



PUBLIC SCHOOLS RELEASE
TO: Superintendents, Charter Administrators
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www.sde.idaho.gov

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ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM CONSOLIDATES TO OFFER MORE OPTIONS TO STUDENTS

(BOISE) – With the passage of House Bill 458 during the 2016 legislative session, the Advanced Opportunities programs will now offer more options for Idaho students as they map out their options for jumpstarting their future.

Beginning July 1st, every student who attends an Idaho public school will be allotted \$4,125.00 to use in grades 7-12 through the Fast Forward program. These funds can be used to pay for dual credit, overload courses, and college-credit bearing/professional technical exams.

Other benefits of the law allow school districts to exert flexibility for students in meeting graduation requirements by creating metrics by which students can test out of a course for high school credit. All students who graduate at least a full year early will be eligible for the Early Graduation scholarship that can be used at any Idaho public post-secondary institution equaling roughly \$1,500.

With the new and expanded Fast Forward program, students can utilize their funds of \$4,125.00 in the following ways:

- **Dual credits:** Dual credit courses are offered by various colleges and universities around the state. Students who are still in high school can access these college credits for a cost of \$65.00.
- **Overload courses:** In many instances, students are choosing to take high school courses in excess of their regular school day, either online or over the summer. Students can use these funds to cover up to \$225.00 per course to cover course costs associated with overload courses.
- **Examinations:** Students can utilize these funds to pay for college credit bearing and professional technical examinations. These include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College Level Examination Program, and Professional Technical Certification Exams.

In essence, the funds allocated for Idaho students through this revision to statute is enough to pay for the tuition of an associate's degree for any student who would like to get on a fast track to college. Students will be able to access their funds through the Advanced Opportunities portal that has been in place since the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year. In this portal, students can create an account and request that funds be sent to a particular institution on their behalf, while tracking remaining funds. The portal may be accessed at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/advanced-ops/index.html>.

With these new changes, it is expected that school districts will continue to grow dual credit programs locally and seek out creative alternatives through online access, virtual partnerships and



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on-campus options. The State Department of Education will be providing further support and training for school districts to ensure effective implementation of these programs prior to the 2016-2017 school year.

The full text of [House Bill 458](#) can be found on the Idaho Legislature's website. For more information on program support and implementation, visit www.sde.idaho.gov or contact Tina Polishchuk, Coordinator of Advanced Opportunities at the Idaho State Department of Education at (208) 332-6944 or by email at tpolishchuk@sde.idaho.gov.

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