

Testimonies by PSEO students, alumni, and supporters

Charles Shi (He/him), PSEO alumni, Eden Prairie

I'd like my Minnesota State Legislators to know how much I care about PSEO. I enrolled in PSEO at Eden Prairie High School during my senior year. I earned 24 credits before graduating high school. My overall experience with PSEO is overwhelming positive. Being able to take college classes at little to no charge was a privilege. I enjoyed the variety of classes that were offered along with the flexibilities that the University of Minnesota provided us. I hope this program continues to be available for all high schoolers as it provides high schoolers a great opportunity to challenge themselves and get ahead.

Abhi Nallamalli (He/Him), PSEO alumni, Eden Prairie

I'd like my Minnesota State Legislators to know how much I care about PSEO. I was in PSEO as a junior and senior. It significantly accelerated opportunities available to me, allowing me to do research, network, and get early college credits.

Diyesh Thirukonda (he/him), PSEO alumni, Lakeville

I'd like my Minnesota State Legislators to know how much I care about PSEO. I went to Edina High School for grades 9 and 10. In 11th grade, I did PSEO at Normandale Community College and in the second sem of that year I completed the remainder of my EHS credits. Instead of graduating early, I did PSEO at UMN in 12th grade. After graduating EHS, I had 70 college credits. PSEO allowed me to graduate college at 19 and save over \$70k. It allows high schoolers to explore subjects that aren't available in their high school. The funding your school has shouldn't be a barrier to the quality and breadth of education you get.

Tejosh Rana (He/Him), PSEO Supporter, Wayzata

I did not do any PSEO classes, but I did do concurrent enrollment classes. I believe the PSEO program is a useful program for students looking to start college or trade schools at an early age

Rohan Sharma, (He/Him), PSEO Student, Plymouth

I am currently an 11th-grade student at Wayzata High School, and I plan to enroll in the PSEO program during my senior year, ideally through the University of Minnesota Twin Cities or Northwestern Health Sciences University. While I have not yet participated in PSEO, the program has already become an integral tool in my academic journey. My path through high school has not been straightforward. During my freshman year, I missed large chunks of time from school while helping care for my grandmother as she battled cancer. Losing her was one of the most defining moments of my life. It forced me to grow up quickly and opened my eyes to the lack of quality medical care for these conditions, sparking my deep commitment to pursuing medicine, particularly in neurology and genetics. More recently, in the middle of high school, I relocated to a new district, and that meant rebuilding my academic footing from scratch at a very difficult time. There were moments when it truly felt like I was trying to win a 400 meter dash with a broken leg. That is why programs like PSEO matter so much. To me, PSEO is one of the few truly equalizing forces in education. Not every student's academic path is smooth. Life happens. Families face illness, moves, financial stress, and responsibilities that do not show up on a transcript; especially in our modern day. The PSEO program gives students a real second runway. It allows motivated

students—regardless of setbacks or financial background—to step into rigorous college classrooms and prove what they are capable of right now, not just what their past circumstances allowed. The financial accessibility of PSEO is incredibly powerful. College-level opportunities are often tied to cost, and that reality can quietly limit who gets to accelerate and who does not. By removing that barrier, PSEO opens doors that might otherwise stay locked behind a paywall. It gives students the chance to save thousands in future tuition while building genuine college readiness. That is not transformative. More broadly, I believe strongly that programs like PSEO are essential to maintaining fairness in our education system. They recognize that potential is widely distributed, even when opportunity is not. Supporting and expanding access to PSEO means investing in students who are ready to work hard but may simply need a key to that door. For thousands of students in a similar position as myself, the PSEO program represents momentum regained, opportunity restored, and a clear path forward toward becoming outstanding members of society who can one day give back to families facing the kinds of medical challenges that first inspired my journey.

Valerie Schuster (She/her), PSEO alumni, Mendota Heights

I went to Nova Classical Academy for high school and did full-time PSEO at the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities during my junior and senior years. Through PSEO, I earned 65 college credits before graduating high school, which allowed me to finish my B.S. in Biochemistry debt free and graduate from college at 19—two years ahead of schedule. I chose to enroll in PSEO because my high school had limited advanced math and science courses, and I’ve always known I wanted to go into medicine. At the University of Minnesota, I had access to resources and technologies—like PCR, gel electrophoresis, agar plate preparation, and bacterial culture—that my high school couldn’t offer. Those experiences helped me build a strong foundation in research and lab work early on. I was also drawn to the broader community at UMN, with clubs like the pre-med AMSA and the undergraduate surgery interest group that let me explore my interests and connect with others in the medical field. PSEO has had a huge impact on me by opening doors much earlier than would have been possible otherwise. It really shaped my education and career path by letting me dive into college-level science (and other interests) while I was still in high school, and it helped me discover what I’m genuinely passionate about. Being trusted with that level of responsibility built my confidence, showed me I could handle rigorous coursework, and made taking on bigger challenges—like advanced research and an accelerated college timeline—feel possible instead of intimidating. The PSEO program is important to me because it makes higher education realistic for students who might not have the money or time to pursue college after high school. It opens the door to earning meaningful college credit without taking on extra debt, which can change the trajectory of a student’s life. It also helps create a more educated Minnesota community, which is essential for advancing our state as a whole. I personally know several people who say they might not have gone to college at all if they hadn’t been able to start through PSEO, and that shows how powerful this program can be.

