



Policy Spotlight on New England

Dual Enrollment Policies & Programs

What is Dual Enrollment?

“Dual enrollment” refers to programs in which students take postsecondary courses while simultaneously enrolled in high school. While programs differ among and within states, all programs share the goal of supporting students to complete their postsecondary education more quickly and cheaply while also fulfilling high school graduation requirements.

Although the term dual enrollment is often applied loosely to any program that enables high school students to earn postsecondary credit, there are important differences:

- **Dual enrollment:** Students travel to a college or university campus to take courses offered to the institution’s traditional student body. High school students may have access to other resources on the institution’s campus, such as the library or advising services. Students may be responsible for full tuition or some costs or may enroll at no cost, depending on the program or policy.
- **Concurrent enrollment:** Students take college-level courses for credit that are taught in their high schools by high school teachers approved by the college. Students may be responsible for full tuition or partial costs or may enroll at no cost, depending on the program or policy.
- **Early college high school:** Students combine high school and college coursework, along with added supports, so that they can receive a high school diploma and two years of college credit. Early college high schools are usually located on or near college campuses and students do not pay tuition for their college-level coursework.

In addition to reducing the time to and costs of a student’s degree, dual enrollment programs introduce high schoolers to the concept of college and the higher education environment earlier in their academic careers. This means students may come to perceive themselves as “college material” sooner, as well as boost their college readiness.

Dual enrollment programs, relatively new in the last 15 years, have been evaluated along varying parameters—primarily program by program rather than across state borders and longitudinally. Nevertheless, studies show that students participating in dual enrollment experience increased postsecondary success, whether measured by increased enrollment in college directly from high school, reduced need for remedial education, higher GPAs in college, or quicker time to completion.

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What Does Dual Enrollment Look Like in New England?

Dual enrollment opportunities exist in each of the six New England states, either instituted by state policy or established and offered by public or private higher education institutions. In order to highlight similarities and differences of programs in the region, the following pages offer state summaries along five program features recommended by the Education Commission of the States (corresponding subtitles in the state summaries noted in parentheses):

- All eligible students may participate and eligibility is based on demonstrated ability to access college-level content. (Are there eligibility requirements?)
- Students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses.
- Postsecondary credit is transferable. (Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?)
- Tuition doesn't fall on the shoulders of students or parents. (Who pays and how much?)
- Districts and postsecondary institutions are fully funded or reimbursed for participating students. (How's it funded?)
- Course rigor and teacher quality are ensured to meet postsecondary standards. (Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?)

As a region, the state summaries demonstrate that:

- Four of the six New England states' dual enrollment programs are managed by a community college or university system, rather than an overarching state-level entity.
- Transferable postsecondary credit is not guaranteed for most students enrolled in dual enrollment programs.
- In none of the New England states are students and/or families responsible for paying the full cost of a course.
- Funding mechanisms for dual enrollment differ from state to state.
- There is little consistency on policy governing course or instructor quality.

For questions or comments, please contact Gretchen Syverud at gsyverud@nebhe.org or 617-533-9522.

About the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE)

Established in 1955 by six visionary New England governors, NEBHE is a regional compact that works across New England to: help leaders assess, develop and implement education practices and policies of regional significance; promote regional cooperation that encourages efficient sharing of education resources; and strengthen the relationship between higher education and the regional economy. Learn more at www.nebhe.org.



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Dual Enrollment in Connecticut

Students in Connecticut can access dual enrollment through the UConn Early College Experience concurrent enrollment program and the College Career Pathways concurrent enrollment program provided by the community college system. In addition, career and technical education (CTE) high school students who participate in the Conn. State Apprenticeship Council may earn college credits required for their career and technical program. High school students can also take university courses on any UConn campus with the permission of their high schools and appropriate approval from the University.

Are there eligibility requirements?

Any student may participate in a concurrent enrollment program if they have the appropriate academic preparation for the class. There is no state policy on eligibility requirements for the sending secondary school or receiving postsecondary institution. High schools do establish their own criteria for participation.

Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?

The UConn Early College Experience is a concurrent enrollment program that requires districts to award high school credit as the university awards UConn credit, provided a student is successful in the class.

