



## Guidance for Concurrent College Enrollment Partnerships

This resource was developed by high school and college representatives from across the state who collaborated to share ideas, suggestions and successful practices regarding concurrent enrollment partnerships. Please keep in mind that implementation will vary from school to school. Reach out to your local high school or institution of higher education for additional information about current concurrent college enrollment processes.

### PRINCIPLE 1: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

#### SUMMARY

- Hold meetings with students and parents to communicate opportunities.
- Develop a handout for students and parents.
- Create a program such as a Parent University to inform parents of opportunities.
- Invite college partners to the high school campus.
- Develop a new student orientation program for concurrent college students.
- Work with college partners to consider developing a program to get high school teachers qualified to teach concurrent college courses.
- Develop a communication plan in advance to work out issues before they arise.
- Create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the partners.

#### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A strong partnership based on shared goals, thorough communication, and a focus on student success is key to a successful concurrent enrollment program. High schools and colleges should have a plan in place to ensure the partnership is meeting the needs of students, the high school and the college before any student enrollment occurs.

#### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

##### COMMUNICATING CONCURRENT COLLEGE ENROLLMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND PARENTS

This could include **meetings during school hours with students, parent-teacher conferences, or meetings with juniors and seniors during high school enrollment.** It's

advisable to have a **handout to distribute to high school students and parents that succinctly summarizes the program**, including requirements for admission and placement, any high school or college-specific requirements, and financial obligations of families. Some partnerships have also found success in utilizing a **Parent University**, where parents learn about topics such as the transition from middle school to high school, Advanced Placement courses, and concurrent college enrollment. It's also a good idea for **college partners to attend enrollment night at the high school**.

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## ORIENTATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

High school students enrolled in college courses should participate in a **new student orientation** outside the context of the classroom. Colleges can either require these students to attend a larger new student orientation program with non-high school students or develop a separate orientation. Depending on time, geographical constraints and other factors, the orientation can be conducted in-person or online. Examples of concepts covered during orientation could include: how to read a syllabus, communication with faculty, setting up a college email account, expectations of college students, college resources, managing information privacy, and using the learning management system.

For concurrent college enrollment courses held on the high school campus, the high school and college may consider a **partnership to assist high school teachers in completing graduate courses to become qualified to teach college classes**. This may include the high school, the college or a combination of both entities covering some or all of the cost of the high school teacher's graduate coursework. The Higher Learning Commission, which accredits all Oklahoma's public colleges and universities, requires college faculty—including high school teachers acting as adjunct instructors—to possess a master's degree and 18 graduate-level credits in the subject being taught.

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## DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PLAN

High school and college partners should develop a **plan for communicating about issues before they arise**. This plan may include elements such as determining how a student can enroll or drop courses (in-person only or online), requiring a form signed by the high school counselor for college schedule changes, regularly informing high school counselors about students who have been administratively withdrawn from college classes, and creating a backup plan for students who must withdraw from college courses. Placing **restrictions on changes high school students can make to their college course schedules** can often help high schools avoid potentially serious issues that may arise from students making changes without a counselor's knowledge. **Colleges should also communicate issues related to poor student performance** to the high school early and often. Examples of this could include emailing high schools the midterm grades for all concurrently enrolled students; identifying students each week who are in jeopardy of failing and communicating these students' issues to the high school; and reaching out to the student directly to identify issues preventing college success.

High schools and colleges should also **make decisions about logistical issues** well before classes begin. This includes decisions such as whether **high schools grant log-in privileges to college faculty teaching on site at the high school** and how often these credentials last. High schools and colleges should also **work out building access issues** for college faculty teaching at the high school site, especially if the high school site may be closed on days when the college class occurs or if the class begins or ends outside of normal school hours.

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## CREATING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Many of the elements of the communication plan can be detailed in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the high school and college. OSRHE policy 3.10.6.A.5 **requires that an MOU be developed for any concurrent enrollment college course that is not taught on the college campus.** The MOU must detail all the obligations, expectations and responsibilities of both the high school and the college and must be signed by a representative from the college and a senior administrator from the high school. For an example MOU, contact Kyle Foster ([kfoster@osrhe.edu](mailto:kfoster@osrhe.edu)).

## PRINCIPLE 2: SUPPORTING AND INFORMING STUDENTS

### SUMMARY

- Schedule concurrent courses for times and dates that work for the needs of both partners.
- Have a high school staff member available on days students don't have college classes to assist students with studying and completing readings.
- Develop a list of concurrent courses available to high school students.
- Set expectations for students and parents early on.
- Consider online courses for students heavily involved in extracurricular activities.
- Be clear about GPA expectations and requirements for concurrent college students.
- Clearly communicate college support services available to concurrent college students and how the services can be accessed.

