

CTE and Dual Enrollment

The Changing Face of “Readiness”

Too often, there is a false choice between being “college” ready and being “career” ready. With over two-thirds of jobs requiring education and training beyond high school, the reality is that college is now a part of many learners’ career pathways.¹ At the same time, with about 84 percent of Career Technical Education (CTE) graduates enrolling in postsecondary education after graduation, CTE is increasingly part of a learner’s college pathway as well.² The overlap between “college” and “career” readiness is particularly clear when considering the increase in dual enrollment courses among CTE students.

The Facts

- The latest data shows that about **34 percent of learners take courses for postsecondary credit** by the time they graduate high school.³
- **Nearly all public districts offer CTE programs** to high school students, and about **three-fourths of these districts offer dual enrollment CTE courses.**⁴
- At last count, over **600,000 dual enrollment credits were earned in CTE courses**, totaling about a third of all dual enrollment credits earned.⁵ This figure may be underestimated, given many “academic” dual enrollment courses may count toward students’ CTE programs of study, such as economics, anatomy or computer science.
- Participation in dual enrollment varies across states: For the 2017-2018 school year, **Colorado** reported that over 45,000 high school students participated in any type of dual enrollment program and attempted nearly 265,000 credit hours in the state’s concurrent enrollment program. Additionally, **more than 13,000 learners participated in CTE concurrent enrollment courses, representing 43 percent of all concurrent enrollment students.**⁶

States and Students Reaping the Benefits

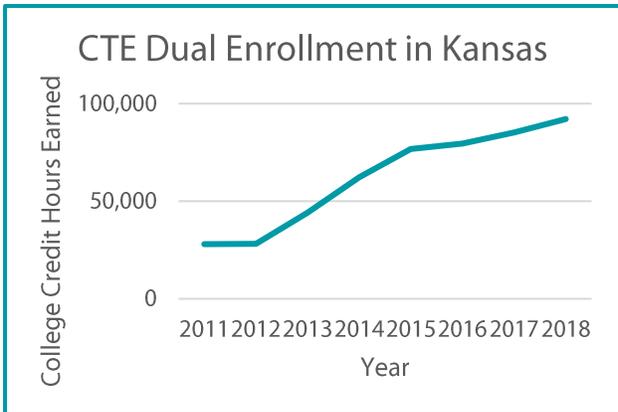
- A meta-analysis of rigorous dual enrollment studies found that dual enrollment programs have positive effects on **postsecondary degree attainment, college access and enrollment, credit accumulation, high school completion and academic achievement.**⁷
- Dual credit students at the University of **Texas** were **more likely to complete college and had higher GPAs** than their peers.⁸
- Many states, districts and/or institutions cover most or all of the cost of dual enrollment. **Indiana’s** statewide community college system, Ivy Tech Community College, has **estimated savings of \$55 million** in tuition costs for learners by enrolling high school students in dual enrollment.⁹
- **Black and economically disadvantaged students** who take dual enrollment courses are **more likely to attend a postsecondary institution** than peers of similar backgrounds.¹⁰

Dual Enrollment

is when a high school student takes a credit-bearing postsecondary course, be it on a college campus, within a high school taught by faculty or a high school teacher who qualifies as a college adjunct, or online through distance education. It is sometimes referred to as “dual credit” or “concurrent enrollment.”

A Radical Redesign

In 2012, **Kansas** recognized a need to improve education through CTE to ensure students would graduate college and career ready. When former Governor Sam Brownback called on the Kansas Legislature to help him enact an initiative to expand CTE in Kansas, the legislature passed Senate Bill 155, which covers **tuition for high school students taking postsecondary CTE classes** and provides incentives to districts to encourage students to earn industry-recognized credentials.¹¹



Shortly thereafter, Kansas funded a public information campaign to promote the availability of tuition dollars for CTE courses. Kansas's multi-faceted approach has led to a more than **200 percent increase in CTE dual enrollment**, with students earning over **495,000 college credit hours** and almost **8,500 credentials** between 2010 and 2018.¹²

Reshaping the High School Experience

Dual enrollment is a key component of a high-quality program of study, helping to ease the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. When students graduate high school having already earned college credits in their field of focus, it gives them a leg up in pursuing postsecondary opportunities. For example, Vista PEAK Preparatory – a 2016 **Excellence in Action** award winner from Aurora, Colorado – has established dual credit opportunities as part of its core educational model. Students in the program can earn **up to 18 postsecondary credit hours** and can elect to stay in the program for an additional fifth year to earn an associate degree. As a result, **60 percent of students in the 2014-15 school year earned postsecondary credit**.¹³



¹ https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web.pdf

² <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/cte/index.html>

³ <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019176.pdf>

⁴ <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/cte/index.html>

⁵ <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013001.pdf>

⁶ https://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/Enrollment/FY2018/2018_Concurrent_Enrollment_April_2019.pdf

⁷ https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/InterventionReports/wwc_dual_enrollment_022817.pdf

⁸ <https://data.utsystem.edu/sites/default/files/upload/UTSystem-DualCreditStudy.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.ivytech.edu/dual-credit/11377.html>

¹⁰ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED537253.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.kansasregents.org/workforce-development/excel-in-career-technical-education-initiative-senate-bill-155>

¹² <http://www.kansasregents.org/workforce-development/excel-in-career-technical-education-initiative-senate-bill-155>

¹³ https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/Vista_PEAK_Final.pdf