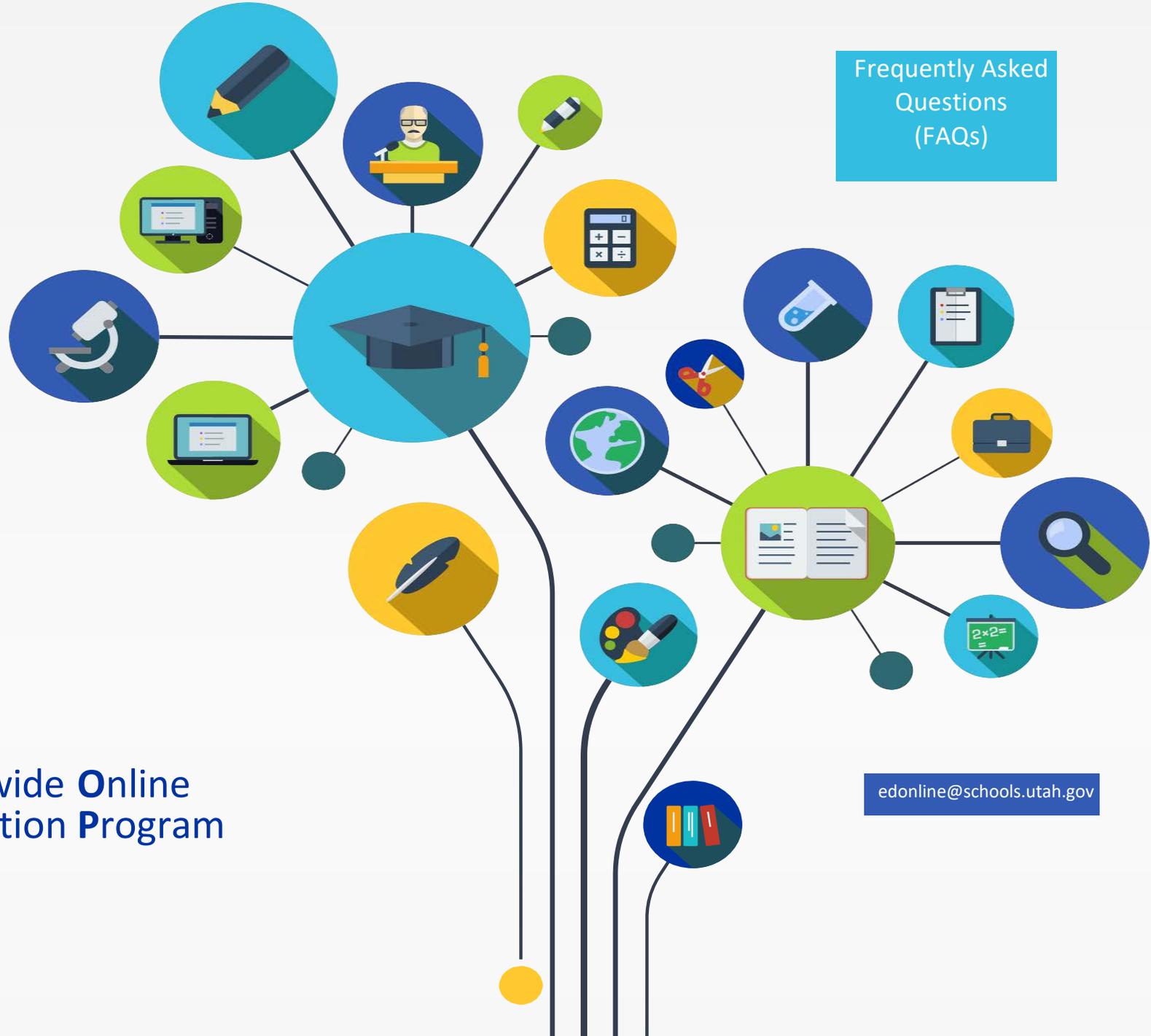


Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Statewide Online Education Program

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### 1. What is the Statewide Online Education Program?

