

Dual Enrollment

What is Dual Enrollment?

Dual enrollment programs allow high school students in their junior and senior year to take college courses and earn college credits while in high school. Sometimes these courses are taught at the student's high school, other times students travel to the college campus for class.

Dual enrollment	Programs are offered in high school classrooms, on a college campus or through a distance-learning.
Middle college high schools	High schools are located on college campuses. Enrollment is usually limited.
Early college high schools	High school and college resources are integrated to accelerate curriculum and allow students to graduate with a high school diploma and an associate's degree in four or five years, instead of six.

Dual enrollment is increasingly popular among high school students. The U.S. Department of Education reported that during the 2002-2003 school year (the most recent year that data is available), 71 percent of high schools and 51 percent of postsecondary institutions allowed high school students to take college courses. That translates to 813,000 high school students taking at least one college-credit course during that school year.¹

Benefits of Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment has many advantages for students, as well as the high schools and colleges involved in the program:

- Increases academic rigor for high school students
- Allows high schools to offer more academic opportunities and electives
- Reduces high school dropout rates
- Reduces the cost of college for students and their parents
- May help students get accustomed to life on a college campus
- Facilitates communication and coordination between secondary and postsecondary

Dual enrollment can also be an effective tool as a means to help meet President Obama's goal of postsecondary education for all. By starting courses while in high school, students have the opportunity to figure out which classes are of interest to them and which may turn into a major after high school graduation. It can also be a means to demonstrate that they do have the ability to succeed in college-level work.

Dual Enrollment and CTE

Many dual enrollment courses are in CTE areas, such as medical assisting, auto technology, and engineering. Students who participate in dual enrollment can obtain certificates in these areas.

While more data is still needed in this area, preliminary research has found that CTE students in a dual enrollment program were more likely than their peers to:

- earn a high school diploma
- enroll in college
- have high postsecondary GPAs
- earn more credits after three years in postsecondary education

Sample Dual Enrollment Programs

- The **College Now** program is a collaboration between the **New York City** public schools and the City University of New York (CUNY) system that allows high school students to take college classes and earn either high school or college credit (depending on the course). College credits may be applied to any of the CUNY schools, or may be eligible for transfer at other schools. Research has shown that students in the College Now program are more likely to pursue a bachelor's degree and have better grades during their first college semester than students who did not participate in dual enrollment.
- **Minnesota's Post-Secondary Enrollment Options program** allows high school students to receive both high school and college credit for college or university courses that they complete. This is a state-wide program that offers students from nearly every Minnesota public high school the opportunity to earn credits from programs at Minnesota state colleges and universities. Students have taken a variety of courses through the program, including agriculture science, physics, visual and performing arts, mathematics and statistics, precision production and communications technologies – all CTE offerings.
- **Washington State's Running Start Program** is a program authorized by the state legislature in 1990 that lets 11th and 12th grade students simultaneously earn college and high school credit. The program is available at Washington's 34 community and technical colleges, and at Washington State, Eastern Washington and Central Washington Universities, Evergreen State College and Northwest Indian College. Running Start students can select courses from the entire college catalog, provided that they have met any prerequisites that the college requires of students. During the 2007-2008 school year, 18,847 students, or 11.5% of 11th and 12th graders, were enrolled in the Running Start program. Enrollment has grown every year that the program has been available.

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ⁱ National Center for Education Statistics (2005), *Dual enrollment of high school students at postsecondary institutions: 2002–03*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.