

# **ASCENT Program:**

## *Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment*

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### **Frequently Asked Questions by Students**

#### **What is ASCENT?**

ASCENT stands for Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment. It is a “5<sup>th</sup> Year Program” that allows eligible seniors to remain enrolled at the high school and take a fifth year consisting entirely of college classes. The cost of tuition is covered by the school district (please see tuition information below for more detail).

#### **How would ASCENT benefit me?**

By participating in this program, you get to take college classes for a year while Englewood Schools pays your college tuition (see below for tuition details). Many students finish the ASCENT Program having completed most of their college general education requirements and some complete an Associates Degree. Students can then remain enrolled at the college to complete their degree or transfer to another college with a significant number of credits already completed. The ASCENT program offers students a significant financial savings as they pursue their postsecondary goals.

#### **How do I qualify for the program?**

You must:

- Remain enrolled at the high school for a fifth year. (You will take courses on the college campus, not on the high school campus.)
- Be under the age of 21.
- Have a GPA of 2.0 or higher.
- Be on track to meet all high school graduation requirements by the end of your senior year.
- Have completed, or be on track to complete, at least 12 credit hours of college course work prior to the completion of your 12th grade year (AP classes do not count as they are high school classes. College remediation courses do not count toward the 12-hour requirement. Only college-level Concurrent Enrollment classes count).
- Not be in need of basic skills or remedial course work as defined by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's (CCHE) remedial education policy.
- Have satisfied the minimum prerequisites for the college classes before your enrollment in the course, including having the required ACT or Accuplacer scores.
- Have an updated Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) with your high school counselor.
- Apply for the College Opportunity Fund (COF).
- Apply to and be accepted into the Colorado postsecondary institution where you plan to take college classes.
- Have not participated in the ASCENT program in previous years.

### **Should all qualified students participate in ASCENT?**

No. The following students should not participate:

- Students that want to attend college out of state their freshman year.
- Students that want to play inter-collegiate sports (NCAA) their freshman year.
- Students that will require federal financial aid (federal student loans, federal grants) to cover expenses not covered by ASCENT.

### **How much college tuition will Englewood pay?**

Englewood will pay tuition at the local community college tuition rate. If you attend a school other than a community college, you will only be eligible for the amount of tuition at the local community college tuition rate. The payment of any tuition charged above the community college rate would be your responsibility to pay.

### **Do I have to reimburse Englewood for the cost of tuition?**

Students that pass their classes with a grade of “C” or better do not reimburse Englewood for the amount of tuition paid. However, students that drop a course after the college drop deadline or receive a failing grade (“D” or “F”) will be required to reimburse the district for the amount of tuition paid.

### **Will Englewood pay for my room, board, books, supplies, and fees at the college?**

No. The district will only pay for tuition (at the community college rate). You will be responsible for paying all other expenses.

### **Does participating in this program impact the amount of financial aid I may receive?**

Yes. Students are not eligible for any federal student financial aid including federal student loans and grants while participating in ASCENT. Students will qualify for federal aid after they have completed or dropped the program. Students may disqualify themselves from certain scholarships or grants since 12 semester hours or more earned in college may cause the student to be classified as a transfer student rather than a freshman. *It is important for families to weigh all of their financial options before committing to the ASCENT program.*

### **If I stay enrolled at the high school for a 5<sup>th</sup> year, when will I be considered a high school graduate?**

Until you complete the 5<sup>th</sup> year ASCENT program, you will still be classified as a high school student. Your high school transcript will show that you have completed your high school graduation requirements and that you are an ASCENT student for a 5<sup>th</sup> year. Once you complete or stop participating in the ASCENT program, you will receive your high school diploma and your transcript will show that you are a high school graduate.

### **Will I be able to participate in my high school graduation?**

Yes! You will still participate in the graduation ceremony and all other senior activities with your high school class. Instead of receiving your diploma, you will receive a certificate stating that you are an ASCENT student for the next school year. At the completion of your ASCENT year, you will receive your high school diploma.

### **Where can I take college classes?**

You can take classes at any two-year or four-year Colorado school that has an ASCENT agreement in place with Englewood Schools.

### **Do I need to attend college full time?**

Students may attend college part time. A part time student is defined as someone who is enrolled in a minimum of 3 credit hours but less than 11 credit hours a semester. Students may also attend college full time. A full time student is defined as someone who is enrolled in 12 or more credit hours a semester. There is no limit to the maximum number of credit hours a student can take unless otherwise restricted per a college's maximum credit policy. Keep in mind that the ASCENT program should be used for those students that have the goal of attaining a college credential. You are encouraged to enroll in as many courses as you can successfully complete in order to get closer to reaching your goal.

### **Can I take online classes through ASCENT?**

Yes; however, online learning and course delivery is not the right learning environment for all students. Please research and understand the limitations and best practices of online learning prior to enrolling in the program.

### **Am I required to participate for the entire school year?**

No. We encourage you to take advantage of the financial support for the full year, but you can stop participating any time. If you drop your classes after the final drop deadline or receive a failing grade ("D" or "F"), you will have to reimburse Englewood for the cost of tuition.

### **Which college classes can I take?**

Students may only enroll in Guarantee Transfer courses (see your counselor for a list of approved courses) and/or courses that apply to a specific career pathway as indicated in the student's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP). The courses must apply toward a college degree or certificate.

### **Can I participate in college activities and athletics?**

Students may participate in college activities and club sports, but are not eligible to participate in inter-collegiate athletics. Students who plan to play NCAA athletics should not participate in ASCENT.

**Can I live in the dorms?**

Nothing prevents you from staying in the dorms while taking college classes through ASCENT. However, the cost of room and board is not covered through the ASCENT program. You will be responsible for covering these expenses.

**Will Englewood provide transportation to the college?**

No, you will be responsible for providing your own transportation.

**When do I have to decide and commit to the program?**

You will need to make a final commitment to the program in April of your senior year.

**What else do I need to know?**

- You may only participate in the ASCENT program for one academic year.
- Summer classes are not covered under the ASCENT program.
- You will have to apply for and use the Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF).
- The grades you receive in the college classes will appear on both your high school transcript and your college transcript.
- Undocumented students can participate in ASCENT.

**What do I need to do now?**

If you are interested in the program, see your high school counselor before Jan 30 of your senior year to get more information. Your counselor will work with you to determine if the ASCENT Program is right for you.

**For more information on ASCENT, please contact your high school counselor or Diana Zakhem, Director of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness for Englewood Schools, at 303-806-2005.**