

Camden County Bridge Year Pilot Program

Q&A

Compiled in conjunction with the NJDOE Camden County Office of Education and Camden County College and a consortium of bridge year liaisons in Camden County school districts

What is the Bridge Year Pilot Program?

The Bridge Year Pilot Program (BYPP) is a three-year program under which each school district with a high school shall offer students in the graduating class of 2021 and the graduating class of 2022 the opportunity to pursue a bridge year during the year immediately following their senior year of high school. The purpose of the pilot program shall be to provide participating students an additional year to address learning loss and missed opportunities in extracurricular activities, including spring sports programs, as a result of the public health state of emergency caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

Are there specific eligibility requirements to participate in the BYPP?

A student in the graduating class of 2021 or the graduating class of 2022 who has met all applicable high school graduation requirements by the end of the senior year of high school may defer graduation from high school to pursue a bridge year. A participating student shall be 19 years or younger and not turn 20 at any time during the bridge year except if eligible under an IEP.

How does a student apply to participate in the BYPP?

A student who intends to pursue a bridge year shall notify his/her high school's bridge year liaison (or school counselor) of their intent no later than the first day of the third marking period of the student's senior year of high school.

Will a student who participates in the BYPP be able to participate in graduation ceremonies?

Yes, students participating in the bridge year will be able to participate in graduation ceremonies with the graduating class of 2021 or class of 2022, as applicable, but shall not be issued diplomas until the conclusion of the bridge year.

How does the BYPP work?

A student pursuing a bridge year shall remain enrolled in the host high school while participating in the Bridge Year Pilot Program. The school will work with the student to develop an individual learning plan (ILP). The ILP shall define academic and co-curricular goals for the bridge year and detail activities and strategies for accomplishing those goals including, but not limited to, counseling, academic support, coursework, and co-curricular or athletic participation.

During the fall semester of the student's bridge year, the student shall take between nine and 12 credits at the high school, the county college that serves the county of the host high school, OR a combination thereof. During the spring semester of the student's bridge year, the student shall take between nine and 12 credits at *Camden County College*. Students will, in accordance with NJSA 18A:35-7 and NJAC 6A:8-5.1(a)1vi be required to enroll

in a health/pe course during his/her participation in the BYPP. Students are required to maintain a 2.0 gpa to maintain participation in the BYPP.

Will students participating in the BYPP be considered high school students or college students?

Students will be deemed high school students. For the purpose of enrolling in college credits, the student shall be considered a *nonmatriculated student* of the county college. A student who pursues a bridge year and participates in a spring sport sanctioned by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) shall enroll in less than 12 college credits, or otherwise be enrolled in a number of college credits *as to not be considered a full-time college student*, in each of the fall and spring semesters during the student's bridge year. *NOTE: Students participating in the BYPP shall be subject to all discipline and code of conduct requirements as outlined by the district.*

How can a student ensure that the bridge year is not a “wasted” year?

A consortium of bridge year liaisons have been working in coordination with the NJDOE's county office of education and Camden County College to identify potential courses for students who may be interested in participating in the BYPP to maximize their ability to seamlessly transition to college or career after his/her bridge year.

What if the student changes his/her mind in the middle of the bridge year?

In the event that a student initially decides to pursue a bridge year in the fall semester but does not continue the bridge year in the spring semester, the student's high school shall release all final transcripts and other records as necessary and as may be requested. A student who decides not to continue the bridge year in the spring semester shall not be eligible to participate in a spring sports program or extracurricular activities pursuant to this act.

Will the student have to apply to Camden County College directly?

Yes. Students will need to complete a minor application for Camden County College. They will complete the application during their initial advisement session with the Camden County College Bridge Year Liaison.

Will the school cover the cost of college credits?

No. The student will be responsible for the cost of the courses taken at Camden County College however; a reduced fee of \$145 per credit (not to include a maximum of \$45 for classes with lab fees) shall be assessed for courses with which the student is registered during the bridge year. A student pursuing a bridge year shall be eligible for a financial aid grant under the Community College Opportunity Grant Program if the student meets all other applicable eligibility requirements. Students will be able to participate in a dual enrollment course at the high school towards fulfillment of the course requirements for the bridge year under the criteria outlined for participation in such.

