

## Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and Concurrent Enrollment Minnesota Legislative Presentation & Advocacy

What's happening in PSEO?

1. **Dramatic Increase of Credits and Cost.** The budget line for PSEO in the Pequot Lakes School District has increased over the last 6 years: From \$120,000 in FY20 to \$200,000 in FY25, representing a 67% increase, which does not keep up with the state increases.
2. **Flexibility.** Student demand for flexibility, which PSEO online courses have become the method to attain flexibility.
3. **Academic Standards.** PSEO has become a marketplace for low rigor for some students. There has been a lowering of the threshold for students to qualify for PSEO. High schools don't set the standards for entrance - it's a college decision. Some high school students are electing for PSEO courses over concurrent enrollment courses due to less rigor. High schools are unable to monitor PSEO student progress and appropriate course selection.
4. **Accountability.** Students can access PSEO courses without high school guidance, and when they are failing to perform in PSEO courses, high schools are unaware of their academic struggle. When students fail these courses, the cost and effort to remediate students is left to the high schools without the associated funding.
5. **Budgetary Pressures & Staffing.** Student mobility and unpredictable enrollment in PSEO courses complicate staffing and financial planning. The addition of an October 30th deadline for PSEO creates instability. When students choose PSEO, their high school has already accounted for them in staffing and master schedule building. The new October deadline for spring semester enrollment is unworkable for schools that create their staffing plan six or seven months earlier. The loss of revenues due to PSEO occurs well after Districts have adopted their budgets.

What's happening in Concurrent Enrollment?

1. **Teacher Credential Incentives.** The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requires teachers to have a Masters degree and 18 graduate credits in a specific content area to teach courses for college credit. The Legislature has committed funds to helping to support this credentialing effort but it has not resulted in the growth required to meet the demand students have for college credit options.
2. **Cost Efficiency.** The cost of college credit for concurrent enrollment, compared to PSEO, is around one-fifth of the cost.
3. **Complications with Growing CE.** There may be hardships or challenges for teachers to access graduate credit options for credentialing. Teachers may be unable or unwilling to take on additional college coursework. PSEO options creates uncertainty for teachers and districts with few assurances students will take the concurrent enrollment options.
4. **Varying Options from District to District.** Schools offer a variety of concurrent enrollment options based on their college partnerships, teacher credentialing, and student enrollment.

The following proposal does not solve every issue with PSEO, but it's a major step forward. This plan:

1. Does not limit the amount of credits a student can receive either PSEO, CIS or CE.
2. Does not add cost to the State of Minnesota.
3. Increases school district funding.

### Payments Language

All high school students who are in grades 10-12 are reported as a 1.0 ADM (1.2 APU) through their respective school district's MARSS reporting system. If a fully homeschooled student participates in PSEO, the amounts listed below will be paid to the qualified post-secondary institution by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

1. All PSEO credits taken through a qualified post-secondary institution will be paid by the student's school district in which they are reported in the MARSS system to the post-secondary institution at a rate of \$125.00 per credit.
2. All concurrent enrollment/CIS (College in the Schools) credits taken with a qualified school district teacher will be paid by the student's school district in which they are reported on the MARSS system to the post-secondary institution who contracts for the class at a rate of \$25.00 per credit.
3. The drop period, for both purposes of billing and transcript, for a high school student enrolling in a PSEO or CIS course must be no earlier than 10 school days from the start of the high school's academic school calendar.

#### Current Issue Being Addressed:

- The cost of students enrolling in PSEO classes has increased exponentially over the last five years, at times, exceeding the amount the school district receives for funding.
- Even for a full-time PSEO student, the school district still has direct and indirect costs, such as counselor time, administrative time, activities, and athletics.
- The intent of PSEO was giving high school students an opportunity to earn college credit while in high school and to fill open seats in post secondary institution's classes. It was never intended to be a "Gold Mine" for post-secondary institutions and be a huge detriment to schools, which it currently has turned into.
- The common drop period for a high school student enrollment in a PSEO course is typically 15 days from the post-secondary institution start. This may leave little or no notice to school districts to counsel students or give them notice of this drop period.

### Duplicate Course Language

If a concurrent enrollment/CIS (College in the Schools) course is offered at a student's respective high school and through PSEO during the same semester, the high school student may choose to enroll in either option. If the high school student is less than full-time PSEO and chooses to enroll in the PSEO course option instead of the concurrent enrollment/CIS option, no payment will be made to the post-secondary institution for the student's credit(s).

#### Current Issue Being Addressed:

- Students are reporting that taking PSEO courses are oftentimes easier than concurrent enrollment/CIS (College in the Schools) courses and therefore students are enrolling in the PSEO option instead.
- There is currently no accountability for students' performance in PSEO courses - if they fail PSEO courses and are credit-deficient, the high schools are required to assist in meeting graduation requirements.
- Our State learned clearly that on-line learning is not the most effective instructional model for a majority of teenagers. The intent of college classes to support rigorous options for high school students has been transformed by the fact that colleges are now in the more lucrative business of giving on-line credits.

### Concurrent Enrollment Grant Program (CEGP)

The purpose of the CEGP is to increase opportunities for high school students to earn high school and college credit through concurrent enrollment course offerings. The Concurrent Enrollment Grant eligibility should be expanded to include Minnesota high schools and service cooperatives.

#### Current Issue Being Addressed:

- Currently, only post-secondary institutions can apply for this grant although high schools are the direct beneficiaries of this funding stream.
- Encouraging high schools to collaborate with other districts under agreement with a post-secondary partner to offer some of their courses online through a concurrent enrollment consortium is a method to maintain college credit options for students that stabilizes staffing in high schools while providing college credit options at one fifth the cost of PSEO.
- This proposed legislation would eliminate the intermediary and allow funds to go directly from the State to high schools working with post-secondary institution partners, which aligns with the purpose of the grant.
- For example, this would be a funding source for service cooperatives to coordinate concurrent enrollment options with high schools that don't currently have those options. This would give high schools the opportunity to form a consortium of concurrent enrollment courses with qualified instructors.
- It has been reported that funds are left over every granting period.

### Remove October 31 Deadline

Remove the October 31 deadline for PSEO declaration for Spring courses and replace it with May 31.

#### Current Issue Being Addressed:

- There are currently two deadlines to enroll in PSEO classes based upon the semester; May 31 for Fall courses and October 31 for Spring courses.
- PSEO registration changes prior to the October 31 deadline, during the school year, have had major impacts on high school staffing and a district's financial stability.
- District staffing is established in Spring for the following school year.
- This aligns with the district's statutory obligations for a July 1 deadline to notify teachers of layoffs. Districts are not allowed to reduce a teacher's FTE after July 1.