Alex Carey (He/Him), PSEO Student, Roseville

As a homeschooled senior, I began my PSEO journey at Century College in the fall of my sophomore year (2023). By the time I graduate this May, I will have earned 75 college credits through PSEO, plus an additional 9 credits through AP/CLEP exams. This program has been a blessing and has allowed me to challenge myself in subjects where I previously struggled and to excel as a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. PSEO hasn't just saved me time, it has helped me become more academically

confident. I chose PSEO to maximize my educational opportunities while minimizing the long-term cost of a university degree. Because of PSEO, I am entering my undergraduate years as an upper sophomore, allowing me to focus on my major and deeper research earlier than most of my peers.

Ben Cantor (He/Him), PSEO alumni, St. Louis Park

I went to St Louis Park High School and did PSEO at the University of Minnesota during my junior and senior years. I got 63 credits. It seemed like an improvement on AP or IB as I was directly getting college credit. Then during the pandemic when all schools were remote I was able to have a similar experience as my high school classmates, but with the upside of receiving college credit. It allowed me to graduate in 2 years instead of 4.

Chi Muepae, He Him, PSEO student, St. Paul

I'm at Harding HS, enrolled in fall 2025, the beginning of my senior year. I have earned 14 credits, and am currently taking spring PSEO. I can earn both HS and college credits, save time, money. More flexible schedules, bigger world.

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Program

Minnesota became the first state in the nation to pass legislation to support course-taking at the postsecondary level by eligible high school juniors and seniors. The PSEO program allows high school students to enroll in courses taught by college instructors on college campuses with each participating postsecondary institution setting its own enrollment requirements for admission. The program provides students with a greater variety of class offerings and the opportunity to pursue more challenging coursework than may be available at the high school. Students may enroll in PSEO courses on a part-time or full-time basis.

PSEO allows high school students to earn college credit at no cost and, after graduation from high school, to potentially enter postsecondary institutions with some course requirements already met. The postsecondary institutions generate a separate college transcript with their college courses and grades for the participating high school students. Any public, nonpublic, home school or American Indian-controlled tribal contract or grant student classified as a 10th-, 11th- or 12th-grader and accepted by a postsecondary institution may enroll in nonsectarian courses or programs at that postsecondary institution. Other course limitations may apply depending on grade level.

Eligible institutions include the University of Minnesota and its branches; all state universities, community colleges and technical colleges; private, Minnesota, two- or four-year, residential, degree granting, liberal arts colleges; nonprofit, degree-granting trade schools; or accredited opportunities industrialization centers in Minnesota.

PSEO State-Approved Early/Middle College Programs

Legislation provides the opportunity to use PSEO funding for developmental coursework when a student who is enrolled in the graduation incentives program enrolls full-time in an Early/Middle College Program. This program model is a partnership between a State-Approved Alternative Program (SAAP) and an eligible postsecondary institution, which is specifically designed to offer well-defined pathways to postsecondary degrees and/or credentials. Students engaged in these programs can earn dual credit with intentional academic and wraparound supports offered by the partnership.

[For more information about this unique program, visit the MDE Early/Middle College webpage.](#)

PSEO Funding

The PSEO program is funded through legislative direction under [Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124D.09](#). There is no cost to students for tuition and materials required for PSEO coursework. For state-paid PSEO, funding flows from the state directly to enrolling postsecondary institutions for eligible courses.

Direct contract partnerships exist between high schools and postsecondary institutions to offer PSEO and are allowable per [Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124D.09, subdivision 10 and 16](#). These arrangements, referred to by statute language as courses according to agreements, are commonly known as “PSEO by Contract” or “Direct Pay PSEO.” Because these contracts and fiscal arrangements are between high schools and postsecondary institutions, course taking data is reported by districts and charter schools to the Minnesota Common Course Catalog (MCCC). MDE is working on policies and procedures to obtain accurate student participation, course and credit data. Despite making progress, the information obtained for FY24 was limited and did not warrant inclusion in this report.

Additional funding is available to help pay transportation expenses for PSEO students whose families are at or below the poverty level, as determined by the federal government, to participate in the program.

