

## 343.46 EARLY COLLEGE CREDIT PROGRAM

### PURPOSE

The School District of Wisconsin Rapids supports providing quality educational opportunities to ensure District students graduate college and career ready. Consistent with state law, 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 nonsectarian courses at an institution of higher education through the Early College Credit Program (ECCP).

### DEFINITIONS

- A. Comparable Course. A comparable course means all of the following:
  - a. The high school course is offered during the period of time after the student notifies the Board of his or her intention to participate in the Early College Credit Program under Wisconsin law and prior to the student's graduation.
  - b. The high school course is available for enrollment.
  - c. The high school course content, as determined by curriculum guides, expectations, goals, scope and sequence, is equivalent to the content of the postsecondary course as determined by the postsecondary course syllabus, if available, and course description.
- B. Credit. A unit of measure given for the successful completion of a course of study as defined in Board of Education policy.
- C. Early College Credit Program. A program under Wisconsin law that allows Wisconsin public and private high school students to take one or more courses at an institution of higher education for high school and/or college credit.
- D. Institution of Higher Education (IHE). Institution of higher education shall refer to an institution within the University of Wisconsin System, a tribally controlled college, or a private, nonprofit institution of higher education located in Wisconsin.
- E. Successfully Completed or Successful Completion. For purposes of this policy, successfully completed or successful completion shall mean a student has completed the course with a passing grade.
- F. Term. For purposes of this policy, term shall mean either a semester or a trimester, as applicable.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- A. The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall establish administrative procedures for the administration of the Early College Credit Program, which shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Student eligibility for the program;
  - b. Guidelines for determining a student's good academic standing; and
  - c. To the extent not adequately addressed by state statutes or regulations, guidelines for determining whether a course that a student wishes to take through the ECCP is eligible for high school credit and/or is comparable to a course offered by the District.
  - d. Ensure that the District appropriately processes requests/applications related to the ECCP; and
  - e. Determines whether the District will approve individual applications and pay for specific courses based upon the criteria established in state law, any applicable state regulations and applicable District policies and procedures.
- B. Limitations on the District's responsibility for payment include the following:
  - a. 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, or the student's parent or guardian, is responsible for paying the

tuition and fees for the course. A postsecondary course is considered to be comparable to a course offered by a high school if all of the following apply to the high school course:

- i. The high school course is offered or will be offered between the date the pupil submits a notice of intent to take the postsecondary course under the ECCP and the date the pupil is expected to graduate from high school; and
  - ii. The content of the high school course is at least 80 percent equivalent to the content of the postsecondary course as determined by comparing, if available, the curriculum guide, course expectations, course goals, and the scope and sequence of the high school course to the course syllabus, if available, and course description for the postsecondary course.
- b. The District shall pay only such tuition, fees and course materials costs as are required by law. If the District is required to pay the IHE for the cost of a book or similar resource that is not a one-time use item, the student may be required to return the resource(s) to the District upon completion of the course.
  - c. Dual enrollment postsecondary program offerings by the District are exempt from counting towards the ECCP credit limit.
  - d. The District shall pay for no more than the equivalent of a combined total of 18 postsecondary semester credits per student for any courses that are taken through the Technical College Course Program (“Start College Now”) or the Early College Credit Program. Courses that the District paid for under the former Youth Options Program and/or Course Options Program count toward this credit limit. However, the limitation on total paid credits does not prohibit a student from:
    - i. Taking other courses through a postsecondary institution where the District has authorized the coursework under a separate program or separate source of authority; or
    - ii. Taking other District-approved high school courses, outside of the specific state programs, that may result in eligibility for postsecondary credit(s).
  - e. 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 over the age of 18, is responsible for reimbursing the District for the costs paid by the District. If this reimbursement is not made upon request, the student shall be ineligible for any further participation in the Start College Now Program and the Early College Credit Program.

C. Recovery of Tuition Paid by District for Courses Taken at IHE for Postsecondary Credit Only. 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 (DPI). The DPI considers such cost to be an undue financial burden if the student is eligible for free and reduced-price lunch under federal meal program standards. If applicable to a course and not waived pursuant to state law, the following provisions further govern the timing and method for making the 25% payment to the District:

- a. The student or his/her parent or guardian may make payment for such courses online through the parent portal of the District’s student information system. A small convenience fee is applied for each transaction.
- b. In addition to making payments online, payments can be made via cash, check or money order. Payments can be received during normal school hours in the main office of the building where the student attends school in the District.

- c. The District charges a fee for each check that is returned or denied payment by a financial institution. After a check is returned or denied payment, the District may refuse to accept payment by personal check in the future.
  - d. Unless the District's Business accounting 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 notification of the specific amount due. If a family wishes to arrange a payment plan, the family shall submit a request to the School office before the start of the course(s). 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 shall refund the appropriate amount to the student or his/her parent or guardian.
- D. In order for a student to avoid a payment obligation (where applicable) for a course taken through the ECCP, 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 withdrawal deadline so that the IHE will not charge the District any tuition for the course.
- E. If students withdraw from the postsecondary course within one week of the start of the course, they will be rescheduled for the appropriate high school courses, and no record of the postsecondary course will appear on the high school transcript. From the second week through the sixth week of the course, students may withdraw with no record of the postsecondary course on a high school transcript, but may not be able to reschedule a high school class to take its place. If students withdraw from the postsecondary course after the sixth week, the course will appear on the high school transcript and will show a grade of Withdraw/Failing.
- F. Unless otherwise required by law, the District is not responsible for providing transportation to IHE courses taken under this policy or paying for transportation-related costs. Parents may choose to seek reimbursement of transportation costs through the Department of Public Instruction.

**NOTICE**

- A. Information about the Early College Credit Program shall be provided to high school students annually by October 1. Early College Credit Program information shall also be included in the high school course description book and student expectations handbook.
- B. The District shall not discriminate in admission to any school, class, program or activity on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, homelessness, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability/handicap, or any other legally-protected status or classification. Discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established complaint procedures.

LEGAL REF: Sections 38.12(14) Wisconsin Statutes  
 115.385(4)  
 118.15(1)(b)  
 118.15(1)(d)  
 118.153(1)(a)  
 118.33  
 118.55

118.57  
120.12(17)  
PI 40, Wisconsin Administrative Code

CROSS REF.: 343.45 – Start College Now Program  
343.45 Rule – Start College Now Program Procedures  
343.46 Rule – Early College Credit Program Procedures  
345.5 – Graduation Requirements

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