

AP Exam Overhaul Impact Enrollment and Join Codes

College Board (CB) AP exam ordering changes to an enrollment system using “Join Codes” creates many potential impacts across your AP Exam Administration.

Potential Issues

School Error: Schools have found that the new requirement for students to use join codes during the CB enrollment process can cause inaccurate exam orders or cause exam score reporting errors. Schools report that errors can be introduced to the join code process by teachers unintentionally providing inaccurate codes for students. For example, a teacher may have multiple sections of a class and distribute the wrong single join code for each section.

Student Error: Students may also incorrectly gather and enter join codes into the CB system. For example, some students may not have access to all join codes at the time of enrollment in CB and enter incorrect codes or confuse which code is associated with which exam. Schools have also found AP Coordinators have difficulty detecting student entered join code inaccuracies and, in many cases, require additional work/help from staff/teachers to rectify.

Best Practices and Recommendations

- **Distribute All Join Codes to Each Student at One Time** - The problem with teachers independently distributing join codes is that students may not receive all their join codes at once or in a timely manner, preventing them from enrolling all their AP courses in CB’s enrollment system in a single sitting. For example, a Total Registration staff member had a son at a school piloting the new CB system last school year who was taking 5 AP courses. The student had to access the CB’s Enrollment system on 4 separate occasions due to join codes being distributed in different weeks. If he had received all his join codes at once, he would have enrolled in CB for all at the same time.
- **Let Teachers Teach** – Teachers have numerous varied responsibilities the first several weeks of school and many will find it difficult to effectively add the responsibility of distributing CB’s unique join codes for their multiple sections. Having the AP coordinator distribute all the students’ join codes takes this “extra” requirement off the teachers, while reducing potential errors in the process. The key is to provide each student only their own unique join codes on a student by student basis rather than a class by class basis in order to reduce confusion.
- **Create “Exam Only Sections”** – Schools that have “non-attenders” (home school students, virtual school students, students from other schools, etc.) test at their campus will need to create Exam Only Sections so that these non-attenders can enroll in the CB’s system to be included in the exam order. One significant remaining challenge for AP Coordinators is to distribute these join codes to “non-attenders” who are yet to be identified. The need for an exam only section would also apply to students that intend to take the exam but are not currently enrolled in the class at your school.

- **Second Semester Only Courses - create separate sections/join codes** – Since 2nd Semester Only Courses are exempt from the CB mandated Nov 16 per exam Late Fee, coordinators will need to make sure these courses have unique sections (and join codes) separated from 1st semester or year-long courses.

Total Registration (TR) Help

TR has created several tools to remove the issues created with the new CB late fee and cancellation fee:

- **Join Code Management** – Coordinators using TR will enter the CB Join Codes in TR’s system. TR will then provide each student all their customized join codes at the end of the TR registration process along with directions and a link guiding the student to enroll in the CB’s system. Further, students receive join codes on their screen, via email and can log back into TR and view their join codes at any time.
- **“Non-Attender” Registration Approval** – Schools have an option of wait listing all non-attenders in TR’s system. When a coordinator approves a wait list request, the system automatically emails the student their confirmation page and the join codes they need to enroll in the CB system.
- **Students indicate Exam, Teacher, and Period to Register Accurately** – Students know their exam, teacher and class period and can accurately register without assistance or additional information from school staff. TR’s system provides students appropriate, unique join codes (added to TR by the coordinator) without assistance from teachers, counselors or coordinators.

Total Registration has simplified the exam registration, financial tracking, payment collection, communication and organization processes for more than 1350 schools over the past 12 years. Schools registered more than half million students for over a million AP exams in 2019 using Total Registration.

You can learn more, request pricing and sign up for a guided demo at AP.TotalRegistration.net