State-Paid PSEO Program Participation

PSEO participation and demographic data are collected annually by the MDE School Finance Division. The data includes public, nonpublic, and home school students; however, detailed demographic breakdowns are only available for public school students, as this information is linked through the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS).

In fiscal year 2024, a total of 13,950 students participated in PSEO, a 20% increase since 2022. Public school students represented 72% of the total. Participation also rose steadily among home school and nonpublic school students, though they represent smaller shares of total PSEO enrollment.

Among public school students, female students continued to make up the majority of PSEO participants, comprising 64% in 2024. However, male students experienced a greater rate of growth, increasing their participation by 30% since 2022. Students who qualify for educational benefits—often used as an indicator of economic disadvantage—showed the largest overall increase in participation, growing by 50% from 2022 to 2024 and making up 31% of public school PSEO students in 2024.

Students of color and American Indian students also saw substantial gains in PSEO participation, with a 29% increase since 2022. This group accounted for 35% of public school PSEO participants in 2024. Within this category, Black or African American students experienced the most significant growth, with a 33% increase over the period. Hispanic or Latino students followed closely with a 31% increase. White students remained the largest racial or ethnic group among public school PSEO participants, comprising 65% of the total in 2024.

State-Paid PSEO Participation by Student Enrollment Type (FY22-FY24)

Student Enrollment Type	FY22	FY23	FY24	% of FY24 Total	% Change (FY22-FY24)
Public School Students	7,955	8,780	10,104	72%	+21%
Home School Students	1,780	1,851	2,141	15%	+17%
Nonpublic School Students	1,454	1,464	1,705	12%	+15%
Total Students	11,189	12,095	13,950	--	+20%

State-Paid PSEO Participation – Public School Students by Demographic Group (FY22-FY24)

Demographic Group	FY22 Students	FY23 Students	FY24 Students	% of FY24 Total	% Change (FY22-FY24)
Gender					
Female	5,421	5,860	6,508	64%	+17%
Male	2,534	2,920	3,596	36%	+30%

Demographic Group	FY22 Students	FY23 Students	FY24 Students	% of FY24 Total	% Change (FY22-FY24)
Students who Qualify for Educational Benefits	1,594	2,685	3,162	31%	+50%
Students of Color and American Indian Students	2,550	2,888	3,580	35%	+29%
Special Education Students	284	298	372	4%	+24%
English Learners	280	351	497	5%	+44%
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaska Native	122	135	148	2%	+18%
Asian	705	791	924	9%	+24%
Hispanic or Latino	432	459	628	6%	+31%
Black or African American	1,027	1,233	1,533	15%	+33%
Other Indigenous Peoples	1	1	3	<1%	+67%
White	5,406	5,894	6,525	65%	+17%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	4	6	5	<1%	+20%
Two or More Races	259	273	339	3%	+24%
Total Public School Students	7,224	8,870	10,104	--	+29%

[For a comparison of State-Paid PSEO Participation vs. 9-12 Enrollment \(FY24\), refer to Appendix A.](#)

PSEO Expenditures

During FY24, total state spending reached \$48.6 million—a 21% since FY22. This expenditure data reflects payments made directly to 55 eligible Minnesota postsecondary institutions for credits earned by high school students through the program. Community and technical colleges received the largest share of funding, totaling \$16.3 million in FY24, up 28% over three years.

Minnesota PSEO Program Expenditures by Institution Type (FY22-FY24)

Institution Type	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	% Change (FY22-FY24)
Technical Colleges	\$1,163,708	\$1,368,785	\$1,735,860	+33%
Community Colleges	\$9,305,006	\$9,703,642	\$11,834,613	+21%
Community and Technical Colleges	\$11,700,314	\$13,372,393	\$16,298,320	+28%
State Universities	\$2,689,952	\$3,323,609	\$3,301,347	+19%
University of Minnesota campuses	\$3,184,722	\$3,109,680	\$3,546,390	+10%
Private Colleges	\$10,252,169	\$10,470,751	\$11,907,393	+14%

Institution Type	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	% Change (FY22-FY24)
Total Expenditures	\$38,295,871	\$41,348,859	\$48,623,924	+21%
Total Credits	172,605	182,459	20,5772	+16%
Cost per Credit	\$222	\$227	\$236	+6%

[For State-Paid PSEO Expenditures and Credits by Postsecondary Institution, refer to Appendix D.](#)

Executive Summary

The Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program was created in 1985 and since then has been used by tens of thousands of Minnesota high school students to prepare for college, save millions of dollars in college tuition on an annual basis, access expanded course options, and get a head start on their career. Last year, in our 2023 PSEO Information Gap Report, we found that the majority of websites in Minnesota were not in compliance with a PSEO law ([124D.09, Subd. 7](#)) which requires district and charter schools to provide up-to-date information about the PSEO program on their school websites. This 2024 report builds on our findings from 2023 by reviewing PSEO information on 391 school district and charter school websites.

