

Cover

HOW TO EARN COLLEGE CREDIT WHILE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL

Parents Guide

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HOW TO EARN COLLEGE CREDIT WHILE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL



College is Possible: A Guide for Parents

A high school education is no longer adequate for most jobs in today's economy. Increasingly, U.S. employers complain that today's young adults are not equipped with the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century workforce. In 2006, the Conference Board and three other organizations issued *Are They Ready to Work?* Based on a survey of several hundred employers, the report concluded that "Far too many young people are unprepared to be successful." The authors were especially scathing regarding high school graduates, concluding that more than half were "deficient" in such skills as oral and written communication, critical thinking and professionalism.

Solid preparation for employment involves a good education. In addition to helping your student successfully complete high school, Adams County School District 50 is also helping your student complete college. Family support is the number one reason for student success in education. Remember, you are your student's first and most important teacher. Together, we can make a great future possible for your student.

Did you know?

The District honors the academic efforts of your students by paying for college classes while they are still in high school. Courses are offered through Front Range Community College, Emily Griffith Technical College and Metropolitan State University.

This program is called Concurrent Enrollment. This means students take college courses while they are still completing high school. If students earn 12 college credits before the end of their senior year of high school, they are then eligible to attend a full year of college for free through the ASCENT program. To be eligible to participate in Concurrent Enrollment, students need to meet these criteria:

1. Be a junior or senior in high school
2. Be on grade level, on-track to graduate (not requiring any remediation)
3. Have excellent attendance
4. Have a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA)
5. Be able to demonstrate how the courses they want to take are needed for their career
6. Successfully pass the college entrance exam or score well on the ACT

NOTE: The student/family is responsible for payment of books and fees. It is important for students to pass these college classes with a C or better. Any grade below a C mean you will need to repay the entire cost of tuition for the course(s) your student attempted. It is possible for students to graduate high school with an Associate's Degree or professional certificate at the same time! To accomplish this, they need your encouragement and support.

What is college or postsecondary education?

There are many occupations that require employees to have a certificate or degree in order to meet the minimum skill set for the job, this is called postsecondary education. This means additional years of instruction past a high school diploma and that generally results in a certificate or degree.

To earn the appropriate certificate or degree for their career goal, students must first be accepted into the school that offers the certificate or degree. Each school type requires different proof that the student will successfully complete the postsecondary coursework and then be able to meet the skill level needed for employment for that occupation.

The best way to make sure that your student will be able to pursue any career he or she wants is to start early in preparing them for college, even if they do not currently plan to go.

As a parent, it is important that you get as much knowledge as possible about the process and what resources are available to you to help. The District supplies many FREE resources that help keep you informed and connect you with other professionals who are also available to help you and your student.

Campus Tours

The District Community and Education Specialists organize campus tours every semester. The entire family is welcome to go on campus with your student. You will have a tour of the campus and there will be campus staff to answer all of your questions. Every college has an admissions office and it is the job of the staff to welcome you and your family, show you around campus and answer your questions.

GET COLLEGE CREDIT WHILE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL!

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Affording College

There are many ways to afford college. There is federal aid, state aid, institutional aid and scholarships. Many scholarships go unfilled because students do not take the time to apply. In your student's junior year of high school, take the time to learn about all scholarship opportunities available and begin to plan for those deadlines.

As a parent, you will also need to complete the FAFSA. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is your first step in seeing if financial aid is available in the form of loans (low interest loans), grants (money you do not need to repay) or work-study (payment for a job students perform at school). There is over \$150 billion available for students to use when attending college or trade schools. Priority for FAFSA completion is January to March 1st in the senior year. Most colleges and scholarships require FAFSA completion. As parents you are required to give tax information in order for your student to complete FAFSA. The District provides FAFSA completion support to you FOR FREE. All students are eligible to apply regardless of status. If your child is a DACA student, you are not eligible for FAFSA but you may be eligible for state or institutional aid.

