

Eligibility:

Can an early graduate participate in ASCENT?

No. A student graduating early would not be eligible for ASCENT. Here is what is in statute, C.R.S. 22-35-108 (1)(b):

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of this article 35 to the contrary, a qualified student who is designated by a local education provider to be an ASCENT program participant pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, in the year directly following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the twelfth grade of the local education provider.

However, the student could remain enrolled at the high school and continue to take full-time concurrent enrollment courses and then enter ASCENT following the 12th grade year. The minimum number of credits for ASCENT is 9, but the student can earn more and still be eligible.

There is also a program for early graduates called Path4Ward, that began in 2022. The application period will open in the fall for the following school year, but it may be something to consider if you have students who are early graduates. [More information can be found on CDHE's page.](#)

Can a senior who has not completed their credits in 4 years participate in ASCENT?

Unfortunately, a student who is a super senior would not be eligible for the ASCENT program. Here is what is in statute, C.R.S. 22-35-108 (1)(b):

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of this article 35 to the contrary, a qualified student who is designated by a local education provider to be an ASCENT program participant pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, in the year directly following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the twelfth grade of the local education provider.

Since twelfth grade is traditionally a student's 4th year in high school, then the above language, (the year directly following the 12th grade year), can be interpreted as a student's 5th year. To calculate a student's "true" 5th year, the department uses a student's anticipated year of graduation (AYG) as a way to check that student's 5th year in reporting, which means, even if a student repeats a grade, their AYG does not change.

Can a student finish graduation requirements in December, and take a break in the spring to enroll for the fall in ASCENT?

22-35-108 (1)(b) Notwithstanding any provision of this article 35 to the contrary, a qualified student who is designated by a local education provider to be an ASCENT program participant pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, in the year directly

following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the twelfth grade of the local education provider.

The enrolled status comes from the Student October Count file. There is nothing in the ASCENT statute that specifies that a student is required to take HS courses in the spring before their ASCENT year.

If there is a requirement from the school district, that would be a local decision. Also, if the student is an athlete, there may be CHSAA or NCAA rules that require a HS course in the spring so they should look into that.

At the same time, please consider the following:

- The student would be eligible to participate in CE during the Spring term (as a HS student, not a college student).
- The gap between December and the following August may impact the student's incentive to participate in ASCENT (similar to "summer melt").
- A student cannot enroll as a college student during this break (i.e., spring/summer) and then enroll as an ASCENT (HS) student in the fall.

We would strongly recommend that a student does not take a break between semesters because the gap between December and the following August is very long, and likely to impact the student's incentive to participate.

Can a student use an AP/IB/CLEP test score to qualify for ASCENT?

Yes. The test score must be transcribed on a college transcript no later than June 30th of the student's 12th grade year to be included as part of the 9 credit ASCENT eligibility requirement.

At the same time, it is important to consider that an ASCENT student cannot need a developmental education course (C.R.S. 22-35-108 (2)(a)(II)); meaning, they should be college ready. So, for example, if a student is relying only on test scores in Spanish to be eligible for ASCENT, we would not want them to be surprised if they test into developmental education courses and find out that ASCENT funding does not cover those.

Can a student use a summer school class to qualify for ASCENT?

No. All courses used to qualify for ASCENT must be completed and graded by June 30th of the student's 12th grade year.

Can a homeschooled student participate in ASCENT?

A Colorado home-schooled student must be enrolled/receiving some regular education services with a public school district/charter school to participate in the state concurrent enrollment program (including ASCENT and TREP), as funding for concurrent enrollment goes to the school district to pay a student's tuition cost.

Please check with a public school district/charter school for more detailed information regarding how that district administers their concurrent enrollment programs (including ASCENT and TREP), including what enrollment means to access concurrent enrollment as they may have specific guidelines and eligibility requirements for a student.

If a student attends school in a district that does not participate in ASCENT, can the student transfer to another district for the ASCENT year?

No. The student cannot transfer to another district.

Per C.R.S. 22-35-108 (1)(b): (b) Notwithstanding any provision of this article 35 to the contrary, a qualified student who is designated by a local education provider to be an ASCENT program participant pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, in the year directly following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the twelfth grade of the local education provider.

We hope the opening up of ASCENT makes it easier for more students across many districts to participate in the program.

[Return to top](#)

During the ASCENT Year:

What happens if a student fails a class?

Districts can no longer charge students who fail, withdraw, or do not complete a class, per HB 22-1390.

However, failing a college course has a significant impact on a student's college record including their college GPA, academic status, and financial aid status. They should reach out to their college advisor for guidance on their options.

Can a student take SAI (Supplemental Academic Instruction) classes during the ASCENT year?

Yes, a student can enroll in SAI courses while they are in the ASCENT program. These courses are not considered Developmental Education courses and the school district is required to cover the tuition for them.

Can an ASCENT student take a summer course?

It depends. The district is not required to pay for the student to take a summer class, but they can. Please check with your district to see if this would be covered. In addition, the course would have to be completed and a grade received by 6/30 of the ASCENT year.

How many credits can a student take?

A student is considered part-time if they take between 3-11 college credits, and full-time if they take 12 credits or more. If students are taking more than 12 credits, they should speak with their advisor about their ability to manage that load with their other obligations.

[Return to top](#)

Housing

Is an ASCENT student eligible to live on campus?

Please check with the institution to see what the requirements are for living on campus. Please note that districts are only required to cover student tuition with ASCENT funds, and as a high school student, an ASCENT student does not have access to federal or state financial aid to help cover other expenses, such as housing or room and board.

[Return to top](#)

Financial Aid

Is an ASCENT student eligible for financial aid?

No. A student is retained by their school district to participate in ASCENT, and are still considered to be high school students, so they are not able to accept financial aid. A student may apply for scholarships that do not require first-time, undergraduate college student status. Please note that districts are only required to cover student tuition with ASCENT funds, and as a high school student, an ASCENT student does not have access to federal or state financial aid to help cover other expenses, such as housing or room and board.

[Return to top](#)

Funding

How is an ASCENT student funded?

Districts receive the extended high school rate for per pupil funding. The PPR goes to the district for both district charters and district schools, For CSI-managed charter schools, the PPR funding goes to CSI.