- a. To fulfill graduation requirements at their Primary School of Enrollment, the Statewide Online Education Program (Program) allows secondary students to take up to 6.0 credits online per academic year online.
- b. Online courses offered by a school district or charter school through a locally-created program are not covered by statutes related to this Program.
- c. Credits taken online through this program *replace* credits the student would take at their primary school of enrollment. However, credits taken through this program are considered to be enrollment at the primary school of enrollment for funding and all other purposes.
- d. Allowable credits are determined by “full-time enrollment” typical for a school across the whole school year. To register for more courses than what would be considered full-time enrollment (only credit-bearing courses are considered), a student must obtain a plan for early graduation. from their counselor at their primary school of enrollment.

### 2. Are all students eligible to participate in this program?

- a. 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in a secondary school (district or charter school) in Utah, including students with disabilities and English language learners, are eligible for enrollment under Program statutes (§53F-4-501(2)); R277-726-2(4)(a)).
- b. Students in grades 6-8 enrolled in a secondary environment who are prepared for high-school-level work and have an Early Graduation plan allowing for acceleration of high school graduation may participate.
- c. §53G-6-406 indicates that high schools are required to accept, for purposes of high school graduation, credit

and grades earned from a SOEP provider that is accredited by AdvanceEd for 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade education, *without reference to the grade in which the credit was earned.*

- d. Home-schooled or private school students with a custodial parent resident in the state of Utah are eligible for program participation.
- e. Carson Smith Scholarship recipients are eligible for this program.
- f. Students residing in residential treatment centers may participate in this program if they enroll in the school district where the center is located.
- g. Foreign exchange students may enroll in this program while enrolled in a Utah Public or Private school.

### 3. How do I enroll?

- a. Visit the [Utah State Board of Education’s web site](#), and click on (1) “Departments/Programs” on the left, and (2) the link titled “[Statewide Online Education Program,](#)” and then (3) the “[Students and Parents](#)” tab, on the left-hand side of the screen. Lastly, click on (4) the “[SOEP Utah Public Education Online Enrollment by Course](#)” link.
- b. Form an account, log back in, and register for courses.

### 4. What distinguishes online providers in this program?

- a. The cost of SOEP courses is covered by per pupil funding distributed to K-12 public schools. Parents are not obligated to pay for courses out of their own pockets.
- b. This Program allows a primary school of enrollment to offer its students access to online courses offered by

other, fully virtual schools, that have agreed to allow external students from across the state who wish to take advantage of their online courses, alongside the online schools's own regularly-enrolled students.

- c. Online Course Providers are school districts, charter schools or a district or charter school programs created to serve Utah students grades 9-12 online (*R277-726-1(K)*).
- d. Providers are accredited for 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade education through the AdvancEd, the accrediting commission recognized by the Utah State Board of Education for acceptance toward graduation requirements at Utah Public Schools. This allows automatic acceptance of credit for purposes of high school graduation by Utah Public Schools.
- e. A student cannot earn a failing grade, although a student may fail to receive credit if a course is not completed.
- f. Teachers assisting students are “highly qualified” per state and federal law applicable to K-12 public schools
- g. Providers may only offer course content aligned with Utah Core standards.
- h. Providers must provide services to students consistent with IDEA, Section 504, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- i. Providers must administer, and have the capacity to carry out, state-designated assessments.

#### 5. Is this “Dual Enrollment” or “Split Enrollment”

- a. **Dual Enrollment** applies only to a situation where a student is enrolled “dually” in a **Home School** or **Private School**, for part of the day, and in a **Public School** for the

other part of the day.

- b. **Split Enrollment** is a situation where a student is *regularly enrolled* at two public schools. The student is eligible for graduation and other services at both schools.
- c. When the student participates in online courses through the **Statewide Online Education Program**, the student is a regularly enrolled student *only* at their Primary School of Enrollment, where they remain eligible for Graduation, Counseling, Sports, Co-curricular Activities such as band.
- d. A SOEP student is “in membership” (for funding and other purposes) only at the primary school of enrollment, which state law defines as *the school in which the student is enrolled for courses other than online courses offered through the Statewide Online Education Program*.