Scholarships are a competition. Students can apply for ALL scholarships for which they are eligible. Every application requires students write essays. Most scholarships require a 3.0 or higher GPA. Timeline: most scholarships are available the fall of your senior year. The District counseling office and Community and Education Specialists are here to help you earn as much money as possible to help afford college. The applications will ask students for items like these:

- 1. Transcript and ACT scores (ACT score needs to be at least 18 – 21)
- 2. Letters of recommendation from community leaders, employers, pastors, teachers, counselors
- 3. A brief personal history essay, future plan essay or some other essay asking to describe a time when your student overcame adversity and how it shapes the person he or she is today
- 4. Community service and/or work experience
- 5. School activities, leadership positions, public recognition or honors your student has received
- 6. Class rank and graduating class size

College Application Process

When considering a college or trade school, come to the Future Center and ask the staff to help you review the pros and cons about the choices. You need to ensure that the money you pay in tuition is in alignment with the salary expectations the training is making your student eligible to obtain. You should know about job placement assistance at graduation and on campus resources available to help

What degree or certificate do you want?	Consider	Offers	Provides these benefits	Keep in mind
Certificate of specialization in a career field	Vocational training schools Emily Griffith Technical College	Training in varied fields such as cosmetology, auto body repair, barbering and esthetician	Open enrollment (most students are accepted)	Program can last from five months to three years. Students who register for this program MUST be planning to enroll in ASCENT as a fifth year senior
Associate degree or certificate	Community college Front Range Community College	Coursework in varied programs of study Specialized training in career fields	Open enrollment Transfer to 4-year schools Affordable Can prepare students to enter workforce immediately	If transferring, make sure credits will be accepted at 4-year school destination. To do that, contact the community college
Bachelor's, master's, doctorate or professional degree	4-year <i>public</i> colleges & universities Metropolitan State University	Varied coursework from liberal arts to many specialized fields	Can prepare you for a career or graduate school Generally less expensive than private colleges	Low tuition usually only available to in-state residents
	4-year <i>private</i> colleges & universities	Varied coursework from liberal arts to many specialized fields	• Can prepare you for a career or graduate school • May offer generous financial aid package that makes cost feasible	Cost of attending can be high

from your student's high school application. They will be looking for courses that show a challenging curriculum and good grades every year. A key factor in getting good grades is going to class every day. College requires personal discipline to be successful and that is why schools not only focus on the overall GPA, they also look to see if the GPA increased year-to-year throughout high school. An upward trend shows academic growth and maturity, attributes that are needed throughout postsecondary experience.

Testing is Important

Many colleges determine who they admit based on proven academic proficiency. There are a few tests that matter:

- ACCUPLACER – the community colleges require students to take the math, English and reading placement tests. Students must score at college level in order to avoid taking remediation courses.
- ACT – colleges have minimum entrance scores and scholarships often depend on achievement of at least an

18 on the ACT. The Colorado average is 20. The higher the average score, the better for choices. This test is administered in the District in the junior year of high school.

Here is a checklist of additional ways you can help your student.

Elementary School

- Work to develop good study habits, stay on grade level and attend school every day
- Check to see if your student is maintaining the student data notebooks about academic progress
- Start saving for college
- Communicate with your student about college plans
- Learn about colleges and financial aid
- Share your values and culture
- Stay involved in your student's education
- Students should get involved in clubs, volunteer activities, sports
- Students need to participate in summer learning programs
- Help your student improve reading, writing and math skills
- Learn as much as possible about different careers and what sounds interesting
- Find a mentor – someone able to offer good advice regarding school and careers
- Aim for your student to become truly bilingual (reading, writing and speaking)

High School

Freshman Year

- Help your student create a 4-year plan to graduate from high school
- Find at least 1 mentor
- Students need to practice taking the ACT exam
- Make sure your student is on grade level and has excellent attendance
- Meet the guidance counselor and get advice on how to help your student do well in high school
- Encourage students to find ways to volunteer and join clubs and organizations they like
- Continue to save money for college and learn about financial aid
- Review scholarship sites and see how best to prepare
- Review credits earned by your student
- Learn about different colleges and universities by taking a campus tour
- Help your student find awards and honors he or she can earn
- Monitor the social media use of your student
- Stay involved in your student's academics
- Ask your student about ICAP, GPA and his or her college plan

