

Student Eligibility

A student is eligible for ASCENT if the student:

- Has completed, or is on schedule to complete, at least 9 credit hours (semester hours or equivalent) of transcribed, credit-bearing, college-level postsecondary coursework* prior to completing his/her 12th grade year. Developmental education college courses *do not qualify* as part of the 9 required credits.
- Is college ready, and not in need of developmental education coursework in accordance with the pathway in which he/she enrolls.
- Completes an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) prior to declaring intent to participate in ASCENT.
- Applies to and is accepted into a postsecondary degree program at a qualified Colorado institution of higher education.
- Has not been designated an ASCENT program participant in any prior year (can only participate in ASCENT for 1 academic year).

*Does not include International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Education Program (CLEP), prior learning, or experiential courses, unless these exams/experiences have been converted to transcribed credits on a college transcript. See [ASCENT Q&A for Advanced Placement \(AP\) courses](#).

Student Enrollment

- Students may only enroll in Guarantee Transfer credit courses, a state approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) postsecondary program, or a specific postsecondary degree program pathway including coursework related to apprenticeship programs and internship programs, unless parent and student sign a form indicating “credits may not transfer.” The ASCENT pathway (AAS, AS, AA, etc.) must be clearly spelled out which would include an explanation of “credits may not transfer.”
- If an eligible student is denied admission to a public higher education institution (IHE), the institution should provide a written explanation to the student and the local education provider (LEP).
- High School Completion Reporting: Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, a qualified student who is an ASCENT program participant shall be counted in the enrolling school district's or institute charter school's graduation rate in the school year in which the student completes the school district's or institute charter school's minimum high school graduation requirements. However, an ASCENT student's high school diploma cannot be dated and conferred to the student until he/she has completed the ASCENT (5th) year. Also, the date of graduation on the ASCENT student's official high school transcript must reflect the date that the student completes his/her ASCENT (5th) year. Please refer to [Graduation Rate Reporting-HB17-1294: OPR Guidance](#)



Funding

- School districts/Charter School Institute must report ASCENT students in October count to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). LEPs must verify attendance at the IHE according to October Count procedures for the enrollment for ASCENT students. Please see “[Student October Count Attendance Requirements for Concurrent Enrollment & ASCENT](#)” for guidance on ASCENT attendance verification.
- Textbooks and fees are not required costs covered by the district, unless otherwise negotiated between the LEP and IHE.
- Institutions of higher education will include enrolled ASCENT students in official full-time equivalent student reporting.
- ASCENT participants will be required to apply for Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) funding, and authorize, for each term of postsecondary enrollment at institutions which receive COF funding.

Local Education Provider & High School Responsibilities

- Beginning in 2020-21, Concurrent Enrollment must be offered at **no tuition cost to qualified students** - Local Education Providers **will continue to pay up to only the tuition rate set by the state board for community colleges** and occupational education (per SB19 176).
- Determine any additional LEP defined standards for eligibility/readiness (e.g. appropriate GPA, meeting LEP graduation requirements, etc.) for students enrolled in program or intending to enroll.
- Develop a timeline and procedure for students to sign up to participate in the ASCENT program. LEPs should consider adding ASCENT interest in students’ ICAP form, during their sophomore year of high school.
- LEPs should assist students and parents/guardian to consider all postsecondary opportunities and review the best fit for the student, both in terms of financial options and postsecondary goals. Students should be advised to:
 - Research career and/or military opportunities;
 - Apply to any postsecondary institutions/programs in which they are interested;
 - Apply for any scholarships for which they may be eligible, and
 - Complete the FAFSA



- Notify eligible students that they have been selected by the LEP to participate in the ASCENT program.
- Post college course grade received for each course taken to the ASCENT student's high school transcript (per 1 CCR 301-86(d)(ii)).
- Create a policy for students to participate in graduation. Diploma may not be awarded, but a certificate of attendance or completion may be awarded at high school graduation.
- Implement support procedures for students who fail one or more courses, and for students who drop the ASCENT program in the middle or end of the semester.
- Advise 9-12th graders per American School Counseling Association model. High school should work with students in their 12th grade year to develop "self-advocacy" to access college advisors and student supports for their ASCENT year.

With Institutions of Higher Education:

- Execute an ASCENT Cooperative Agreement with partner IHEs.
- Coordinate ASCENT student orientation in partnership with local IHEs.
- Assure that IHEs will provide advising for ASCENT students that is aligned with student's academic/career pathway.
- Assure that IHEs provide other wrap-around student services/supports and that ASCENT students are informed of these services/supports.