Key Findings

PSEO Page Status	2022	2023	2024
PSEO Page is up to date	153	163	163
PSEO Page is up to date and has inaccurate information	4	6	22
PSEO Page has missing information	175	139	122
PSEO Page has missing and inaccurate information	31	36	54
PSEO Page cannot be found	25	36	29
PSEO Page link is broken	2	10	1
TOTAL	390	390	391

Minnesota students and families need up-to-date information about the program to make informed decisions about whether to participate in PSEO. Knowing about the program can make a difference of thousands of dollars for students. Since 2015, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has reminded high school leaders on an annual basis to follow PSEO law by sharing up to date information with students and families on their website and in other materials. Our measurements indicate that these efforts have resulted in little change in high school compliance rates.



Why are Dual Credit Courses Valuable In Closing Achievement Gaps & Helping ALL Students?

Why are these programs important? As research cited below shows, dual credit programs produce major benefits for students and broader society. Dual Credit courses:

- Increase the likelihood that students will graduate from high school, enter and graduate from some form of 1,2 or 4 year postsecondary program
- Help students and families save thousands, sometimes tens of thousands of dollars.
- Help reduce the number of college students who take remedial, courses.

In a national study of dual enrollment, **"I find significant benefits in boosting rates of college degree attainment for low-income students..."** Brian An, University of Iowa professor

<https://www.issuelab.org/resources/15260/15260.pdf>

"Males, low-income, and low-achieving high school students all appear to benefit from participation in dual enrollment to a greater extent than their dual enrollment peers who enter college courses with more social, economic, and educational advantages. These findings indicate that dual enrollment can benefit a range of students, and may have the greatest positive impact on those students who are often excluded from participation." *From a 2008 report by the Community College Research Center at the Teachers College of Columbia University.*

<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/dual-enrollment-student-outcomes.html>

" Students who participate in dual enrollment are more likely than their peers to finish high school, enter college and complete a degree."

Education Commission of the States.

2014 <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/12/61/11261.pdf>

Taking dual credit closes gaps. Preliminary results of a UMN study found that "students from low SES households who took advanced courses did just as well in first term and first year GPAs as students from high SES households who did not take advanced courses." The study also found that CIS and PSEO students tend to graduate at faster rates than students from similar backgrounds who have not participated in these programs

Forthcoming from Geoffrey Maruyama, Julio Cabrera, Ronald Huesman, & Robert Bruininks

A statewide study of students from low-income families in Texas, found: **"dual enrollment participants were 2.2 times more likely to enroll in a 2 or 4 year college, 2.0 times more likely to return for a second year, and 1.7 times more likely to complete a college degree."** *Jobs for the Future, 2012,* <http://bit.ly/1DAU4Du>

As of 2017. Minnesota ranks fourth in the nation percentage of graduates in debt and ninth in average college debt accumulated by graduates. The average 4-year college debt is \$31,734. https://ticas.org/sites/default/files/pub_files/classof2017.pdf

CSC helped 6 St. Paul high schools serving mostly low-income students increase by about 400% the enrollments in dual credit course courses. As students explain, these programs help youngsters change their view of themselves, seeing themselves as able to accomplish far more than they thought possible. Here is a link to three 90-second videos. <http://bit.ly/1I022cy>

For more information, please see <http://centerforschoolchange.org/dual-credit/>

Minnesota Department of Education, High School class of 2019

4yr Graduation Rate	ALL STUDENTS	Rigorous Course-Taking Participants*	Difference	PSEO/CE Participants -- Funding Flag	Difference
	% of 4yr High School Graduates	% of 4yr High School Graduates		% of 4yr High School Graduates	
All Students	83.7%	92.2%	8.5%	97.6%	13.9%
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>					
American Indian or Alaska Native	50.8%	81.9%	31.1%	91.6%	40.8%
Black of African American	69.9%	85.7%	15.8%	93.8%	23.9%
Asian	87.6%	91.0%	3.4%	97.0%	9.4%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	60.8%	80.0%	19.2%	100.0%	39.2%
Hispanic or Latino	69.9%	86.8%	16.9%	93.3%	23.4%
Two or More Races	72.3%	86.7%	14.4%	95.0%	22.7%
White	88.7%	93.9%	5.2%	98.4%	9.7%
<i>Special Populations</i>					
English Learner	57.0%	76.1%	19.1%	79.7%	22.7%
Not English Learner	85.1%	92.8%	7.7%	97.9%	12.8%
Special Education	61.1%	75.5%	14.4%	90.1%	29.0%
Not Special Education	87.2%	94.7%	7.5%	97.8%	10.6%
Free or Reduced Price Meals (9-12)	69.7%	85.5%	15.8%	93.7%	24.0%
Not Free or Reduced Price Meals (9-12)	89.9%	94.8%	4.9%	98.6%	8.7%