Will the student have to complete a FAFSA?

No. Students will not need to complete the FAFSA as they will not be eligible for financial aid at this time. Guidelines require students to have a high school diploma in

order to be eligible for financial aid. Since students will not be accepting their diploma until after the completion of Bridge Year they will not be eligible for financial aid during their Bridge Year.

What if the student has already taken dual enrollment courses? May the student build upon those courses while participating in the bridge year?

Yes. If students have already taken dual enrollment courses, he/she may continue to pursue the coursework during the bridge year. This would be discussed and built into the ILP when determining the student's course of study.

What is the deadline for registering at Camden County College?

Camden County College typically opens registration for the fall semester in late March or early April. Students will need to follow the guidelines of their ILP to determine when they need to finalize their registration with Camden County College.

If a student takes classes at Camden County College in the summer, will that count towards the bridge year?

No. Student's courses for Bridge Year will need to be taken during the Fall semester (September – December) and Spring Semester (January – May).

What is the deadline for paying for fall/spring bridge year courses if they will be taken at the college?

Camden County College typically requires students to pay for their fall classes in July, while and typically requires students to pay for the spring semester in December. Camden County College does have payment plans available for student payment.

Will students receive transportation to and from the college?

No. Students will not receive transportation to and from the college. Students will be required to obtain their own transportation to and from the college.

Will students be required to take a placement test at the college?

Maybe. Camden County College uses Accuplacer as their placement test for courses. Students that have taken the SAT and received a 450 on the Evidenced Based Reading Section and a 500 on the math section are considered exempt from the Accuplacer.

Who will assist students selecting the appropriate classes at the college?

Camden County College has a designated liaison who is solely responsible for working with each of the Bridge Year students.

Can student a student who participates in the BYPP and plays a fall sport, participate in the fall sports program at the school?

No. Students participating in the BYPP are not allowed to participate in fall/winter sports. The intent of the program in part, is to offer opportunities for students who were not able to participate in spring sports and will therefore not be eligible to participate in any fall or winter sports.

Will students be responsible to pay athletic fees assessed by the school to participate in the spring sport?

Yes. Students will be responsible to pay all applicable fees assessed by the high school to participate in spring sports.

Can students transfer or participate in sports programs at other schools during the bridge year?

No. Students can only participate in spring sports at the high school of their senior attendance.

If a student participates in the bridge year program, will he/she be guaranteed a spot on a spring sports team?

No. Students are NOT guaranteed a spot on a sports team just because he/she opted to participate in the BYPP. He/she will be required to adhere to all eligibility requirements assigned to the sport he/she pursues.

Can a student make a declaration for college recruiters under this program?

Yes. The association (NJSIAA) shall confer with the National Collegiate Athletic Association or any other athletic association, conference, or group or organization with authority over intercollegiate athletics to ensure that any student participating in a spring sport during a bridge year will be eligible to declare as a college recruit during the bridge year and participate in intercollegiate athletics.

Will students lose a year of eligibility to play sports at the college level?

No. Students will not lose any years of eligibility.

Can a student play a sport at Camden County College while participating in this BYPP?

No. Students cannot participate in sports at the college level during the bridge year.

What spring sports are eligible under this program?

The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association identifies the following sports as “spring sports” for the purposes of this program: Tennis; Baseball; Softball; Golf; Lacrosse; Track; and Volleyball.

What should students consider before committing to this program?

- Do I want to spend an additional year as a high school student?
- Do I know what is required of the college/field I'd like to pursue after my bridge year is complete?
- Will this program help me to achieve the goals I have set for myself beyond my high school career?
- Do I have an opportunity to participate in the spring sport during my bridge year?
- Do I have the financial resources to take college courses as a non-matriculated student?
- Do I have the supports in place to ensure my successful complete of this program?