Sophomore Year

- Help your student create a 3 year plan to graduate from high school
- Make sure your student finds at least 1 mentor and makes an appointment with your counselor
- Encourage your student to practice taking the ACT
- Students need to apply for the Access Opportunity Scholarship for 10th graders
- Students should challenge themselves academically – like enrolling in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes or IB Diploma
- Consider enrolling your student in Concurrent Enrollment
- Make sure your student attends the Adams County Commissioners' Career Expo to meet professionals in all careers
- Encourage your student to take career interest surveys and personality surveys to learn more about career options
- To take advantage of all options, make sure your student stays on grade level, continues to develop good study habits and attends school every day
- Students begin their Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) outlining their career choices and how they will get ready!
- It is important for students to continue to improve reading, writing and math skills
- Find out about high school courses that help prepare for college
- Talk with the counselor and get advice on how to get ready for high school
- Attend the Westminster High School Showcase event to learn about high school academic programs that prepare students for college like Academic Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advancement Via Individual Determination, Project Lead The Way, Career and Technical Education, clubs, sports, arts and how to get involved
- Tour the high school and meet teachers, counselors and administrators
- Talk with your students about choices

Middle School

- Make sure your student attends the Adams County Commissioners' Career Expo to meet professionals in all careers
- Encourage your student to take career interest surveys and personality surveys to learn more about career options
- To take advantage of all options, make sure your student stays on grade level, continues to develop good study habits and attends school every day
- Students begin their Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) outlining their career choices and how they will get ready!
- It is important for students to continue to improve reading, writing and math skills
- Find out about high school courses that help prepare for college
- Talk with the counselor and get advice on how to get ready for high school
- Attend the Westminster High School Showcase event to learn about high school academic programs that prepare students for college like Academic Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advancement Via Individual Determination, Project Lead The Way, Career and Technical Education, clubs, sports, arts and how to get involved
- Tour the high school and meet teachers, counselors and administrators
- Talk with your students about choices

Testing

- Check your student's 2-year plan to graduate from high school. Make sure he or she has the credits required to graduate.
- Ask mentors or teachers you trust to serve as recommenders for applications.
- Do your best on the ACT exam. The higher your score, the better your options.

Dec/Jan

- Create a professional resume with your activities, jobs, awards, honors and GPA.
- Remind your parents/guardians to do their taxes
- Use your parent's/salary to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) before March 1
- Apply to scholarships & keep your GPA up!

Feb/March

- Check the Student Aid Report from the FAFSA to make sure it was processed properly
- Monitor your college applications/admissions so you do not miss the Financial Aid deadlines or important requests for additional information (like verification of income for the FAFSA)
- Apply to scholarships & keep your GPA up!

April/May

- Re-take the ACT exam if your previous score is not high enough.
- Review your financial aid offers and the outcome of your applications to colleges.
- Not getting into your top choice school does not mean you can't ever get there!
- Don't forget to pay your deposit to confirm you will enroll in your school of choice.
- High School Graduation!!!!

June/July/August

- Find out if your future college has any summer classes or bridge programs you can take
- Go to your orientation
- Go through the Student Handbook and all the procedures required for new students.
- Learn to read a college syllabus.
- Stay motivated and positive! If you are worried about going to college, talk to college students about what to expect and how to be successful during your first year. Learn as much as you can via Social Media, blogs, websites about your future school. Regularly check your new college's e-mail account because they will send important information through there
- Find out when you need to register for classes and meet with an advisor.

Sept

- Join the orientation activities at your new school
- Find a mentor who can help you
- Learn to manage your time
- Earn a high GPA so you can apply for more scholarships
- Get involved in your school or community
- Embrace the college adventure and keep your college diploma in mind!
- Greet your professors! They'll be writing your recommendations letters in the future!
- Apply to scholarships & keep your GPA up!

