

## EDUCATION

# Ohio high school students take advantage of college credit program during pandemic

During the pandemic some Ohio high school students are thinking ahead and gaining college course credit.



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When it comes time for Pomp and Circumstance it's better to ask "Why not" than "What's the point?"

He already gets it.

"I mean, I'm not going to lie, I never thought that this would be the senior year I'd be getting," Ryan Koenig said.

Koenig goes to Hilliard Davidson High School. Because of COVID he says he's spending his senior year doing more.

"I figured that it would be a better investment for me to get a head start on college, rather than do the whole hybrid [learning] thing," he said.

He's in the College Credit Plus program with Columbus State that allows him to earn college credits. He took about 15 hours last year. This year he's taking another 30.

"I think that [students] are making some really smart choices," Lauren Jones said.

Jones is the senior director of K-12 Partnerships at Columbus State and says with classes online during the pandemic for many districts, it's getting students to think differently about their futures.

"This generation is resilient," she said.

In the spring semester of 2021 there are 6,093 students getting college credits with Columbus State. Last semester that number was 6,446, which was a five percent increase from Fall 2019.

“I think that this generation is extraordinarily smart in terms of taking advantage of those options,” she said. “[They are] resilient in adapting and being able to learn in multimodal types of ways.”

Koenig says there are more perks like a consistent schedule and saving money.

“There’s some kids that’ll be going into college next year already with a year done and that just saves them a lot of money and then if they’re not too sure what they want to do I know some people that have used this year to kind of take a few classes in different areas and really try and narrow it down.”

Taking the pandemic and looking at it through a different lens and focusing on trying harder and doing more.

Whereas there have been occasions for younger teens to take enough credits to graduate high school early, Jones says the majority of high school students who enroll in college classes are juniors and seniors.