#### 6. Does my child’s IEP need to be amended when we request enrollment in online courses?

An IEP should always be updated to reflect the child’s needs in a specifically online environment. A student may require physical aids, supplementary vocabulary, or other supports.

#### 7. Can my Primary School of Enrollment tell me that I am not allowed to enroll in these courses?

If a student has credits available in their schedule, and they choose a course that is consistent with their SEOP, then the student has the right to enroll. If a student needs to drop a course in their schedule at their Primary School of Enrollment to make room for an online course, then they must do so by the ordinary drop date published by that school for traditional courses.

**5. My school says that I need to enroll in courses at this school (my Primary School of Enrollment) or they will not facilitate SOEP enrollment. Is this ok?**

- a. There is no requirement for a student to take any courses at a Primary School of Enrollment – although any courses above the 24 credits (over four years) allowed by SOEP are assumed to be taken at the Primary School of Enrollment, even while other options are available.
- b. A student could take all 24 courses required for graduation online, and still qualify to receive a high school diploma from their Primary School of Enrollment, which would remain in charge of certifying that the student has met state-mandated graduation requirements. The Primary School of Enrollment *may* require additional credits to issue a diploma specific to that school. The student remains fully enrolled at their Primary School of Enrollment for all periods in which they are enrolled in online courses, and the Primary School of Enrollment remains in charge of directing the student’s education, and offering counseling, graduation, access to physical facilities, sports and extracurricular activities.

**6. My school has told me that I need to take courses from the online provider that the school offers, instead of courses through the Statewide Online Education Program. Can a school do this?**

Assuming a student has space available in their schedule, the student *cannot be required* to utilize a courtesy option the school makes available. A courtesy option will be preferable or remedial courses which the student may previously

have failed, however.

**8. My school says I can only take SOEP courses that are not offered at my school already. Is this true?**

A student has a legal right to take advantage of all courses offered through this Program.

**9. What if I want to take excess courses, beyond 8 credits allowed per year by my school?**

YA student can only do so if they have (a) have an plan for Early Graduation, and (b) that plan uses the excess courses to advance your graduation date, so that the student is using the extra courses to make progress toward early graduation. YA student will not be *required* to graduate early, but this will make this option available, and signifies that your school and your parents understand that this is planned.

**10. I want to enroll in summer courses. Can I?**

Yes, although only some online providers work through the summer. Summer credit hours will count towards the next school year, and as a result they reduce the credit hours that a student will be allowed to take in the remainder of this school year unless the student has a plan for early graduation.

**11. I want to enroll in summer courses between my 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade years - and I will be switching schools between my 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade years.**

When **switching schools**, the student needs to contact USBE ([edonline@schools.utah.gov](mailto:edonline@schools.utah.gov)) to request a change of enrollment. The student may then use

SEATS (the Utah State Board of Education's online enrollment application) to enroll. The student should select the appropriate Counselor at the at the new school as their designated Counselor.

**12. If I switch schools, do I need to notify the Utah State Office of Education to move my student account over to the newschool?**

Yes. Contact information is available [here](http://www.schools.utah.gov/edonline/Contact-Us.aspx), at [www.schools.utah.gov/edonline/Contact-Us.aspx](http://www.schools.utah.gov/edonline/Contact-Us.aspx).

**13. When should I enroll?**

**14.** Students should enroll in online courses during their school's ordinary registration period. There is a 10-business-day wait between the date that an enrollment request is filed, and the date on which the online provider receives an email notice that the student can proceed with courses. Providers start each semester when when regular schools do and many providers will not accept new students after that point.

**15.** Schools in this program are ordinary schools, and they start courses at the beginning of semesters and quarters (not trimesters). If you request and enrollment too far into a semester or quarter, a provider may not accept the enrollment.

