

2026 Robertson County District Collaborative Overview / Information Session

What is the RCDC (Robertson County District Collaborative)?

- The RCDC is a Middle College. Middle College programs are partnerships between community colleges and the high schools in their service areas, giving high school students opportunities to earn their associate degrees at the same time they graduate from high school or soon after.

Benefits of the RCDC:

- Complete most or all of an associate degree by high school graduation
- Increased number of courses dually counting toward both the high school graduation requirement and a college credential
- Challenging full-time college courses each semester
- Head-start on your college career – potential to graduate from high school and enter a college program as a junior (depends on future path and future declared degree)
- Start your career sooner
- More autonomy
- Continued connection to your high school through extracurricular activities and graduation

Characteristics of the ideal Middle College student:

- Academically prepared for full-time study at the collegiate level
- Is intellectually curious
- Wants to be challenged with additional academic rigor
- Wants more academic independence
- Is mature and self-motivated
- Takes responsibility and ownership for their education and learning
- Has effective time management skills
- Is adaptive and resilient

Academic eligibility

- Be a rising junior in a Robertson County public high school
- Have appropriate college-level placement scores (at least **one** of the following):
 - Final Sophomore High School GPA 3.6 (note: students who use GPA for this purpose during the spring application period can only receive conditional admission until the final sophomore year GPA is posted)
 - ACT scores: 18 English, 19 Reading, 19 Math, **or**
 - ACCUPLACER: 250 Writing, 250 Reading, 250 Math, **or**
- Notify their high school counselor that they are interested in applying to the Robertson County District Collaborative

- Complete all components of the Vol State admissions application process (Only eligible students who have been selected for RCDC consideration by RCS will be guided on next steps including the application process).

Placement Testing

- **High School GPA:** If your high school GPA is 3.6 or higher, you may not need additional placement testing. (Note about MATH 1710 – Needs ACT Math 21 sub score)
- **ACT:** If you have already taken the ACT and meet the minimum score requirements, send a screenshot of your ACT scores to **dualenrollment@volstate.edu**. The screenshot must show your full name, your ACT composite score, and ACT sub-scores. Do not submit an ACT Superscore.
- **ACCUPLACER:** If you do not have a minimum 3.6 high school GPA or an acceptable ACT score, may take the ACCUPLACER as an alternate option – see RCDC website for more information).

Academic Schedule

- (See included two-year schedule template)
- Must be a full-time student each fall and spring semester (minimum 12 hours per semester)
- High school may have additional academic graduation requirements apart from the college courses

Location and Transportation

- In-person RCDC courses are held at the Vol State Springfield Campus (150 Laureate Ave. Springfield TN, 37172)
- RCDC students should be available for in-person classes **Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**
- **RCS statement on transportation:** Robertson County will provide transportation from each high school to the Vol State Springfield Campus at Highland Crest for any student enrolled in the district collaborative **on an as needed basis. Students are encouraged to provide their own transportation** within district guidelines where possible. **Transportation must be requested to the school counselor prior to classes beginning** in order to schedule with the transportation department.

Student Support

- Learning Commons (<https://libguides.volstate.edu/learning-commons>) Free tutoring for Vol State students
- Library (<https://www.volstate.edu/library-at-volstate>)
- ACCESS center (<https://www.volstate.edu/access-center>)

Academic Calendar

- The RCDC follows the Vol State Academic Calendar (<https://www.volstate.edu/academic-calendar>)
- Inclement weather

Cohort

- The cohort is capped at 20 students (total from all Robertson County high schools)
- If 20 or fewer eligible students apply to the program, then all can be accepted
- This cap will be managed by Robertson County Schools district office

Process

- By the beginning of March, eligible high school sophomores in the Robertson County School system should notify their high school counselor that they are interested in participating in the RCDC.
- Students and their parents/guardians will have an opportunity to attend an information session led by Vol State staff to learn more about the program and ask questions (these are encouraged but not mandatory).
- The RCDC cohort is capped, and not all eligible students may be able to participate if more students express interest than the cohort seats available. Robertson County Schools will determine the initial cohort applicants. The district may manage a list of alternate applicants in the event a student applicant withdraws from consideration or is determined to not be eligible.
- Once the cohort is defined, Vol State will host an onboarding/orientation session during the spring to guide students in filling out the RCDC application and appropriate financial aid applications.
- Parent/Guardian consent and financial acknowledgement will be solicited and must be received before a student can be fully accepted into the RCDC
- Students will be advised on course selection
- Once a student's application process is complete and the student is accepted to the district collaborative, Vol State's Dual Enrollment Office will enroll the student into Fall 2026 courses
- GPA verified at end of Sophomore year
- Classes begin in August
- Ongoing advising from semester to semester

Costs

- Tuition (<https://www.volstate.edu/tuition-fees>) - click on Dual Enrollment In-State
- Books (approx \$400-\$500 per semester)
- Unique course fees (e.g. lab fees, equipment, etc.)
- Transportation
- Miscellaneous personal expenses

Financial Aid (Visit each link to see grant amount and eligibility requirements)

- TSAC Dual Enrollment Grant (<https://www.collegefortn.org/dualenrollment/>)
- TSAC Middle College Scholarship (<https://www.collegefortn.org/middle-college/>)

State Employee Dependent Discount

- <https://www.volstate.edu/businessoffice/fee-waivers-discounts>

Financial Liability of Students/Parents/Guardians - Out-of-Pocket Costs

- Portion of tuition not covered by financial aid
- Books and course materials and unique course fees
- Living expenses (such as food)
- Daily transportation to and from the Vol State Springfield campus
- Miscellaneous costs incurred such as parking tickets, fees for replacing lost ID cards, and costs for replacing damaged devices or materials.

General Expectation for Communication

- **FERPA** (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/eligible-student-guide-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa>)
 “The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or FERPA provides certain rights for parents regarding their children’s education records. When a student reaches 18 years of age or attends an institution of postsecondary education at any age, the student becomes an “eligible student,” and all rights under FERPA transfer from the parent to the student.” Based on this:
 - Post-secondary communication structures are designed **around the student**. Vol State faculty and staff can only communicate with the student about the student’s protected data (academic, financial, records, etc). This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Communication between the student and faculty regarding grades, academic expectations and requirements, etc.
 - Communication between the student and business office and/or financial aid office regarding bills, financial aid, etc.
 - Communication between the student and the records office regarding transcripts, posted grades, and graduation.
 - All other communications regarding information protected by FERPA.
 - How can parents effectively advocate for their students in dual enrollment or middle college courses?
 - Build a dialog with your student. Your student is free to share as much as they choose with you.
 - Learn as much as you can about the general processes your student will encounter and encourage them to take responsibility for following those processes.
 - Students should check their Vol State email and eLearn pages regularly (daily).