

EARLY COLLEGE CREDIT PROGRAM

343.46

High school students who meet the eligibility requirements defined in applicable statutes, regulations, and District policies, and who submit timely and complete applications and notices, may be permitted to enroll in one or more program-eligible courses at an institution of higher education through the Early College Credit Program.

The High School Principal or an administrative-level designee shall be responsible for (1) ensuring that the District appropriately processes requests/applications related to the Early College Credit Program; and (2) determining whether the District will approve individual applications and pay for specific courses based on the criteria established in state law, any applicable state regulations, and applicable District policies and procedures.

The authority of the program administrator(s) includes, but is not limited to, the authority to make or approve the following determinations on behalf of the District:

1. Whether a student meets the minimum eligibility criteria established in state law;
2. Whether a proposed course is comparable to a course already offered in the District;
3. Whether the proposed course and any resulting credit meets any of the District's high school graduation requirements; and
4. Whether the student will be eligible to receive high school credit for the successful completion of a proposed course, and, if so, the amount of high school credit.

In making such determinations, the authorized program administrator(s) shall evaluate a postsecondary course under the applicable legal standards and, to the extent applicable to determinations of high school credit, using the same methods and criteria as are used to evaluate District courses that may be offered for high school credit. All efforts should be made to ensure that similarly-situated courses are being processed with a reasonable degree of uniformity. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction may be consulted in these decisions as needed.

If a student who intends to take a course through the Early College Credit Program disagrees with a District decision regarding comparability of courses, satisfaction of high school graduation requirements, or the number of high school credits to be awarded for a course (if any), the student may appeal the District's decision to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction within 30 days after the decision.

Initial Applications and Notices Students Are Required to Submit

Students interested in enrolling in an institution of higher education (IHE) for the purpose of taking one or more nonsectarian courses under the Early College Credit Program must do all of the following to start the application process:

1. Submit a timely and complete application directly to the applicable IHE in the semester prior to the semester or session in which the course is scheduled to begin. The student must adhere to all application deadlines and other related requirements established by the IHE; and
2. Submit a timely and complete written notice to the District that identifies the student's intent to take one or more courses under the Early College Credit Program. A separate notification form must be completed and processed for each IHE semester/session in which a student intends to take a course.
 - a. The deadlines for students to submit such notice for any fall semester, spring semester, or summer session/semester course are the deadlines established under state law: October 1 for any spring semester course, and February 1 for any summer semester/session course.
 - b. In addition to any other information required on the form, the initial notice must identify the name of the IHE the student plans to attend, the titles of the course(s) in which the student intends to enroll, the number of postsecondary credits of each course, and whether the student will be taking the course(s) for high school credit, postsecondary credit, or both.

Responsibility for Costs; Limitations on District Payments

To the extent required by state law and as applicable to each course that a student takes under the Early College Credit Program, the District shall pay the appropriate tuition amount to the IHE and such other costs (if any) as may be specified by law. The student or the student's parent or guardian shall pay the

amounts (if any) specified as the student's responsibility for each course under state law and District policy. The following also apply:

1. If a student takes a course at an IHE that is comparable to a course offered in the District, the District will make no payment for the course. Instead, the student taking the comparable course is responsible for paying the tuition and fees for the course.
2. If a student takes a course at an IHE for postsecondary credit only, and the course is not comparable to a course offered in the District, the student or the student's parent or guardian shall pay to the District 25% of the tuition amount that the District is required to pay to the IHE, unless such 25% payment is determined to pose an undue financial burden on the student's family under standards and procedures set by the Department of Public Instruction. If applicable to a course and not waived pursuant to state law, the following provisions further govern the timing and method for making such 25% payments to the District:
 - a. The student or his/her parent or guardian may make payment for such courses via a personal check or a bank (cashiers) check, made payable to the School District of Altoona or by online payment via the District's e-Funds for schools option. Payments attempted in other forms, including in U.S. currency, are not acceptable and will be refused or returned to the payor. If a check is returned as non-payable due to insufficient funds, a stop-payment order, or any other reason, any related fee(s) charged to the District by a financial institution will be added to the amount due.
 - b. Unless the District's Finance and Operations Office has agreed in writing to a different plan of scheduled payments, payment is due in full within 30 days of the date on which the District provides the student (or student's parent or guardian) with an invoice of the specific amount due. If a family wishes to arrange a payment plan, the family shall submit a request to the District's Finance and Operations Office before the start date of the course(s). The District's Finance and Operations Office may agree to a payment plan provided that (1) the student has no other outstanding obligations to the District that are in arrears, and (2) the final payment to be made no later than the earlier of 30 days after the course is complete or at least 10 days prior to the student's high school graduation. Initial installments under such a payment plan may be based on an estimated

amount owed if a definite figure cannot be provided by the IHE at that time.

- c. If the District receives any payment from the student or the student's parent or guardian as a share of tuition, and it is later determined that the District is not responsible for paying tuition for the course, or if the amount received as payment exceeds the amount of the student's actual payment obligation, the District will refund the appropriate amount to the student or his/her parent or guardian.
 - d. Any past-due payments for a share of course tuition that are owed by a student will be processed in the same manner that applies to other past-due school fees and charges.
3. The District shall pay for no more than the equivalent of a combined total of 18 double postsecondary semester credits per student for any courses that are taken through the "Start College Now" program (section 38.12(14) of the state statutes) or the Early College Credit Program. However, the limitation on total paid credits does not prohibit a student from (1) taking other courses through a postsecondary institution where the District has authorized the coursework under a separate program or separate source of authority; or (2) taking other District-approved high school courses, outside of the specific state programs, that may result in eligibility for postsecondary credit(s).
 4. The District shall only pay for courses that are successfully completed. If a student receives a failing grade in a course or fails to complete the course, the student's parent or guardian or the student, if an adult, is responsible for reimbursing the District for the costs paid by the District. If this reimbursement is not made upon request, the student is ineligible for any further participation in the "Start College Now" program and the Early College Credit Program. However, the student or the student's parent or guardian may submit a written request asking the School Board to waive this repayment obligation if the Board determines, at its discretion, that extenuating circumstances led to the unsuccessful completion of the relevant course(s) and repayment would impose an unreasonable and undue financial burden on the student or the student's family.
 5. In order for a student to avoid a payment obligation (where applicable) for a course taken through the Early College Credit Program, it is the sole

responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian to ensure that the student withdraws from the course prior to the applicable IHE's deadline for doing so such that the IHE will not charge the District any tuition for the course.

6. Unless otherwise required by law, the District is not responsible for providing transportation to postsecondary courses taken under this policy or for paying for transportation-related costs.

Legal References:

Wisconsin Statutes

Section 38.12(14)	[attendance at technical college under the technical college course program, also known as "Start College Now" Program]
Section 115.385(4)	[required parent notification of educational options, including early college credit program]
Section 118.15(1)(d)	[discretionary program and curriculum modifications]
Section 118.33	[high school graduation requirements]
Section 118.55	[the early college credit program]
Section 118.57	[required public notification of educational options, including early college credit program]
Section 120.12(17)	[non-early college credit program courses taken for high school credit at a UW System Institution]

Wisconsin Administrative Code

Chapter PI 40	[regulations governing the early college credit program]
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