Dual Enrollment Programs in Minnesota

A Comparative Revenue Analysis

New Pharos Consulting

December, 2020



New Pharos Consulting
Public Policy Research – Data Analytics and Reporting

December 15th, 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document summarizes research about significant financial savings for dual credit, participants, their families, and Minnesota taxpayers. Mark Misukanis, PhD, formerly a fiscal analyst at Minnesota Senate Education Finance Committee and Minnesota Office of Higher Education, is the author. He earned a PhD in education administration and now is president of New Pharos Consulting.

Key Findings:

1. "Minnesota offers a number of approaches for students to obtain college credits while in high school under dual enrollment- programs," including AP, IB, Concurrent Enrollment and PSEO." (pg. 23)
2. "Enrollment has risen dramatically the last 10 years in each of the programs with growth in the 40 to 50 percent range." (pg. 23)
3. "PSEO is the most cost-effective approach. In FY2021, state and local taxpayers will save an estimated \$15.1 million for students taking PSEO compared to other dual enrollment programs." (pg. 23)
4. "With dual enrollment programs, parents and students realize significant cost savings with lower tuition or debt payments in the future. Under PSEO alone, a reasonable estimate for FY 20-21 is \$59.8 [million] annually." (pg. 23)
5. "The State spends approximately \$8.5 million for AP and Concurrent Enrollment (\$4.5m for AP/IB, \$4.0m for CIS, pg. 7-10). This includes aid for exams and teacher training. This is in addition to the standard aid and levy paid for these students. If students used PSEO instead of these programs, this \$8.5 million could be reduced." (pg. 23)
6. "Other state and federal student financial aid programs would also see savings as these students enroll in college and graduate early due to the accumulated credits." (pg. 23)

This study describes costs and savings and does not include recommendations. The report was commissioned by People for PSEO, an organization that advocates for the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEO) and other dual credit options for Minnesota for students. People for PSEO asked New Pharos Consulting, a nonpartisan public policy research group, to conduct a comparative revenue analysis for each of the dual enrollment programs and determine potential savings to Minnesota taxpayers and parents of Minnesota's dual credit programs. This study provides data about the costs of investing in dual-credit initiatives. It can assist policymakers and students in preparing for their futures. People for PSEO recognize that in some cases the costliest options are in the best interests of students/families. We believe families and students deserve several dual credit options. **People for PSEO has developed legislative recommendations based on this report.** To learn more about People for PSEO please visit www.peopleforpseo.org.

Conclusions

Section 7

This section presents the key messages from the report.

1. Minnesota offers a number of approaches for students to obtain college credits while in high school under dual enrollment- programs.
2. The programs structures are very different with some driven by national or international groups (AP and IB), some taking place in the high school settings (Concurrent Enrollment) and one other occurring mainly on college campuses (PSEO).
3. Enrollment has risen dramatically the last 10 years in each of the programs with growth in the 40 to 50 percent range.
4. Analyzing the revenue formulas put in place by the Legislature for the several programs, PSEO is the most cost-effective approach. In FY2021, state and local taxpayers will save an estimated \$15.1 million for students taking PSEO compared to other dual enrollment programs.
5. As shown in Section 1, the State spends approximately \$8.5 million for AP and Concurrent Enrollment. This includes aid for exams and teacher training. This is in addition to the standard aid and levy paid for these students. If students used PSEO instead of these programs, this \$8.5 million could be reduced.
6. Enrollment in the programs should not be considered cost drivers for higher education institutions. Under marginal cost ideas, the change in credits is too small. Under average costs notions, enrollment today would cancel enrollment in the future. Indeed, since future costs are higher, there could be a net savings.
7. With dual enrollment programs, parents and students realize significant cost savings with lower tuition or debt payments in the future. Under PSEO alone, a reasonable estimate for FY 20-21 is \$59.8 annually.
8. Other state and federal student financial aid programs would also see savings as these students enroll in college and graduate early due to the accumulated credits.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HF 2544

Aaliyah Hodge

*PSEO Student (2011–2012), University of Minnesota Twin Cities
Founder, People for PSEO*

Re: HF 2544

Dear Members of the MN Education Policy Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HF 2544.

I began participating in PSEO in 2011 during my junior year of high school at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. I was 15 years old — one of the youngest students on campus. I still remember my first day. I walked across campus, stopped at Ben & Jerry's, and sat in awe that I was on a college campus while still in high school.