**14. I want to enroll in an A.P. course. When should I register?**

**Who will administer an A.P. test?**

**A.P. courses** and a few other courses begin only in the fall, and so a student should register early enough to be enrolled and ready to go by mid-August. A few A.P. courses are not full-year courses, but these are exceptions. Students may register for an A.P. test

[through theCollege Board](http://collegeboard.org) web-site. Neither a Provider LEA nor a Primary LEA is *required* to facilitate A.P. testing.

**15. I want to enroll in Drivers Education? Where do I do my driving instruction?**

The written portion of the **Driver Education** course is administered online. The road portion will need to be arranged at a [Division of Motor Vehicles](http://dmv.utah.gov), or your local high school or elsewhere.

**16. How are fee waivers handled?**

A student whose family qualifies for a **Fee Waiver** may not have to pay fees or purchase materials that would ordinarily be free to the students at the online provider school. If a student's Primary School of Enrollment determines that the student is fee waiver eligible, then that student will be fee waiver eligible with respect to fees charged by an online provider.

Providers may charge fees consistent with other secondary schools. If the Provider intends to charge fees, however, the Provider must notify the primary school of enrollment with whom the Provider has the CCA of the purpose for fees, amounts of fees, and provide timely notice to parents of required fees and fee waiver opportunities. It must also post fees on Provider website. Technology access is not handled by an online provider, and students should request technology and internet access from a primary school of enrollment.

**17. Can my school district or charter school choose not to participate in the Statewide Online Education Program?**

This program is an *option for all 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in a secondary school environment.*

- b. **Staff may not discourage enrollment or give preference to one online provider** over another (§53F-4-503), including online options offered by a school or district to its own students.
- c. **Who is the “primary LEA of enrollment,” and who is the “primary school of enrollment?”**
- d. Utah law defines a **Primary LEA of Enrollment** as the LEA in which an eligible student is enrolled or may enroll or courses other than online courses offered through the Statewide Online Education Program (§53G-11-401, R277-726-1(L)).  
The **Primary School of Enrollment** within this *LEA* will maintain the student’s cumulative file, enrollment information and transcript (R277-726-1(M)).

**19. How can I evaluate a Provider?**

- a. Providers must administer state-designated assessments, and post results on their websites (R277-473; R277-726-7(A)).
- b. The Utah State Board of Education posts an [Annual Report on the Performance of Online Providers](#) ("Reports Tab" used to evaluate the quality of Providers (§53F-4-511)).
- c. Using contact information on links listed on the [Utah State Board of Education/SOEP website](#).
- d. Call and talk to Providers. Their staff can tell you about unique features of their programs.

**20. Can a student “make up” credits or take “extra” credits through this program?**

- a. Extra credits can be taken if the student has a plan for early graduation.
- b. Students should ask their school counselor about options

that the school has available for remedial or make-up credits. The Statewide Online Education Program is not usually a student's best option for remediation.

**21. My daughter is active in sports and needs to maintain a certain GPA to participate. Will her online courses count toward her athletic eligibility? Can the coach check her grades and attendance?**

- a. These topics should be discussed with a School Counselor. A school of record sets standards for student grades and enrollment in online courses for purposes of: (1) school awards and honors, and (2) Utah High School Activities Association participation, and (3) graduation requirements. The counselor must communicate these standards to the Provider, who will then cooperate to offer information as necessary.
- b. NCAA “approval” depends on the method of instruction and supervision, and other factors. Check for NCAA acceptance of courses on the NCAA website, or check with the provider to ensure acceptance.

**22. Will my child be allowed to remain on the school campus for periods in which he is registered for an online course?**

- a. Online courses are periods of enrollment in the Primary School of Enrollment and the school retains responsibility for the child during these periods, unless it has arranged for the parent to accept this responsibility.

**23. Can a student withdraw?**

- a. A student may withdraw up to 20 days after course begins.

- b. Students and parents are responsible for notifying Providers and Counselors immediately of any intended change in enrollment.

