

## Florida Department of Education Guidance on Common Placement Tests for Dual Enrollment Eligibility

### **Background**

On May 13, 2020, the Florida Department of Education released [DOE Order No. 2020-EO-02](#). To provide Florida College System (FCS) institution, and school districts with additional guidance and information related to this emergency order, the Department held a webinar also on May 13, 2020, to review the [details related to dual enrollment](#). Recognizing the impact on students and their ability to sit for placement testing, the emergency order suspends the testing requirement for student eligibility for initial enrollment in college credit dual enrollment courses through December 31, 2020. Please note that students must still meet the minimum grade point average requirements defined in section (s.) 1007.271, Florida Statutes (F.S.), to establish and maintain eligibility to participate in dual enrollment. For clarity, this document also includes information regarding career dual enrollment.

### **College Credit Dual Enrollment**

1. The emergency order suspends the statewide common placement testing requirement in s. 1007.271(3), F.S. Under the suspension, institutions are permitted to place students in dual enrollment college credit coursework with a 3.0 unweighted high school GPA.

Pursuant to s. 1007.271(3), F.S., FCS institutions' district boards of trustees may establish additional initial student eligibility requirements to ensure student readiness for postsecondary instruction; these requirements must be included in the dual enrollment articulation agreement. Additional requirements included in the agreement may not arbitrarily prohibit students who have demonstrated the ability to master advanced courses from participating in dual enrollment courses.

2. The suspension of common placement testing is effective immediately for college credit dual enrollment courses taken through December 31, 2020.
3. If a postsecondary institution and their district partner wish to establish additional eligibility criteria for initial eligibility they must be mindful that the additional requirements included in the agreement may not arbitrarily prohibit students who have demonstrated the ability to master advanced courses from participating in dual enrollment courses. Institutions must utilize methods that are accessible and widely available.

Examples of alternative methods include, but are not limited to:

- a. PSAT, Florida Standards Assessments or another type of test or assessment of college readiness, if previously-taken test scores are readily available.
- b. A minimum grade level can be determined to assess preparation for college-level work.
- c. Grades earned by the student in relevant prior high school coursework.
- d. Approval, such as a letter(s) of recommendation, to indicate student possesses the level of communication and computation skills necessary for college-level coursework.

Institutions may consider more than one of these or other appropriate option(s) for students for initial placement.

4. Institutions that are considering using PSAT scores as an alternative method to determine eligibility may wish to refer to the College Board's [score report guidance](#) regarding the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks.
5. As institutions consider using alternative methods to common placement testing for initial eligibility, they should be mindful the initial and continued eligibility requirements for home education student participation does not exceed those required of other dual enrolled students.
6. An institution does not need to execute a new agreement based on the testing suspension. However, institutions will need to create and submit an addendum that may be applied to their current agreement for school year 2019-20 and their school year 2020-21 agreement if they decide to establish additional initial eligibility requirements as result of the testing suspension. The addendum should include:
  - Any specific additional requirements they may be using;
  - The semester(s) of enrollment the addendum will be in effect;
  - A statement regarding how students will be notified of the eligibility requirement changes; and
  - An acknowledgement of receipt by both the secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Institutions that choose to reflect these requirements in a newly-executed 2020-21 dual enrollment agreement should make clear that the requirements apply to the fall 2020 semester only. Institutions that do not establish alternative eligibility criteria are not required to submit an addendum. Completed documents should be submitted to the Office of Articulation at [articulation@fldoe.org](mailto:articulation@fldoe.org).

7. Because the availability of the common placement tests is not the same for all students, institutions that adopt a policy using alternative methods in addition to the 3.0 high school GPA must follow that policy for all students for the summer and fall term(s) specified in the emergency order regardless if testing becomes more widely available. This will continue to address the issue of students being arbitrarily prohibited from participation.

Unless this provision of the emergency order is extended, the common placement testing requirement in Florida Statutes will be required for initial dual enrollment eligibility for spring 2021 courses.

8. For continued enrollment in college credit dual enrollment courses, students must statutorily maintain a 3.0 unweighted high school grade point average and the minimum postsecondary GPA established by the postsecondary institution. Students who enrolled in dual enrollment without the common placement test score who maintain the minimum GPA requirements are not required to complete a common placement test for continued enrollment.
9. The suspension of the common placement test requirement also applies to continuing students who have not yet achieved a minimum score on a common placement test, as these students do not have uniform access to tests. Students meeting continued eligibility criteria are not required to achieve minimum scores in the areas of reading, writing or mathematics to enroll in courses in those curriculum areas nor are they limited in their ability to earn more than 12 college credit hours due to prior placement test results.
10. For a dual enrollment student that had previously completed a common placement test and did not meet student eligibility requirements based on those scores, a college should consider that student as eligible if the student has an unweighted 3.0 high school GPA and the student meets locally established requirements.

11. Because secondary student access to testing is not uniform, colleges may not require students to sit for a common placement test for course placement.

Institutions should identify other measures and minimum standards for student placement in higher-level coursework, such as the measure(s) listed above in item 3, or other appropriate measures chosen by the institution. Institutions are encouraged to work with their colleagues in districts and high schools in their identification, giving consideration to providing more than one option that could be used for placement, providing as many opportunities as possible for a student to demonstrate the potential to master higher-level coursework. For example, a college could choose to place a student in a course based on either the student's grades in specific high school courses or the student's Florida Standards Assessment score.

12. For students who do not meet the standards for course placement that the college is using under the Emergency Order, a college may use a score already on file for a common placement test, if the score can be used to place the student in the higher-level course.
13. Districts and FCS institutions should work in close partnership to determine the messaging and methods by which dual enrollment eligibility requirements are communicated to students and parents.
14. The Department of Education intends to capture Florida College System dual enrollment eligibility through state reporting to determine whether each student was placed in dual enrollment using a GPA only or using a GPA plus an alternative method(s). Additional details will be forthcoming as soon as practicable.

### **Career Dual Enrollment**

15. There is no placement test required for career (clock-hour) dual enrollment. Section 1007.271(3), F.S., establishes the eligibility requirements as follows for initial and continued enrollment in career certificate dual enrollment courses:
  - o 2.0 unweighted high school grade point average.
  - o Exceptions to the required grade point averages may be granted on an individual student basis if the educational entities agree and the terms of the agreement are contained within the dual enrollment articulation agreement.
16. For clock hour programs of 450 hours or more, career dual enrollment students are required to be assessed for basic skills within 6 weeks of admission, as are all other career certificate students. Section 1011.80, F.S., requires the following: A student may not be reported for funding in a dual enrollment workforce education program unless the student has completed the basic skills assessment pursuant to s. 1004.91, F.S.

However, institutions may use locally-developed assessments as indicated in DOE Order No. 2020-EO-02. See question 19 in the FAQ on this emergency order. Under this order, programs are authorized to assess basic skills by any reasonable means and are not limited to the assessments listed in Rule 6A-10.040, F.A.C., or bound by the time limits set forth in order to exit a student who meets all other criteria for completion of a clock hour certificate program that is 450 hours or greater.

Currently, the effective date of DOE Order No. 2020-EO-02 corresponds with the effective dates of the Governor's Executive Order No. 20-52. On May 8th, 2020, the Governor issued Executive Order 20-114, which extends EO 20-52 for 60 days.

For questions regarding dual enrollment eligibility, please contact the Office of Articulation at [articulation@fldoe.org](mailto:articulation@fldoe.org).