



Dual Enrollment Recommendations: Executive Summary

Editorial note: These recommendations are based on the work of a subcommittee of the Partnership for Continued Learning ("Partnership"). They were forwarded on behalf of the Partnership to meet the 5/31/07 legislative mandate and will be reviewed by the Partnership at its next meeting.

The Goal:

The Ohio Core provides a legislative mandate that the Partnership for Continued Learning make policy recommendations for

“Increasing opportunities for students to earn credit toward a degree from an institution of higher education while enrolled in high school, including expanded opportunities for students to earn that credit on their high school campuses; a definition of "in good standing" for purposes of section 313.6013 of the Revised Code; and legislative changes that the partnership, in consultation with the Ohio board of regents and the state board of education, determines would improve the operation of the post-secondary enrollment options program established under Chapter 3365 of the Revised Code and other dual enrollment programs. The recommendations for legislative changes required by this division shall be issued not later than May 31, 2007.”

The Problem:

The proposed dual enrollment recommendations address several problems related to dual enrollment and the Post-secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program:

1. Current dual enrollment policy & programs lack a state level plan– Ohio has one dual enrollment “policy”- PSEO; and a collection of other accelerated learning/dual enrollment “programs,” including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Tech Prep, and Early College High Schools. The PSEO policy does not have state level oversight resulting in inconsistent implementation; the other “programs” do not have policy-supported funding streams and are not consistently available in school districts throughout the state.
2. Awareness & participation in dual enrollment needs to increase overall, and is currently uneven by geography, school district, and student demographic groups. Approximately 1.8% of Ohio’s high school students (predominately white and female) currently participate in PSEO, the state’s only dual enrollment policy. This participation rate compares with Hoffman’s (2005) findings that, “In states with long-term programs and no costs to students, between 10 and 30 percent of juniors and seniors gain college credit in high school.” (p.1)
3. Ohio lacks a longitudinal data system that can follow dual enrollment students from high school into college, therefore we have no way to measure the impact of our investments or the degree to which our students benefit from participation.
4. Many have questioned whether our dual enrollment courses, particularly PSEO, are consistently taught with college level rigor – affecting the transferability of credit upon matriculation to college.
5. Current funding for PSEO causes school districts to lose a portion of the state foundation dollars and dilutes the amount of higher education state subsidy available for “regular” college students. Funding for other accelerated learning and dual enrollment programs relies on the biennial budget process and/or grant funding sources.

Proposed recommendations:

Provide clear definitions of dual enrollment and accelerated learning that make the following distinctions:

Dual enrollment options enable a student to earn both high school and college credit *during high school* as a result of participating in a *college course* offered at the high school, at a college or university, or via distance learning. Examples of dual enrollment options are: PSEO, other dual enrollment agreements, Early College High School, and some College Tech Prep programs.

Accelerated learning opportunities enable a student to complete coursework while enrolled in high school that may earn credit toward a degree from an institution of higher education *upon the student's matriculation to higher education*; and in some cases the college credit is based on the attainment of a specified score on an examination covering the coursework. Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate, and some College Tech Prep articulation agreements are examples of accelerated learning options.

Area I. Increasing opportunities for high school students to earn college credit, including opportunities on high school campuses:

1. Create a statewide vision and plan for college credit opportunities, including setting clear goals and benchmarks for student participation levels and credits earned.
2. Create a statewide communication plan that informs all students and parents, particularly low income and disadvantaged students, about the various types of college credit opportunities.
3. Encourage efficiencies through regional implementation strategies.
4. Place accelerated learning/dual enrollment “report only” indicators on Ohio high school and district report cards.
5. Expand on-line college credit opportunities.
6. Revise funding provisions for non-public students order to maximize access for as many as students as possible (current procedures follow a first-come-first serve basis and results in some students being approved for several credit hours and other students being denied participation). Recommend limiting to the equivalent of 12 semester hours per student per year until all qualified non-public PSEO applicants are included.
7. Establish state level funding support for the development and implementation of a comprehensive Advanced Placement (AP) system.

Area II. Defining “In good standing” for dual enrollment opportunities

1. Any Ohio high school student in grades 9-12
2. Meets the criteria of the individual accelerated learning/dual enrollment program

Area III. Recommend legislative changes that would improve the operation of the Post-secondary Enrollment Options Program and other dual enrollment programs:

1. Ensure consistent awarding & transferability of credits at both the high school and college level.
2. Require the Board of Regents to submit a plan to evaluate return-on-investment for various dual enrollment opportunities and require students to participate in a privacy protected, state-level linked data system that would allow such an evaluation.
3. Establish consistent participation criteria for students that is based on a common standard for placement into initial college level courses (under development by OBR Articulation & Transfer Advisory Council).

4. Ensure that all dual enrollment and PSEO instructors are qualified as defined by The Higher Learning Commission's statement titled, Commission Guidance on Determining Qualified Faculty.
5. Create a state-level PSEO authority that would provide oversight.
6. Require that all PSEO and other dual enrollment courses honor college content and pre-requisites – use the same syllabi, assessments, and texts.
7. Encourage nonpublic higher education institutions to adhere to the same policy and regulations as public institutions; and encourage reporting of aggregated student data consistent with data reported by public institutions.
8. Analyze the current PSEO funding model and recommend a fix that considers weighted funding and incentivizing increased participation levels.
9. For adult and high school career technical programs that have a pathway to college, expanded efforts will be made to accelerate articulating college credit and certification opportunities. Once college level credit is agreed upon through the Articulation and Transfer or stackable certificate process, adult and high school CTE programs that do not align to the Articulation and Transfer or stackable certificate process will be given a phase-in period to meet this standard. After the phase-in period, those programs that do not meet the standard will be required to reapply for state weighted CTE funding.

Metrics:

1. Increased participation in accelerated learning & dual enrollment, particularly by disadvantaged student groups, particularly in rural and urban districts. Increased college credits earned and transferred.
2. Increased college participation rates.
3. Increased college retention rates.
4. Increased college completion rates, with shortened time to degree.