

# Dual Enrollment Programs for High School Students

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## Overview

Dual enrollment programs allow high school students to earn college credit while in high school.<sup>1</sup> There are different types of dual enrollment programs under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09, with different types of funding and different levels of choice for students.

## Types of Dual Enrollment Programs

### Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)

Students participating in PSEO earn high school and college credit through enrollment in a college-level course taught at a postsecondary institution (PSI) by college faculty. The course must be nonsectarian and nondevelopmental, except that a course offered through a middle and early college program may be developmental.<sup>2</sup> The course may be offered in person or online. Students choose the courses they want to enroll in and can enroll in PSEO on a part-time or full-time basis.

Early or middle college programs are a type of PSEO program open to students enrolled in a state-approved alternative program. The alternative program must have a partnership with an eligible PSI to offer an early or middle college program specifically designed to allow the student to earn dual high school and college credit with a well-defined pathway to allow the student to earn a postsecondary degree or credential. Students enroll in remedial, developmental, or other courses that are not college level and receive developmental college credit. Coursework is usually located on the PSI's campus, allowing students to experience a college setting.

### Concurrent Enrollment

Students participating in concurrent enrollment earn high school and college credit through enrollment in a college credit-bearing course taught at the high school by high school teachers. Concurrent enrollment courses are offered under an agreement between the public school board and the governing body of an eligible PSI. Some concurrent enrollment courses are known by branded titles, such as "College in the Schools."

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<sup>1</sup> This publication does not address the Advanced Placement (AP) program, which allows high school students to earn college credit by taking a college-level course and standardized exam. AP offerings vary by school.

<sup>2</sup> Development courses are courses offered by PSIs to prepare students for success in college-level work. Nondevelopmental courses are college level.

## **Courses According to Agreement**

A school board and a PSI may enter into another type of agreement to offer students courses for dual enrollment. Under these agreements, the courses are taught by a PSI instructor at the PSI campus or online. The student remains enrolled at the district, and the PSI receives a negotiated payment directly from the district. These types of courses are sometimes called “PSEO by contract” or considered a type of concurrent enrollment course, but they may also be considered as their own separate type of dual enrollment program.

## **Requirements and Limits**

### **Student Eligibility**

Students enrolled in 11th and 12th grade in a school district, charter school, nonpublic school, home school, or American Indian-controlled Tribal contract or grant school may participate in PSEO. For students in 9th and 10th grade, eligibility for dual enrollment programs varies by a student’s grade; whether the student is enrolled in a public school or American Indian-controlled Tribal contract or grant school, or in a nonpublic or home school; and whether the student seeks to enroll in a career or technical education course, world language course, or other eligible course. Students must also meet residency requirements. For more information on student eligibility requirements, see Minnesota Department of Education, Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Reference Guide, available at <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/ccs/pseo/>.

In addition to the statutory eligibility requirements, students must also meet the PSI’s admission standards to participate in specific PSEO programs and courses. Admission standards vary by grade and may include a student’s score on the ACT or SAT, class rank, and score on state standardized assessments. A PSI may also limit the number of PSEO courses a student can enroll in and may require a student to meet prerequisites for particular courses. A concurrent enrollment program may also establish student eligibility criteria.

### **Course Limits**

A student who first enrolls in dual enrollment courses in 9th grade may enroll in these courses for up to the equivalent of four academic years. If the student first enrolls in 10th grade, the limit is three academic years, if in 11th grade the limit is two, and in 12th grade the limit is one. A student may earn enough college credits to earn a college credential such as a certificate or associate degree. Students may also earn credits that are part of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, a 40-credit package of general education courses. Once a student earns credit for a course in the transfer curriculum at any Minnesota State institution, all Minnesota State institutions must recognize the credit; the University of Minnesota also recognizes credits for these courses.

## **Institution Eligibility**

The following are defined as “eligible institutions” for purposes of participating in dual enrollment programs: “a Minnesota public postsecondary institution, a private, nonprofit two-year trade and technical school granting associate degrees, an opportunities industrialization center accredited by an accreditor recognized by the United States Department of Education, or a private, residential, two-year or four-year, liberal arts, degree-granting college or university located in Minnesota.” ([Minn. Stat. § 124D.09](#), subd. 3)

A PSI must request approval from the commissioner of education to participate in PSEO. A list of PSEO participating institutions is available on the Minnesota Department of Education website.

## **Teacher Requirements**

State law requires all public school teachers to meet teacher licensure requirements under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 122A, and sets no additional requirements for teachers of concurrent enrollment courses.

However, the Higher Learning Commission, which accredits PSIs, sets criteria for faculty credentials and requires that high school teachers meet the same credential requirements as an institution’s faculty when teaching a course for credit from that institution. As a result, high school teachers teaching concurrent enrollment courses must have a master’s degree or higher in the discipline the teacher is teaching; if the teacher has a master’s degree in another discipline, such as education, the teacher must have 18 graduate credits in the discipline of the concurrent enrollment course. The legislature has provided funding for programs helping teachers to enroll in coursework necessary to obtain the 18 graduate credits.

## **Student Access to School and School Activities**

A school district must allow a student enrolled in dual enrollment courses to remain at the school site during regular hours, and must allow the student reasonable access during school hours to computer and other technology resources the student needs to complete coursework for a dual enrollment course. A district must not prohibit the student from participating in school-sponsored activities.

## **Funding**

The funding method for a dual enrollment program depends on whether the program is a traditional PSEO program or a concurrent enrollment program. For a public school student enrolled in traditional PSEO full-time, the Department of Education pays the PSI 88 percent of the basic general education revenue for the student and pays the school district the remaining 12 percent. The other types of revenue that the district would normally receive for the student are “saved” by the state. For nonpublic school students, the state pays the PSI 88 percent of the basic general education revenue and does not make a residual payment to the school district of residence. For part-time PSEO students, the state pays the district a proportionate share of the

total school revenue attributable to the student, based on how much time the student is attending the high school rather than the PSI. Students in PSEO courses do not pay the PSI for tuition, textbooks, materials, or support services, but do pay for equipment that becomes the property of the student.

The state does not make any payments to the PSI for concurrent enrollment courses or other courses offered through an agreement between the district and PSI. The agreement determines how much the district pays to the PSI for the course. The state provides the same funding to a district as it would otherwise, except that the district receives additional aid under the concurrent enrollment aid formula. Students pay no cost to participate in concurrent enrollment courses.

For more information on dual enrollment program funding, see the House Research publication [\*Minnesota School Finance: A Guide for Legislators\*](#).

## Program Data

The legislature requires the commissioner of education to report annual statewide information on PSEO programs, including concurrent enrollment, as part of its annual report on rigorous course taking information. (See Minn. Stat. § 120B.13) The report includes data on participation by enrollment type (public school, home school, and nonpublic school) and student group (male or female, special education, English learners, free or reduced-price meal eligible, and race or ethnicity); reimbursement by PSI type; total credits reimbursed; and cost per credit. For more information, see Minnesota Department of Education, *Rigorous Course Taking: Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Concurrent Enrollment and Postsecondary Enrollment Options Programs* available at <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/about/rule/leg/rpt/>.

In 2024, the commissioner reported that 11,189 students received 172,605 credits through PSEO in fiscal year 2022. Of that total, 7,955 students were enrolled in public schools, 1,780 in home schools, and 1,454 in nonpublic schools. That same year, 32,505 public school students participated in concurrent enrollment.

The commissioner also reports on the number and percentage of students participating in PSEO and concurrent enrollment statewide, in each district, and public high school. That information is available on the Minnesota Report Card on the department website.



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