OCTOBER TO EXPLORE:

- Go to your college career center to learn about your career interests and Internship opportunities
- Study abroad
- College student clubs based on major/interests/honor/sports/culture OR start a new club
- Fraternities/Sororities
- Campus resources such as mental health, exercise, tutoring, advising, mentoring
- Conferences based on leadership, careers, research or professional interests
- TRIO or Student Support Services or other help for first year and/or low-income and first generation students
- Summer classes to graduate faster
- More scholarships!
- Giving back to future college students from your high school
- Representing your new college to future students

To learn more about how to get the most out of education, come visit the Future Center!

Additional sources of information regarding preparation for college and the college transition process:

- College Board <http://www.collegeboard.com/padres/>
- Adventures in Education <http://www.aie.org/spanish/>
- Novelas Educativas <http://www.novelaseducativas.com/>
- TG <http://www.tgsc.org/spanish/>
- Colorado Coalition for the Educational Advancement of Latinos <http://www.coceal.org/>

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How to Earn College Credit while still in High School

Adams County School District 50 is committed to helping students prepare for their professional careers after graduation. To that end, the District will support college course completion that is in direct alignment with the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) of the student. These courses must be in support of postsecondary coursework leading to or required to obtain a professional certificate, Associate's Degree or core elective postsecondary requirements for a bachelor's degree.

Students on track to graduate and meet the District requirements have multiple ways to earn college credit while

still in high school. In fact, through the ASCENT program, a student on track to graduate, who has successfully completed at least 12 college credits before the end of the senior year, can enroll in college full time in the "fifth year" of high school. Students have the potential to graduate at the end of this "fifth year" with an Associate's Degree or Certificate in addition to the high school diploma.

Interested students need to complete all required and relevant courses offered within the District that align with their career plans. Once the student has taken all of the necessary courses

offered by the District, the District will approve and provide funding for students to enroll in and attend college level courses outside of the District. To be enrolled in these courses, a formal application process is in place to ensure that students are truly ready for the demands of college work, have already taken the proper prerequisite courses, understand the academic and financial impact of not passing a college level course with a C or better and that parents of these students understand the long-term impact of poor grades as well.

Any student who does not pass a college level course as part of

Concurrent Enrollment or ASCENT is obligated to reimburse the district for the cost of that course. Course fees and books are paid by the student, regardless. Pre-Collegiate and CU Scholar also requires student repayment for tuition, books and fees for non-attendance. Any student with a college/postsecondary grade point average (GPA) less than 2.0 is not entitled to financial aid or scholarships at most higher education institutions and will, most likely, be placed on probation.

Students taking any college level courses need to be prepared to perform college level work since missing and/or failing class

has long-term impact.

To help better understand the differences between each of these programs, obtain the necessary application documents or learn more about what you need to do to be eligible to participate in any of these programs, please refer to the College Credit while in High School Program Overview grid and talk with your high school counselor or Community and Education Specialist.