In my family, college was always the dream. We simply did not know how we would afford it or make it happen. PSEO made it possible. By the time I graduated high school, I had earned 58 college credits. I completed my bachelor's degree at 19 and my master's degree in public policy from the Humphrey School at 21. PSEO saved my family tens of thousands of dollars and fundamentally changed my life trajectory.

However, accessing the program was not straightforward. I struggled to obtain clear and accurate information, even attending a suburban high school. I was told PSEO was essentially the same as AP — it is not. PSEO provides actual college credit through course completion, not just the possibility of credit based on an exam score. I experienced delays with required forms. I was told I could not use school computers because I was not enrolled in high school classes, which was incorrect. I was even told I was trying to “go to college on the school's dime.”

I share these experiences not with anger, but with concern. For a student who is less persistent, less confident, or navigating the system alone, those moments can close doors to opportunities.

Research consistently shows that even taking a single dual enrollment course significantly increases a student's likelihood of graduating high school — especially for students from low-income backgrounds and students of color. Yet participation gaps remain. When access depends on persistence, advocacy, and insider knowledge, opportunity becomes uneven.

As a Black woman who grew up in a low-income, single-parent household, I know how transformative access can be. That is why I founded People for PSEO. With the support of other advocates, we built a youth-led organization because students were often discussed in policy conversations but not meaningfully included in them. We believed that those who had lived the program should have a voice in shaping its future.

That belief aligns directly with HF 2544. This bill does not impose immediate changes to PSEO. Instead, it creates a task force to review funding structures, incentives, transparency, and barriers to participation in a thoughtful and data-informed manner. Importantly, it ensures student representation at the table. When

funding formulas and access structures are reviewed, the students most impacted —must be part of that conversation.

Today, I work at a national organization supporting improvement initiatives across hundreds of schools nationwide. My commitment to educational equity began with PSEO. I have seen firsthand how access to rigorous coursework can serve as a true equalizer — but only when access remains broad, transparent, and student-centered.

PSEO changed my life. I respectfully urge you to support HF 2544 so that it can continue opening doors for students across Minnesota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaliyah Hodge', with a stylized, cursive script.

Aaliyah Hodge



March 14, 2026

Members of the House Education Policy Committee:

We are writing in strong support of HF4231 and HF4232, two bills that would bring important reforms to Minnesota's Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program. These bills represent a thoughtful approach to strengthening PSEO to meet the needs of students and address concerns raised by school districts regarding gaps in the program.

HF4231 provides consistent, transparent eligibility criteria for students to participate in the PSEO program. The lack of criteria determining whether a student is academically prepared for college-level coursework leaves both institutions and students without clear guidance, which can result in enrollments that set students up for failure. Importantly, the bill preserves flexibility. A student who does not meet the eligibility criteria may still enroll if their school submits a letter of recommendation, ensuring these standards serve as a floor, not a ceiling.

HF4232 addresses two additional challenges with the current statute: lack of communication from postsecondary institutions about student academic progress, and the potential for students to take on more college coursework than is appropriate while still enrolled in secondary school.

Under current law, secondary schools are notified when a student enrolls in or withdraws from a PSEO course, but they receive little or no information about how the student is performing throughout the term. As a result, school counselors, parents, and administrators are often unable to intervene when a student begins to struggle until long after any opportunity to provide support has passed. HF4232 closes this gap by requiring postsecondary institutions to notify a pupil's school at least twice per quarter or semester of the student's grades and available academic progress information. This requirement will allow school staff to connect with struggling students early.

By capping participation at 28 quarter credits or 16 semester credits per school year, HF4232 ensures that PSEO enriches a student's secondary education rather than replacing it. This limit provides a reasonable balance between providing motivated students with access to college-level learning and preserving a coherent, well-rounded secondary school experience.

We also support HF2544 establishing a dual enrollment task force. With dual enrollment expanding across Minnesota, now is the time to ensure these programs are rigorous, including student support, are accessible to underrepresented students, and have a sustainable financial model that works for schools and colleges across the state.

While HF4269 and HF4270 are not currently on the committee's agenda, we urge the committee to hear these bills as well. They address additional gaps in the PSEO program by ensuring reimbursements reflect what students complete and call for a comprehensive evaluation needed to help fully understand the program's impact on students and school districts.

We appreciate the committee's focus on PSEO reform and believe these bills will make PSEO a more equitable, accountable, and effective program for everyone it serves.

Sincerely,

Minnesota Association of School Administrators

Association of Metropolitan School Districts

Minnesota School Boards Association

Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals

Minnesota Rural Education Association

Written Testimony Regarding HF 4232, HF 4231, and HF 4270

To: House Higher Education Policy and Finance Committee

From: Madelyn Chu, Augsburg University

Date: March 16, 2026

Subject: Opposition to Provisions in HF 4232, HF 4231, and HF 4270

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding several provisions in the proposed PSEO legislation. While I appreciate the Committee's focus on academic success, the current language creates significant barriers for the unique student populations we serve at Augsburg University.

