

Clarifying the terms: “fifth-year senior” and “adult” student - Virtual State Aid

There has been some confusion regarding virtual fifth-year seniors and adults and Virtual State Aid for those who are 19 years and older.

To clarify:

- Fifth-year seniors may enroll in virtual schools and programs approved to serve 12th grade students. They may also enroll in virtual schools and programs approved to serve adult students. They can participate with either group of students, but they will be coded in the KIDS system in a grade level based on credits earned, because they do not meet the definition of Adult.
- The definition of adult (which applies to all adult students in the state, virtual and otherwise) is “a general education student who is over the age of 18 AND whose fifth-year cohort has graduated, or any student over the age of 21.” Students who meet this definition will be coded in the KIDS system as Not Graded.
- The terms “fifth-year senior” and “adult” have NOTHING to do with funding. These are terms KSDE uses to denote grade level and position within the graduation cohort.
- Traditional and alternative funding is NOT differentiated based on age. Traditional and alternative students will be funded based on minutes enrolled.
- Virtual funding IS differentiated based on age. Virtual students 18 and under will be funded based on minutes enrolled. Virtual students 19 and over will be funded based on credits completed.
- The age determination date for virtual funding is September 20th.
- Virtual schools and programs MAY encounter a disconnect between the terms “12th grade student” and “fifth-year senior” and the way that these students will be funded based on age. There may be some 12th grade students who are 19 and over and are funded based on credits completed. There may be some fifth-year seniors who are 18 and under and are funded on minutes enrolled. Virtual schools and programs will need to pay close attention to this possibility.
- KSDE encourages virtual schools and programs NOT to set enrollment criteria based on age, but rather on grade level and to just be prepared for students that overlap the ‘18 and under’ and ‘19 and over’ funding categories.

Excerpted from the FY19 Enrollment Handbook which is available on KSDE’s Fiscal Auditing website: <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Fiscal-and-Administrative-Services/Fiscal-Auditing>

For more information, or if you have questions regarding virtual schools or program, please contact John Girodat at 785-296-3444 or jgirodat@ksde.org