Gateway to College Comparison Grid											
	GATEWAY TO COLLEGE	CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT	CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT	CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT	CU SCHOLAR	PRE COLLEGIATE	ASCENT	PROJECT LEAD THE WAY	INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	CU SUCCEEDS
WHERE	Front Range Community College (FRCC) Westminster Campus	Metropolitan State University (MSU)	Emily Griffith Technical College (EGTC)	FRCC	CU Denver	CU Denver & Boulder	FRCC	Westminster High School	Westminster High School	Westminster High School	Westminster High School
WHEN	Semester 1, 2 & Summer (student must apply for summer school)	Semesters 1 & 2	Semesters 1 & 2	Semesters 1 & 2	Limited to one class in the fall and one class in the spring	Summer	Semesters 1 & 2	Semesters 1 & 2	Semesters 1 & 2, Junior & Senior yrs. only	Semesters 1 & 2	Semesters 1 & 2
WHO IS IT DESIGNED FOR?	Students, ages 16 - 20, who dropped out of school or at risk for dropping out. Students must read at the 7.5 grade level and have at least 6 high school credits. Students need to be able to attend school solely at FRCC and demonstrate internal motivation to change their lives.	Students must be enrolled in 10th grade or higher, be less than 21 years old and meet the District and University's requirements for each course.	Students must be enrolled in 12th grade and be eligible for and plan to enroll in ASCENT in their 13th year.	Students with a post-secondary plan who require courses that are not offered at WHS or HLHS. Also, students enrolled in FRCC courses taught by high school faculty at the high school are eligible.	Seniors in High School (college high-achieving first generation students). Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the time of application, complete two years of math (Algebra 1 or higher) and have a B average or better, complete two years of English (one must be composition) with an average of B or better, commit to participating in Saturday Academies and attend all scheduled classes.	Middle School through 12th grade in high school. This summer program is for first generation college students, it involves workshops, college field trips, ACT preparation, and two classes over the summer.	Students who have successfully completed 12 college credits by the end of their 12th grade year, who are on track to graduate high school, and who are willing to officially graduate high school one year late. ASCENT students are given the opportunity to enroll in college full time during this fifth year program. The expectation is that they graduate with both an associates degree or technical certificate and a high school diploma in their fifth year. If not, they should be very close to earning an associates degree or technical certificate, or have their first two years of general education credit earned by then.	Students enrolled in bioscience engineering and/or civil engineering who decide to pay for elective credit for their high school coursework. The credit is earned at CU - Colorado Springs.	Students can pursue the biology program, meaning they will enroll in 6 advanced courses as well as core requirements for the IB diploma. Alternatively, students can enroll in up to three individual courses per year as "certificate" courses. For diploma students, a formal application process including letters of recommendation are part of the process.	This AP Biology course offers students 8 credit hours of college biology and lab through CU Denver.	
HOW COLLEGE CREDIT IS EARNED	Students must complete an application, have an interview with their parents/guardian at the District and FRCC in order to apply. Once accepted by GTC and D50, students complete high school course requirements by taking full time college classes at FRCC. Students must complete Developmental Education requirements before taking transfer level college courses (done in Semester 1). They remain full time in college courses at FRCC Westminster until they have met all D50 high school graduation requirements and earned their high school diploma.	Students who successfully complete courses earn college credit. The dual credit program allows students to earn a diploma while progressing toward a college degree or certificate. Accepted students take all of their courses at Metropolitan State University. The courses taken must be applicable to earning a degree or certificate.	Students enroll in Auto Collision Repair, Cosmetology, Esthetician or Barbering and earn their certificate within the two years of instruction. The dual credit program allows students to earn a diploma while progressing toward a college degree or certificate. Accepted students take all of their courses at Emily Griffith Technical College. Enrolled students must be approved for one of the listed degree or certificate programs and must be planning to enroll in ASCENT for the second year of instruction.	Community College (FRCC), complete the Accuplacer assessment test (or have qualifying ACT scores to be exempt), and complete all required Concurrent Enrollment paperwork. Students then register for approved FRCC courses for the semester through the FRCC eWOLF system. Students receive credit toward high school graduation upon completing courses with a C or higher.	