In my daily work, I provide direct **1:1 support** to PSEO students. I see firsthand that with the right mentorship, these students don't just "get by" - they thrive.

1. The Evidence Against a 16-Credit Cap (HF 4232)

The proposed **16-credit annual cap** is based on a misconception that high credit loads lead to burnout. In my experience, many of our students are highly successful in 16+ credits per semester. Because of the intensive support we provide, these students effectively balance rigorous advanced coursework with high school requirements, extracurriculars, and campus involvement.

Restricting them to ~8 credits per term would dismantle the **"Auggie Experience."** It forces ambitious students into a part-time, commuter-style role, stripping away their sense of academic belonging and ending the pathway to earning an Associate degree while in high school.

2. Penalizing Major-Specific Progress (HF 4270)

Many of our students complete high school requirements early and use PSEO to begin major-specific coursework. By prohibiting state payments for courses taken for postsecondary credit only, HF 4270 penalizes students seeking a head start. This restriction would force students away from the rigorous, specialized pathways that make PSEO a premier program for Minnesota's future workforce.

3. Overriding Holistic Admissions (HF 4231)

Augsburg's strength lies in catching students who might otherwise "get lost in the shuffle." By mandating rigid GPA and standardized test scores, the state would override our ability to use holistic measures—like counselor recommendations—to identify students who have the drive to succeed but may not meet a standardized benchmark. We should trust institutions and high school counselors to serve as the gatekeepers.

4. Unfunded Administrative Mandates (HF 4232 & HF 4231)

The requirement for **twice-per-term progress reporting** and the **10-day withdrawal rule** creates immense bureaucratic hurdles. We already utilize robust early-intervention systems. A state mandate to report progress multiple times a term adds a heavy workload to our faculty and staff without providing the resources to manage it. Furthermore, the 10-day rule places the entire financial risk on the university, even when we are actively working to keep a struggling student enrolled.

Recommendation: A "High-Support Exception"

I urge the Committee to consider a **"High-Support Exception."** The legislature's goal is to limit "low-value online programs," but these broad-brush bills inadvertently dismantle the high-quality, high-oversight residential and hybrid programs offered by private colleges like Augsburg.

Please preserve the flexibility and depth of the PSEO program so we can continue to provide the 1:1 support that helps Minnesota's students reach their full potential.

Sincerely,

Madelyn Chu (she/her/hers)

Associate Director of PSEO

2211 Riverside Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55454

Augsburg University

TESTIMONY OF DEXTER PAASCH, St Paul, MN

Supporting HF 2544

My name is Dexter Paasch. I'm a senior at Harding High School and a member of the Ho-Chunk nation. I am testifying about the PSEO bill that you are hearing today – HF 2544. I support, HF 2544 (setting up a task force to examine ways to retain the strengths and recommend improvements in PSEO. I think it is vital to retain the opportunity to do full time PSEO.

I also am a PSEO student taking two classes, Chemistry 1 and Interpersonal Communication at St Paul College. I am writing to explain why PSEO is valuable and why it should be available not only part time but also full time.

Full time PSEO helps students challenge themselves and learn how colleges work. This has students learning to manage their time along with becoming more independent and I don't see why it should be taken away from them.

I reached out to a handful of students at my school who are taking full time PSEO since their voices can not be heard today. And as stated by one student she says that PSEO has taken her out of her comfort zone and has pushed her to grow in ways that she could have never expected. And getting to interact with her I got to see how full time PSEO has guided her to becoming not only more disciplined but also a more independent student as well.

Out of the several students from my school that I questioned about their thoughts on PSEO all of them stated that they believe that PSEO is nothing short of beneficial to high school students no matter background or income.

I realize that some educators want more money to remain with high schools. But isn't the money that the Legislature allocates for education – **for OUR education** – whether on the high school campus, the college campus or on-line?

The credits I am earning have helped me take the next step into my life and my career.

There's no doubt that PSEO has been helpful for low and moderate income students. These are students who sometimes drop out or sometimes do not go on to college. And of the several students I questioned, all stated that it is also beneficial to those students as well.

Even the North Star scholarship that the Legislature has adopted requires students to pay for books and other fees. PSEO really levels the field.

I had previously taken IB courses at Harding and PSEO was another step forward to reaching personal goals along with building up a good resume.

I urge you to retain the option for students to take PSEO – part or full time.

Thank you.

Dexter Paasch

Shania Lovelace, PSEO Supporter, People for PSEO, shanialovelace456@gmail.com, HF 2544, For

Testimony:

Hello,

My name is Shania Lovelace, and I'm a constituent from Farmington, Minnesota. I am writing to urge support for HF 2544/SF 2769 which would establish a dual enrollment taskforce to analyze the PSEO funding formula and make evidence and experience based recommendations for the formula.

