



July 14, 2020

## Determining Proficiency for Senior Year Plus Programs

Senior Year Plus statute requires that a student test proficient in reading, math, and science on the statewide assessment in order to access arts and science courses through concurrent enrollment and the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEO). To determine proficiency, school districts are to refer to student performance results from the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP). Student level ISASP records will indicate whether a student is proficient in a given subject area and should be consulted prior to enrolling students in coursework through concurrent enrollment and/or PSEO.

In guidance issued in March 2020, the Iowa Department of Education waived the requirement to administer all federally required assessments in the 2019-2020 school year, including the ISASP. Accordingly, school districts may find it difficult to determine proficiency for purposes of accessing Senior Year Plus programming through traditional means due to the lack of recent and/or relevant assessment scores. There are, however, steps that school districts and postsecondary institutions can take to maintain on-going access to concurrent enrollment and PSEO opportunities that the Department strongly recommends institutions pursue. This is vital to ensure that access to these opportunities currently enjoyed by tens of thousands of Iowa students is not disrupted.

Therefore, the Department encourages a school district and postsecondary institution to establish mutually agreed upon alternative measures of proficiency for concurrent enrollment courses, utilizing the authority granted to institutions to establish such measures under Iowa Code section 261E.3, subsection 1, paragraph 3.

*If a student is not proficient in one or more of the content areas listed in this paragraph ... the school board may establish alternative but equivalent qualifying performance measures including but not limited to additional administrations of the state assessment, portfolios of student work, student performance rubric, or end-of-course assessments.*

These measures should allow the student to demonstrate mastery of appropriate content knowledge and align to measures of college readiness used by the postsecondary institution during the admissions and placement process. Institutions should incorporate these agreed-upon measures into formal contracts to ensure transparency and consistent application across all students. These contracts should be approved by the board of the respective institutions.

*This guidance replaces prior guidance issued by the Department regarding alternative measures of proficiency.*

### Contact

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