Choices for courses include: Intro to Archeology Basic Biology Foundations of General Chemistry Core Chemistry: Chemistry for Consumer China and Chinese Fundamentals of Communication Intro to Media Studies Intro to Ethics Studies Core Composition I Telling Tales: Narrative Art in Lit/Film Intro to Environmental Science Environment, Society & Sustainability Intro to Arts Cultures of French Speaking Worlds World Regional Geography Intro to Physical Geography Intro to Urban Studies Physical Geology: Surface Processes Physical Geology: Internal Processes Germany & the Germans US History to 1876 US History since 1876 Paths to the Present Math for Liberal Arts Algebra for Social Sciences & Business College Algebra Intro to Philosophy: Relationship of the Individual to the World Intro to Ethics & Society General Astronomy I Foundation of Physics Music Appreciation Intro to Political Science American Political Systems Intro to Religious Studies Intro to Sociology	As a high school junior or senior, students are able to take two classes over the summer.	Credit toward the 12 college credits can be earned through CU Success, Pre College or Concurrent Enrollment. Credits earned through AP or IB are only applicable if they have been transcripted on a student's college transcript.	Students take and successfully complete a full year PLTW course to earn 2 - 3 transcripted college credits. Principles of Engineering Introduction to Engineering Design Aerospace Engineering Biotechnical Engineering & Architecture Engineering Design & Development Digital Electronics Principles of Biomedical Sciences Human Body Systems Medical Interventions Biomedical Innovation	Students are eligible to receive credit at universities upon successful completion of IB exams.	Credit is awarded upon successful completion of the AP Exam.	Students take a full year course and are offered the option to purchase the college credit if they successfully complete the course.
HOW H.S. CREDIT IS EARNED	The dual credit program allows students to earn a diploma while progressing toward a college degree or certificate. Accepted students take all of their courses at FRCC. The program combines high academic expectations with one-on-one advising and support.	1 College credit = .25 credit in Adams 50 • 2 or 3 College credits = .5 credit in Adams 50 • 4 or 5 College credits = 1 credit in Adams 50					Students enroll in PLTW courses: Principles of Biomedical Sciences (PBS), Human Body Systems, Medical Interventions, Biomedical Innovation (BI), Intro to Engineering and Design (IED), Digital Electronics, Principles of Engineering, Civil Engineering and Architecture, each course is worth 1 high school credit.	Diploma students are awarded, on average, 12 credits per student. Up to 36 credits are possible. High school credit that can be earned is IB World Literature 2 credits, IB Math Studies 2 credits, IB Math (SL) 2 credits, IB Math (HL) 2 credits, IB Biology (HL) 1 credit, IB Physics (SL) 1 credit, IB History of the Americas (HL) 2 credits, IB Psychology (SL) 1 credit, IB Business & Management (HL, SL) 1 or 2 credits, IB Theatre (HL, SL) 2 credits, IB Music (SL) 1 or 2 credits, IB Spanish 2 credits, IB French 2 credits.	Students earn high school credit when they successfully complete the learning targets for that course. Credit that can be earned is AP English Language & Composition 1 credit, AP English Literature & Composition 1 credit, AP Statistics 1 credit, AP Calculus 1 credit, AP Biology 1 credit, AP Chemistry 1 credit, AP Physics 1 credit, AP United States History 1 credit, AP Art History 1 credit, AP Spanish 1 credit.	Students earn high school credit when they successfully complete the learning targets for that course.	
HOW MUCH COLLEGE CREDIT CAN BE EARNED?	Students are required to pass their class with a C or higher to receive college credit. The amount of credit earned depends on the student and the amount of time it takes to complete the high school coursework required for a diploma.	Students are not limited in the number of credit hours they can earn. Those enrolled in 9 credits or more must have health insurance and are required to participate in MSU's student health program.	Students must be able to attend all scheduled classes toward their certificate.	Up to 6 credits can be earned in the Multimedia program offered at WHS. Students who enroll in classes at the FRCC campus can earn credits for as many classes as District 50 approves.	Generally, students earn a maximum of three (3) college credits per semester for a total of six (6) college credits for both semesters.	Full time students are required to take a minimum of 12 credit hours of coursework each semester; Part time students must be enrolled in at least 3 but no more than 11 credits per semester. Maximum of 36 credits for a year.	2 - 3 credits	Up to 36 credits	Course offerings are limited by the number of students eligible to take the course	8 credits - 4 per semester	
COST TO STUDENT	GTC is a scholarship program, and the District and FRCC partner to pay for the students tuition and books each semester. Students are required to pay for student fees unless they qualify for Free and Reduced lunch or Adams County workforce. Typically, student fees cost between \$100 - \$200.	Students pay the difference between the community college rate and the university rate (approximately \$177.85 per credit hour); students pay books, fees, and a \$25 application fee.	Students pay for books, fees and testing costs associated with certification or licensing.	Students pay fees and books.	Text books Parking Student ID	There is no fee for the college course, books or any other fees. They are all covered by the university.	Students pay fees and books.	\$102 per credit for tuition	Exam and Registration Fees	Exam fee	\$300 per semester cost to students for transcripted credit - \$600 for the full year and 8 credits of biology and lab.