However, districts are not required to give high school credit for the successful completion of a post-secondary course and public higher education institutions are not required to accept dual/concurrent enrollment credits outside of the Early College Experience program. The awarding of credit is largely on a case-by-case basis.

Who pays and how much?

The UConn Early College Experience program charges students approximately one tenth of standard tuition. There is no cost for students enrolled in the College Career Pathways program.

How is it funded?

The UConn Early College Experience is funded by the university, with an eye on keeping program costs low so all students may participate. Students on the federal free & reduced lunch program receive full fee waivers; high schools that are 80 percent full & reduced lunch receive full institutional fee waivers.

The College Career Pathways program is federally funded through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.

Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?

Standards for course quality are set only for online courses. However, UConn's Early College Experience is accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), which certifies that courses taught by high school instructors are as rigorous as courses taught at UConn. Standards of instructor certification are set by the departments and are equivalent to all adjunct faculty in the department.

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Dual Enrollment in Maine

Maine's primary dual enrollment program, On Course for College, is offered by the Maine Community College system. CTE students may take advantage of The Bridge Year program, which combines dual enrollment opportunities with summer career academies, college and career advising, job-shadowing activities and a college first-year seminar experience. Maine is also home to more than nine early college programs, some of which are offered by public colleges and others that are offered by private higher education institutions.

Are there eligibility requirements?

On Course for College: Students must have a minimum high school GPA of 3.0, a written recommendation by a high school administrator or teacher, meet college entrance requirements and have met course prerequisites, and have parental approval. A student may still participate in the program without meeting all requirements if the student is in at least the 11th grade and has approval from both his/her high school and the postsecondary institution.

Dual Enrollment CTE Program: Students must be enrolled full time in a CTE program at a participating school and in grades 11 or 12.

Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?

On Course for College: Districts may choose to award secondary credit while public institutions are required to accept dual enrollment credit.

Dual Enrollment CTE Program: Both districts and public institutions are required to award credit.

Who pays and how much?

On Course for College: The Maine Department of Education pays 50% of tuition for the first 6 credit hours each semester, up to 12 credits per academic year. Students and parents must pay any remaining costs.

Dual Enrollment CTE Program: Students pay \$40 per credit.

How is it funded?

On Course for College: The department of education receives funding from the legislature to carry out this program.

Dual Enrollment CTE Program: Districts and postsecondary institutions are funded equally by the state, with a new appropriation this year to expand the program to additional schools.

Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?

On Course for College: There are no statewide policies on ensuring the quality of courses or instructors in Maine.

Dual Enrollment CTE Program: Although not accredited by NACEP, programs must meet national concurrent enrollment standards.

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Dual Enrollment in Massachusetts

The Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership (CDEP) is Massachusetts's primary dual enrollment program, serving 1,627 students in FY15.

Are there eligibility requirements?

Students must have a minimum high school GPA of 2.5 or a recommendation from their high school guidance counselor, teacher or principal. Students must meet the entrance requirements of a postsecondary institution and have completed course prerequisites.

Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?

Courses count toward secondary graduation requirements and qualify as credit under the MassTransfer Block, which are highly transferable but not guaranteed.

Who pays and how much?

Students are expected to pay little or no costs for CDEP courses.

How is it funded?

Institutions apply for a grant, funded by the state, through CDEP to offer dual enrollment. To be eligible, an institution, among other stipulations, must offer a variety of courses that apply to a MassTransfer block, make concerted efforts to enroll first-generation, low-income and minority students, and provide academic and career supports.

Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?

Only postsecondary faculty or high school instructors approved by the partnering institution may teach courses.

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Dual Enrollment in New Hampshire

Are there eligibility requirements?

Any student may participate in dual enrollment programs offered by the Community College System of New Hampshire (Running Start), although pre-requisites may be required, and Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU in the High School). However, there is no statewide policy or program on dual enrollment.

Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?

Students do earn both secondary and postsecondary credit if they successfully complete the course.

Who pays and how much?

Students participating in Running Start pay \$150 per course. The Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) offers a \$75 scholarship for students with documented financial need. Students enrolled in SNHU in the High School pay \$100 per course.

How is it funded?

Neither program receives direct state funding.

Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?

There are no state policies to ensure course or teacher quality, although institutions have their own standards for high school instructor qualifications.