**24. My child is enrolled at our local high school in traditional courses for three courses and home-schooled otherwise. I would like to enroll my student in online courses. How can this be done?**

When a student is released for home schooling but also chooses to participate in public school to a limited extent, this is called “dual enrollment.” When the dually-enrolled student registers online, using the SEATS enrollment application, they must list their school as the public school that they currently attend. Online enrollment will increase the public education portion of the student’s day and decrease the home school portion. The home school portion of the student’s day is a portion of a regular school day wherein the student is not attending public school and has therefore requested a release from compulsory education requirements. This release is unnecessary for hours that the student is enrolled in the public school system, including online courses. The student may not enroll in courses, as a result, as a home school student, while dually enrolled; SOEP enrollment is thought of as widening the extent of the student’s public school enrollment in this case.

**25. Who is accountable for students eligible for services under the IDEA and Utah State Board of Education Special Education Rules (USBE SER)?**

- a. The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) has determined that only one LEA retains accountability for a student’s

receipt of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Based on that determination, for purposes of this Statewide Online Education Program, accountability for FAPE and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and USBE Special Education Rules (USBE SER), including monitoring and dispute resolution, lies with the primary LEA of enrollment. Primary LEAs of enrollment will need to develop policies and procedures for implementing the Program. Those policies and procedures should include provisions for students with disabilities (*R277-726*). For students with an IEP, participation in the Statewide Online Education Program will require a revision of the student’s IEP. It is suggested that the IEP team should invite a member of the online provider staff to serve on the IEP Team.

- b. School districts are encouraged to develop policies that will ensure proper review of IEP and 504 Accommodation Plans as students choose to enroll in online courses, and to provide notice to providers of necessary accommodations following provider acceptance of a Course Credit Acknowledgement, but prior to a student beginning participation in a course.
- c. Online course providers (Providers) are expected to comply with IDEA and Sections 504 and 508 requirements (*R277-726-7(C)*). Providers in the Statewide Online Education Program must provide the special education services and accommodations that the student requires, as per the IEP or 504 plan (*Id*). If a Board investigation finds that a Provider has violated IDEA or Section 504 provisions for students taking online courses, the Provider shall

compensate the student's Primary LEA of enrollment for costs related to compliance (R277-726-6(G,H,I,J)).

- d. For enrollment in this program by any student, a Course Credit Acknowledgement (CCA) form has been developed by the USOE and is available on the USOE website. This includes clarification about whether a student has an IEP or 504 plan.
- e. The primary school of enrollment will designate a counselor to review the CCA form to ensure consistency with graduation requirements, the student's SEOP, and the student's IEP or Section 504 plan, if applicable (R277-726-3(B)). If approved, the counselor gives preliminary approval to the CCA and submits the CCA (R77-726-3, 5).
- c. Each LEA should develop policies and procedures for the administration of this program. **As the gatekeeper of the CCA process, the counselor should establish whether the student has an IEP or Section 504 plan and include relevant school staff, such as the IEP team or student's teacher(s), in the preliminary approval process.** If a student with an IEP wants to enroll in the program, it is recommended that the student's IEP team meet to consider and plan for the requested changes to ensure that the student will continue to receive the special education and related services required for a free appropriate public education (FAPE). *A primary school of enrollment must transmit IEP or 504 Accommodation plan to the online provider within 72 business hours of receiving notice that the provider has accepted an online enrollment.*

**26. The student's IEP team and CCA counselor may consider the following questions helpful in determining the student's need for services and /or accommodations in the online subject matter or in accessing the online course content.**

How might the student's current IEP require modification to ensure FAPE considering attendance in the Program?

*Consider the following:*

- i. What is the expected impact on academics and social emotional development of the student? Consider both intended and unintended consequences.
- ii. Has the student had specific instruction in using a variety of programs on the computer?
- iii. Has the team considered the technological skills required for this class?
- iv. Has the team considered what specialized instruction the student may require for this class?
- v. Has the team considered the need for supplementary aids and services for this class?

**27. What about student confidentiality?**

Providers are responsible for confidentiality provisions in State and Federal law. All Providers in the Program are familiar with confidentiality requirements applicable to public education.

**28. How does a Counselor respond to a request to enroll with an online provider?**

- a. A Counselor must not dis-enroll the student and infer that the student is transferring schools.