, and if a student fails or withdraws from a PSEO course, they must reimburse the district for the cost of the course (\$250).

² The exception is for PSEO courses in which only juniors, seniors and talented and gifted students are allowed to participate.

Checklist | Continued

- **Grade Level Participation:** All students in grades 9-12 are allowed to participate in concurrent enrollment courses as long as they meet proficiency and prerequisite requirements. PSEO courses are allowable to all juniors, seniors and talented and gifted students who meet eligibility requirements.
- **Modality:** College-credit courses may be offered in multiple delivery methods; in the high school, face-to-face at the college campus, online and hybrid. Districts contract the course, not the modality, so students may choose whichever way they want to take the course. Districts may advise, counsel and encourage, but the decision is up to the student.
- **Order of Courses:** Often the high school will offer what seems to be the same course as the community college because it has the same title and number, but they are not the same course. Each year, the district's board certifies that each college course approved for concurrent enrollment does not supplant the high school course; therefore, they have verified the courses are not the same. The college course will require a greater depth of knowledge, end of course competencies, maturity of projects, in-depth research skills and writing ability.
- **Proficiency:** Students must demonstrate proficiency in reading, math and science to participate in joint enrollment opportunities. Proficiency is determined by each student's latest state assessment scores; however, every district has a secondary measure in which students may demonstrate proficiency through measures of college readiness. Each district and their community college collaborate to determine these measures, which could differ district to district. Students do not have to meet proficiency requirements in all three areas prior to enrolling in a college course. For example, if a student is proficient in reading and science, they are allowed to enroll in non-math joint enrollment courses. CTE courses do not have proficiency requirements to participate. However, CTE programs may require an assessment later if a math or writing course is part of the program.
- **Study Halls:** Scheduling study halls for students who are taking joint enrollment courses is not a state requirement; it is a local decision.
- **Transcripts:** When participating in Senior Year Plus programming, a student will have both a high school and college transcript. It is a local decision how many high school credits each college course is worth and where they will be placed on the high school transcript. The district does not have to allow joint enrollment courses to meet high school graduation requirements. All joint enrollment course grades must be entered on both the high school and college transcripts, regardless of the grade earned by the student.
- **Unapproved College Credit Courses:** Students may opt to take college courses that have not been approved by the district. They may take them through any postsecondary institution, even out-of-state, but these courses would be the responsibility of the student to pay at full-tuition and for college credit only.



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