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The ultimate goal of a concurrent enrollment program is for high school students to get a head start on a credential that will be valuable to them in the workforce and their own development as citizens of the state of Oklahoma. Supporting high school students as they complete their first coursework must be a central feature of a successful concurrent enrollment partnership.

## WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

### SCHEDULING CONCURRENT COLLEGE COURSES

High schools and colleges should work together several months in advance when scheduling classes to **identify dates and times that fit schedules for both entities**. College courses are normally scheduled for either two or three days a week. On the days the student is not in class, a high school staff member should be available to **assist students with learning how to study, completing reading for the college course, or finishing assignments for the college course**. High schools and colleges should also determine in advance what the plan will be when one entity is closed but the other is not (for example, the high school closes for inclement weather but the college does not). This is especially important if the college course is taught at the high school site. **It's a good idea to address this in the MOU** and communicate the plan clearly to students, college faculty, and high school counselors and administrators. **High schools and colleges should work together to develop a comprehensive list of college courses available to high school students and make the list available to students and parents as they plan for enrollment**. Colleges and high schools should also work together to accommodate state testing dates. Finally, high schools should make every attempt to schedule events for which a student needs to miss class - such as a visit to the counseling center - during periods when a student is not in the college class.

### SETTING STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

It's crucial to a successful concurrent enrollment partnership **that colleges and high schools set student expectations for their college courses early on**. Students should understand the impact of attendance on their success in college classes and the detrimental impact that non-attendance will have on their grades. Students who participate in extracurricular activities—especially those who miss several school days for those activities—should understand that the college has a different attendance policy than the high school. **These students may want to opt for online college courses**. High schools and colleges should also **make clear to students during their orientation that students must achieve a 2.0 college GPA in order to continue enrollment in college courses**. Colleges should notify the high school each semester if a student is no longer eligible to enroll in college courses.

### PROVIDING STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Colleges and high schools should partner to ensure that students have **access to tutoring, counseling and academic advising services**. Additionally, **students should be informed (normally during new student orientation) about how to access the college's learning management system and library resources**. It's often helpful for colleges to prepare a printed handout for students and counselors containing information about each of these, as well as putting the information in the class syllabus. High school students enrolled in college courses can

often benefit from online tutoring. If online tutoring is not available, the high school and college should develop a plan for how students will be able to access tutors. Since concurrently enrolled students normally spend most of their time at the high school site, **high school counselors should be well-versed in college support services available to students.**



## PRINCIPLE 3: IMPLEMENTING APPROPRIATE POLICIES TO SUPPORT CONCURRENT COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

### SUMMARY

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) governs who can legally access student educational records.
- Signed consent from the student is required for the college to release records to parents or guardians, even if the student is a minor.
- School counselors have access to higher education records through FERPA, and no written consent is required.
- Concurrent college students may not exceed a 19-hour workload, as defined in State Regents policy.
- School districts are responsible for determining how college courses appear on the high school transcript and for determining how these courses count toward high school graduation.

- College tuition is waived for up to 18 college credit hours for seniors and up to nine credit hours for juniors.
- Families are responsible for paying course fees.

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Concurrent enrollment partnerships happen within the context of state policy and statutes, as well as federal law and regulations. All high school and college staff involved with the concurrent enrollment partnership should have a familiarity with these laws and policies and verify that district and college policy align with these requirements.

## WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

### PROTECTING STUDENT PRIVACY

Access to student records in higher education is governed by the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, commonly known as FERPA**. FERPA sets forth who owns a student's educational record and who has the right to access the record. For minors not enrolled in higher education, this is the parent or guardian. For students 18 or older or those enrolled in higher education, the student is considered an "eligible student" and, therefore, controls access to their own educational record. In general, anything related to the student and maintained by the college would be considered an educational record for the purposes of FERPA, with a few narrow exceptions. **Students have five basic rights under FERPA:** to inspect and review their educational records, to amend an incorrect record, to consent to disclose the records, to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding the records, and to obtain a copy of the institution's student privacy policy. **In general, signed consent is required from the student in order to share educational records.** Notable exceptions include those with a legitimate educational interest in the records (such as college officials) and disclosure to the school district where the student is enrolled. It's recommended that high schools and colleges make signing a disclosure form a part of the enrollment process for concurrent enrollment classes. **Note that FERPA applies regardless of whether the course is being taught on the high school or college campus or whether the class is taught by a college employee or high school teacher.**

### IMPORTANT TAKEAWAYS

**For Students** - Federal law says that you are in control of your higher education records. You'll need to work with your high school, college, and parents or guardians to ensure that the right people have access to your records. Your college should provide a form for you to sign in order to grant access to these records.

