

Arvada High School

Arvada High School Ascent Program

Talking Points

May 24, 2010

- On Tuesday, September 29, 2009 Bill Ritter Colorado's Governor announced that House Bill 09-1319, Colorado Ascent is the nation's first statewide program that will allow students to simultaneously pursue high school and community college degrees which will keep students in school, lower the dropout rate and help graduates find jobs quicker.
- Jefferson County Public Schools has joined Red Rocks Community College in an exciting partnership to serve a wider range of students, particularly those who represent communities with historically low college participation rates. Nevertheless, all student applicants are welcome!
- Arvada High School is the second school in the District to offer this exciting dual enrollment program to its students, to students applying for open enrollment or to students enrolling from other school districts.
- Jefferson High School was the first school to initiate this effort and planning for their Ascent program began in September of 2009. There are 42 students enrolled for the second semester of the 2009-2010 school year.
- Arvada High School has established an advisory committee that includes Arvada High School staff, school district central office staff, a representative from Red Rocks Community College and other representatives.
- Two types of degrees are being planned; an Associate of Applied Science Degree that is a 2-year career oriented terminal degree that may help students qualify for demanding jobs in areas such as electronics and other skill areas; and, a transferable Associate of Arts Degree that is for students who intend to transfer to a four-year college. Qualified students may earn up to 60 college credits that may be transferred to colleges offering a 4-year degree. Both degrees will be offered AT NO COST! This could be a potential benefit of thousands of dollars to parents of qualified Ascent students.
- Dual enrollment classes will be taught by Arvada High School Staff called Adjunct Professors but for some courses may be taught by staff at Red Rocks Community College or from Warren Tech so as to maximize skills of qualified staff. Such staff members

must have a minimum of 18 graduate areas in their content area and/or meet stringent licensure requirements in certain technical areas.

- The model combines the last three years of high school with the first two years of college so qualified students may earn both a high school diploma and a two year college degree within five years after enrolling as freshmen at Arvada High School.
- There are NO TUITION COSTS for these exciting college opportunities. There may be a small fee of less than \$15.00. Nevertheless, IMAGINE YOUR COST SAVINGS for College!
- Costs for books (these could be very expensive) will be paid by Arvada High School.
- Admission to the Arvada High School Ascent Program is by application. Students up to age 21 may participate.
- There is a five-year commitment required and all successful students will be recognized at 4th and 5th year high school graduation ceremonies as well as have the opportunity to attend graduation ceremonies at Red Rocks Community College upon completion of their 5th year.
- All parents of qualified students admitted to the program must attend a minimum of two information/discussion sessions to be offered each year at Arvada High School.
- Qualified students will take dual enrollment courses at Arvada High School. Some courses may be offered at Red Rocks Community College or Warren Tech.
- Students may apply as early as the 9th grade. Some Arvada High School students as young as 9th graders are concurrently enrolled in demanding courses at Arvada High School that offer Red Rocks Community College credit.
- Qualified students admitted to the program in their 9th or 10th grade will be tested with the ACCUPLACER to determine strengths or areas in need of improvement. This will allow program staff to identify appropriate interventions such as homework assistance, so those students are fully prepared before they enroll in dual enrollment classes. This test will be waived if a student's standardized tests scores (ACT) meet or exceed 19.
- Qualified students admitted to the program as early as September 1st of 2010 will earn credits as follows:
 1. Current juniors at Arvada High School will get an early start in college when they successfully complete two dual enrollment classes to be offered during the second semester of their senior year of the 2010-2011 school year. As such, although they

will not fully complete the 60 hours required for an Associate Degree, they will have a BIG head start on meeting college requirement when they graduate in May of 2011. This opportunity is tuition free!

2. Current sophomores at Arvada High School, or students in similar standing who have completed open enrollment applications, will get an early start in college when they successfully complete up to four dual enrollment classes to be offered during the 2010-2011 school year. This opportunity is tuition free!
 3. Current Freshman and Sophomores at Arvada High School, or students in similar standing who have completed open enrollment applications, will be the first group of qualified students who will have the FULL opportunity to successfully complete courses for a two-year college degree at Red Rocks Community College. The goal for such students is to have them successfully complete a minimum of 30 hours of college credit during their first four years at Arvada High School and an additional 30 hours of college credit during their 5th year at Arvada High School. This opportunity is tuition free!
- Qualified students must attend school for 95% of the time or better except for emergencies.
 - Qualified students must maintain a Grade Point Average of 2.5 or better.
 - Qualified students must be willing to spend a minimum of 10 hours of weekly homework.
 - Qualified students will be required to meet with their counselor on a weekly basis to select courses, discuss attendance, and review required academic plans and related progress, review grades and to resolve any challenges or opportunities that may arise.
 - An Ascent program Administration handbook is available for review by inquiring in the Arvada High School Principal's office.