



ASCENT Program: Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment

Frequently Asked Questions by Students

What is ASCENT?

ASCENT stands for Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment. It is a “5th 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.

How would ASCENT benefit me?

By participating in this program, you get to take college classes for a year while Jeffco Schools pays your college tuition. 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 apply for the program?

- Students must complete the Jeffco ASCENT application. All applicants are “**candidates**” and not guaranteed a scholarship, due to the limited number of ASCENT slots determined by the State of Colorado.
- 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.
- Be emotionally ready for college.
- Have a GPA of 2.0 or higher.
- Must be enrolled in a Jeffco School 11th and 12th grade as a fulltime student.
- 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.
- Not be in need of basic skills/developmental education coursework 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 SAT, ACT or Accuplacer scores.
- Have an updated Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)/5 Year Plan with your high school counselor and college advisor.

- 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 attend a Colorado college that is not: Front Range Community College, Red Rocks Community College, Community College of Denver, Arapahoe Community College or Metropolitan State University.
- 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 are students selected for the ASCENT program?

You will be notified of your selection for participation in the ASCENT program after June 1st of the year preceding the semester/term you would like to begin participating in the ASCENT program. *Students are ASCENT candidates until they are granted an ASCENT scholarship. If the district has less scholarships available, then applicants will be assigned by EFC scores.*

How much college tuition will Jeffco pay?

Jeffco will pay tuition for courses. Students are responsible to pay student fees and textbooks.

Will Jeffco pay for my room, board, books, supplies, transportation and fees at the college?

No. The district will only pay for tuition. 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 5th year, when will I be considered a high school graduate?

Until you complete the 5th 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 5th 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 at Front Range Community College, Red Rocks Community College, Community College of Denver, Arapahoe Community College or Metropolitan State University.

Do I need to attend college full time?

Yes. Students must attend full time. A full time student is defined as someone who is enrolled in 12 or more credit hours a semester. Students must be enrolled in 12- 15 college credits per semester. Keep in mind that the ASCENT program should be used for those students that have the goal of attaining a college credential.

Can I take online condensed or weekend classes through ASCENT?

No. Students have to take college classes on campus that are scheduled for the entire semester.

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. You do need to finish the semester.

Which college classes can I take?

Students may only enroll in Guarantee Transfer courses (see your college advisor for a list of approved courses) and/or courses that apply to a specific career pathway or industry certificate



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 Jeffco 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 May of your senior year.

What else do I need to know?

- You may only participate in the ASCENT program for one academic year.
- You must maintain a 2.0 or higher GPA in college to stay eligible for the entire year.
- You must submit a completed attendance form in October.
- Summer, online and weekend condensed 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.

What do I need to do now?

If you are interested in the program, see your high school counselor before Jan 30th 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 Suzanne Ellis, Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Coordinator for Jeffco Schools, at 303-982-5543.