**For Parents** - Even if your child is a minor, they are still the owner of their educational records from college. This means that neither the college nor the high school has the legal right to release their college records without the student's written consent. Be sure to work with your student on securing written consent to review their college records at the time of enrollment. The college should supply a form or have an option on the student portal to grant this consent.

**For High Schools** - While high schools do have the legal right to review concurrent college students' educational records from the college, these records cannot be released to any other party, including parents or guardians, without the written consent of the student. It's a good idea to work with the college on obtaining written consent from the student to release these records at the time of enrollment.

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## OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) was established by the Oklahoma Constitution as the coordinating board of control for Oklahoma's 25 public colleges and universities, the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. The State Regents establish policies related to many areas of operations, including concurrent enrollment. **OSRHE policy 3.10 governs concurrent enrollment at State System institutions.** This policy may be found on the State Regents' website ([www.okhighered.org/state-system/policy-procedures/part3.shtml](http://www.okhighered.org/state-system/policy-procedures/part3.shtml)). The policy addresses much of the information covered here in more detail. One part of the policy for which there are frequent questions is that of workload. **According to State Regents policy, high school students enrolled in college courses may not exceed the equivalent of a 19-credit hour workload.** For the purposes of calculating workload, one-half high school unit equals three semester-credit-hours of college work. Non-academic units are not included in this calculation; these may include courses such as office and library aid, athletics, or choir. If a student wishes to exceed the 19-hour limit, the high school and college should work together to determine if an exception is appropriate.

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## STATE AND DISTRICT POLICIES

Oklahoma state statute provides that high school students enrolled in college courses must be given high school credit for those courses. **How these credits count toward high school graduation requirements is up to each school district. It's highly recommended that school districts develop board policy regarding how these courses are counted toward high school graduation requirements, including how many high school credits each college course is worth.** Some examples of college courses commonly taken in high school include English Composition I & II, general education math (for non-STEM majors, sometimes referred to as quantitative reasoning, contemporary math, etc.), college algebra (for STEM majors, sometimes called pre-calculus, algebra for STEM, etc.), U.S. history (both before and after the Civil War), American federal government, introductory psychology, introductory sociology, general biology, or general chemistry. High schools should work with their college

partners for a full list of college courses available to high school students. **How these courses appear on the high school transcript is determined by each school district. Again, development of a district-level policy is highly recommended. It's also recommended that high schools include on the transcript the name of the college where the course was taken.**

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## FINANCIAL POLICIES

Unlike many states, Oklahoma's State System institutions are responsible for funding tuition costs for high school students enrolled in college courses. Oklahoma statute provides that up to 18 hours of tuition will be waived for eligible high school seniors enrolled in college courses and up to nine hours for eligible juniors, **subject to available funding. Students are still responsible for the cost of mandatory fees and books. If funding is not available for high school juniors to receive a tuition waiver, those students will also be responsible for the cost of tuition.** Funding to pay for these expenses may be available from tribal education agencies, gifted and talented funds, federal funding, or other outside sources. If funding is available, high schools may also cover these costs.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

- **Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education ([www.okhighered.org](http://www.okhighered.org))**
  - Information for K-12 Teachers and Staff ([www.okhighered.org/teachers](http://www.okhighered.org/teachers))
  - Policy and Procedures Manual ([www.okhighered.org/state-system/policy-procedures](http://www.okhighered.org/state-system/policy-procedures))
  - Higher Education Directory ([www.okhighered.org/he-directory/he-dir.pdf](http://www.okhighered.org/he-directory/he-dir.pdf))
- **OKcollegestart ([www.okcollegestart.org](http://www.okcollegestart.org))**
  - Concurrent Enrollment Information ([www.okhighered.org/concurrent-enrollment](http://www.okhighered.org/concurrent-enrollment))
- **Oklahoma State Department of Education ([www.sde.ok.gov/](http://www.sde.ok.gov/))**
  - High School Transcript Information (<http://bit.ly/OKHSTranscript>)
- **National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships ([www.nacep.org/](http://www.nacep.org/))**