CCSNH has high school teacher credentialing requirements that vary by course taught. CCSNH also requires a college faculty partner be assigned to work with each high school teacher who is teaching a Running Start course to ensure the rigor and integrity of the college course is being upheld.

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Dual Enrollment in Rhode Island

In 2015-2016, Rhode Island launched the Prepare RI program, which provides universal access to dual and concurrent enrollment programs for RI's public high school students. The \$1.3M investment from the state enables qualifying students to take college courses from Rhode Island's public higher education institutions (University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and Community College of Rhode Island) as part of their high school course of study at no cost to students or their families. During the first year of the new program, over 3,800 students enrolled.

In addition, Rhode Island has launched a new tool, the Advanced Course Network, which extends dual enrollment and advanced coursework (e.g. Advanced Placement) opportunities across the state. Public schools and districts may join as network providers to offer new courses of their own or allow students to enroll in courses offered by other network members.

Are there eligibility requirements?

Public secondary school students may take dual and concurrent enrollment coursework upon the approval of their principal, director or head of school, in accordance with local enrollment criteria. The criteria is based on the student's academic, behavioral, and attendance record and, if applicable, the student's results on an ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, PSAT, Explore or state standardized assessment. Student age is not a determiner of enrollment. Postsecondary institutions establish assessment standards to determine student eligibility.

In the case of career and technical education dual and concurrent enrollment coursework, secondary school students must meet the course-specific eligibility requirements.

Secondary school students may not be denied access to dual and concurrent enrollment coursework provided they meet the local enrollment criteria and there is space available in the course.

Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?

Upon successful completion of a dual or concurrent course, students earn credit toward their high school graduation requirements and at the higher education institution where they are enrolled for the course. Students may be able to transfer the postsecondary credit to another institution.

Who pays and how much?

Through the Prepare RI Dual Enrollment Fund, qualified public high school students can take dual and concurrent coursework at CCRI, RIC and URI at no cost to them or their families.

Students participating in courses offered through the Advanced Course Network face no tuition costs. However, transportation to a providing institution's location is not covered by the secondary school or district.

How is it funded?

The initial state investment in Prepare RI was \$1.3 million for the 2015-2016 school year. The Governor's Prepare RI Dual Enrollment Fund was approved for a second year as part of the FY17 State budget.

The Rhode Island Department of Education supports the Advanced Course Network through state discretionary funds for students not enrolled as full time at the providing institution.

Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?

The Board of Education's Regulations for Dual Enrollment specify that dual and concurrent enrollment courses must have the same educational outcomes and academic policies as other courses taught at the public postsecondary institutions.

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Dual Enrollment in Vermont

The Vermont Dual Enrollment program, part of the Flexible Pathways Initiative created by the Legislature through Act 77 of 2013 and administered by the Vermont Agency of Education, includes up to two college courses offered by public and private partner higher education institutions across the state, including the Vermont State Colleges System and the University of Vermont. The Early College Program funds high school seniors to take a full year of college-level classes while completing their high school degree in programs offered by the Vermont State Colleges and accredited private postsecondary institutions in Vermont approved by the Agency Secretary.

Are there eligibility requirements?

Students attending public high schools, technical centers, or independent schools using public tuition dollars may participate in dual enrollment. To participate, students must be in grades 11-12 and have included dual enrollment in their personalized learning plans. Both secondary and postsecondary institutions may determine if students are prepared for the coursework.

Do students earn both secondary and postsecondary credit for successful completion of approved courses?

For traditional students, secondary and postsecondary credit may be awarded but is not guaranteed. Technical center students receive secondary credit but postsecondary credit is not automatically awarded.

Who pays and how much?

Eligible students receive tuition vouchers for up to two dual enrollment courses subject to funding. Limited additional funding to cover materials fees and textbook costs has been provided through the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), for students who are eligible for free and reduced price lunch.

How is it funded?

Funding for dual enrollment and early college tuition comes from the state, administered by the Agency of Education. Depending on where and by whom the dual enrollment course is taught, the state pays 20% or 90% of the Community College of Vermont tuition rate. Funding for Early College is an amount equal to 87% of the state base education amount.

Are there standards for course rigor and teacher quality?

For those courses taught in high schools, the receiving postsecondary institution retains authority on course content and instructor selection, monitoring and support.

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