

College course requirements being waived for Ohio high schoolers interested in high-demand fields

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COLUMBUS, Ohio - The state is waiving requirements for high school students to take free, career-technical college courses in high-demand fields, Lt. Gov. Jim Tressel announced Thursday.

The students can enroll in Ohio's dual-enrollment program, College Credit Plus, through a waiver that eliminates barriers that have prevented some high school students from participating. The new waiver applies to a requirement that students must have a cumulative, unweighted 3.0 grade-point average or pass placement tests.

The first schools to receive approval for the waiver are Lorain County Community College, Columbus State Community College and Sinclair Community College in the Dayton area.

As a result of the waiver, state officials hope more students will be able begin an education in industries where Ohio needs workers. The programs that are eligible for the waiver are technician certificates or degrees for advanced manufacturing and engineering technician roles.

Specifically, that applies to classes in electro-mechanical engineering, electronic engineering, mechanical engineering, manufacturing engineering, manufacturing equipment and semiconductor fundamentals.

Marcia Ballinger, Lorain County Community College president, said the waiver is an important step in widening the pipeline of talent in the in-demand careers.

"By expanding College Credit Plus to include career-technical education programs and making this waiver available statewide, Ohio is a leader in unlocking new opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience and earn college credit while still in high school," she said in a statement. "This bold move enables colleges and K-12 partners across the state to work together in building direct pathways to in-demand careers. As Ohio's economy grows in strategic sectors like semiconductors

and smart automation, this waiver ensures we are preparing the skilled workforce needed to fuel our state's future."

Tressel announced the new waiver with Mike Duffey, the chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education, at a Thursday morning meeting of the Governor's Executive Workforce Board at Columbus State.

"As we continue our work to strengthen Ohio's workforce pipeline, one of our top goals is to provide as many of our students as possible the chance to gain experience in the jobs that will define Ohio's future," Tressel said. "The expansion of College Credit Plus eligibility will give more of our home-grown talent an affordable pathway to high-demand careers like advanced manufacturing and others, and will allow us, as a state, to be ready to fill the jobs we need to fill."

Duffey said that Lorain County, Columbus State and Sinclair community colleges were selected to first participate in the waiver program because they're among the largest Ohio schools providing these credentials.

College Credit Plus, [which had 80,163 students in the 2022-2023 school year](#), allows students in grades 7-12 to take college courses online, at a campus or in their high schools with a teacher who meets adjunct faculty requirements. School districts, under current law, pick up the tab of the course and textbooks.