I am a former PSEO student who did full-time PSEO during my junior and senior years of high school. This program was life-changing for me as a first generation college student. The cost savings associated with being able to pursue full-time coursework cut my bachelor's degree bill in half and greatly reduced the time I was pursuing my degree once I graduated high school. Because of the reduced cost and time, I was able to obtain my graduate degree by age 21.

Participating in full-time PSEO was crucial for me because of my family financial background. My family could provide zero support for my education after high school. My twin sister also participated in full-time PSEO due to the same constraints. Now, she is pursuing her PhD at the University of Minnesota, and I hold an MBA from St. Mary's University of Minnesota. These achievements come from students with parents who never graduated high school and could provide no guidance, financial support, or legacy for a college degree. This displays the impact of fully supporting students and giving them every opportunity to move past their family's historical economic position through higher education.

Minnesota was the first state in the nation to pass a dual enrollment law in 1985, and PSEO remains one of our most effective tools to reduce college costs, accelerate degree completion, and strengthen workforce readiness, which is why the legislature should continue to support the program and all the students in it rather than passing restrictions that harm student access. The educational landscape has changed from when PSEO was first created, so enacting a taskforce would be the most appropriate action to ensure that today's program meets the needs and goals of students, families, and educators.

Thank you,
Shania Lovelace



March 18, 2026

Re: Support for HF2544, Dual Enrollment Task Force establishment and appropriation

Dear Co-Chair Jordan, Co-Chair Bennett, and Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

We are writing in support of HF2544, which would establish a task force to improve how Minnesota funds dual enrollment programs. For years there have been questions and cross-pressures around our current funding model, and it's important that we build long-term solutions that keep the best interest of students at the center. The Minnesota P20 Education Partnership [Dual Enrollment Survey](#) report, released just last fall, emphasized the importance of this work: While stakeholders across the education sector agree that dual enrollment is important and benefits students, tensions exist between high schools and colleges that create challenges in implementation and success for students.

These challenges signal an opportunity and an obligation to examine our existing structures to ensure that these proven pathways to college success remain robust and accessible to every student in our state, especially those who have historically been underserved. The proposed task force is essential because it will bring together stakeholders to address how we fund these programs, resolve implementation barriers, and ensure that every eligible student can easily access and succeed in dual enrollment.

The Importance of Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment, including PSEO, is an important tool that can help open doors to new experiences, advanced coursework, and exposure to college-level programs and even credit. [Robust nationwide research](#) demonstrates that dual enrollment is linked to higher graduation rates, increased postsecondary enrollment, and higher rates of degree completion. These benefits are most pronounced among historically underrepresented student groups. Data shows that low-income, Black, and Latino students experience salient, positive gains when they participate in dual enrollment.

For many students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds, dual enrollment is not just an academic boost; it is a financial lifeline. PSEO provides students with the invaluable opportunity to earn college credits, saving time and money and preventing college debt.

While students of color, English learners, and low-income students are currently underrepresented in rigorous coursework options, the students from these groups who do participate in dual enrollment [enroll in and complete college](#) at higher rates than their peers.

Furthermore, PSEO participation is the rare academic metric in Minnesota which shows near-racial parity, and an actual closing of an opportunity gap for Black students specifically. In 2024, students of color comprised [35% of PSEO participants](#), while making up 37% of the 9-12 population in Minnesota. 11% of high schoolers in 2024 were Black while 15.2% of PSEO students were Black. Not only that: participation in dual enrollment is growing, and this growth is driven by the very students who stand to benefit most:

	PSEO Participation Growth (2022-2024)	Concurrent Enrollment Participation Growth (2022-2024)
Statewide	29%	8%
Low-Income Students	50%	43%
English Learners	44%	19%
Students of Color	29%	19%
Special Education	24%	22%

Source: 2026 Rigorous Course Taking Report to the Legislature - MDE

While concurrent enrollment remains the [most-used rigorous coursework option](#) among students of color, low-income students, English learners, and special education students, PSEO is growing at the fastest pace, emphasizing the importance of both options as access tools. Even in the immediate post-COVID period, when rigorous coursework participation dropped across most student groups, [PSEO participation increased](#) among English learners, students of color, and special education students, perhaps signaling that online and flexible options may have removed participation barriers.

We must act now to preserve these powerful programs, eliminate the remaining barriers to participation, and ensure the funding mechanism supports the growth and success being driven by historically underserved students. EdAllies urges the committee to support HF2544, bringing all key stakeholders to the table for a solutions-oriented conversation.

Sincerely,
 Matt Shaver
 Senior Policy Director