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# UPDATE: Dual Credit Programs

**2013**

Authorizing legislation: [RCW28A.600.280](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.600.280)  
(<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.600.280>)

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## Executive Summary

Dual credit programs allow students to take rigorous college-level courses while still in high school. Students may earn college credit by scoring well on year-end tests or by taking college-level classes at their high schools or at colleges and universities.

In our state, and across the country, we are defining what it means to be “career and college ready.” Dual credit programs play a key role in preparing students for life after high school. Students should be able to match the courses they take with their educational and career goals.

The number of dual credit courses has increased 19 percent since 2011. The highest growth has been in College in the High School and University of Cambridge International Examinations programs.

During that same time, the number of students taking dual credit courses has increased 4 percent. In the 2012–13 school year, 173,867 high school students were enrolled in dual credit courses.

Despite this overall success, student participation varies by subgroup. The number of highly capable students enrolled in dual credit programs has increased dramatically. But the number of enrolled American Indian/Alaska Native students, bilingual students, and students receiving special education services has dropped. All other ethnic groups have seen slow to moderate growth in dual credit enrollment.

The data also reveal barriers to dual credit enrollment:

- These programs cost students money. For example, Running Start students and their families do not pay tuition, but they do pay college fees and buy their own books. They must also provide their own transportation.
- It’s challenging to bring course offerings to rural and isolated school districts.

Some student ethnic groups have been disproportionately affected by these barriers. We need to build a dual credit policy that gives all students a chance to access these high-level courses.

## Introduction

As our society moves toward a global economy, ensuring our students are well prepared is more important than ever. Washington students must be highly skilled to be successful. One way to achieve success is to provide students with the opportunities for a smooth transition to college and/or training.

Our state Legislature intends to expand the number of students who begin earning college credits or career and technical certificates while still in high school. Students can do this by participating in “dual credit” programs.

[RCW 28A.230.130](#) requires high schools, using existing resources, to work toward the goal of offering a sufficient number of dual credit high school courses. These courses allow students to earn a year’s worth of postsecondary credit toward a certificate, apprenticeship program, technical degree, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) [School Report Card](#) annually reports on a variety of accountability measures including test scores, graduation rates, special program participation, and dual credit enrollments.

[RCW 28B.10.053](#) requires colleges and universities to develop master lists of courses that can be fulfilled by taking and meeting competency levels in dual credit opportunities. These lists are posted to the [Washington Student Achievement Council website](#), with a link from the [OSPI Dual Credit Programs website](#). These sites provide an important guidance resource for school districts, high schools, students, and their families.

With the passage of [2SHB 1642 – K-12 Education – High School - Academic Acceleration](#), the 2013 Legislature has reinforced the importance of dual credit programs including the elimination of all barriers. This law encourages each school district board of directors to adopt an academic acceleration policy. This policy should encourage high school students to advance to the most rigorous levels of courses, including dual credit options, after meeting or exceeding state assessment standards.

This law also provides a two-part, academic acceleration incentive program. OSPI is administering a competitive grant program to award funds for high schools to expand the availability of dual credit courses. It is also administering an appropriation incentive award to go to high schools for each student earning dual high school and college credit for courses taken during the previous school year. These funds are intended to support teacher training, curriculum, technology, examination fees, and other costs associated with offering dual credit courses to high school students.

OSPI will collect and post the rates at which students earn college credit through dual credit course opportunities on the School Report Card.

OSPI will report to the Legislature, annually, on the demographics of the students earning dual credits in the schools that received grants for the prior school year.

Dual credit opportunities in Washington State are diverse in structure. For example, some programs serve students in their high schools. Others are designed to be offered in college settings. Student participation costs range from near \$0 to over \$300 per course. Some opportunities are restricted to juniors and seniors by statute; others are open to all high school students.

Dual credit programs, such as Running Start, have saved state taxpayers and the families of students millions of dollars. As reported in State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' (SBCTC) [2011-12 Annual Running Start Progress Report](#), parent and student savings were about \$45 million. Taxpayers saw a return of about \$42.2 million in the 2011-12 report year.

Opportunities for dual credit coursework in Washington include, but are not limited to, Advanced Placement (AP), College in the High School (CHS), International Baccalaureate (IB), Running Start (RS), Running Start for the Trades, Tech Prep (TP), Cambridge Program (C), Career Link, Gateway to College, and Technical College Direct-Funded Enrollment programs.

This report has the results of both state and local school district efforts to make dual credit programs available to their students. It includes year-to-year enrollment data for each dual credit program. The report also identifies trends in the data for use in policy planning.

Specific information and findings on each of the programs can be obtained by linking to the Fact Sheets identified in Appendix A.

## **Update Status**

The number of students participating in dual credit offerings continues to grow, with the exception of Tech Prep and Early College for Native American Youth. The total number of student enrollments in dual credit courses taken has increased 19.4 percent, from 401,002 (2011) to 478,700 (2013). The number of students (unduplicated) taking dual credit courses has increased from 165,971 to 173,867, an increase of 4.8 percent over the same three-year period.

Even with increased student participation in dual credit opportunities, CEDARS enrollment data shows that students are only taking an average of 1.2 dual credit courses per year. This number has remained stable over the past three school years.

While experiencing overall growth in dual credit participation, ninth and tenth grade enrollments in most dual credit courses have decreased (6 percent) since 2011.

This unevenness in participation can also be found among ethnic groups. Over the past three years, dual credit course enrollment has increased across all ethnic groups except American Indian/Alaska Native which has remained fairly stable (0.6 percent decrease).

Student served by Special Education or Bilingual programs have also seen decreased enrollment in dual credit offerings over the past three years (10.7 percent and 24.2 percent respectively).

The CEDARS data shows fairly stable participation rates among Free/Reduced Price Lunch program students between 2011 and 2013 (1.6 percent increase).

Students served by Gifted programs have seen strong growth (132 percent) in participation during the past three years.

**Table 1: Dual Credit Participation Student Demographics**

Student enrollment	2011	2013	% change
11 <sup>th</sup> - & 12 <sup>th</sup> - grade	194,243	191,728	-1.3
9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> -grade	329,771	373,960	-13.4
Average # of dual credit courses per year	2.57	2.75	+7
American Indian/Alaska Native	2078	2065	-0.6
Asian	13,502	15,115	+11.9
Black / African American	7424	8358	+12.6
Hispanic / Latino	25,335	26,392	+4.2
White	108,487	111,155	+2.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1343	1481	+10.3
Two or more races	7791	9615	+23.4
Ethnicity not provided	11	2	-81.8
Female	82,389	86,804	+5.4
Male	83,582	87,379	+4.5
Special education	12,355	12,039	-2.6
Bilingual programs	5379	4625	-14
Gifted programs	6198	14,819	+139.1
Free/reduced lunch eligible	60,152	66,462	+10.5

The rates of growth among dual credit programs have varied. Tech Prep participation has dropped; Early College for Native American Youth is no longer in operation. All other programs have seen expansion in the number of schools participating and student enrollments. International Baccalaureate and College in the High School programs have seen the fastest rates of growth over the past three years (37 percent and 27 percent respectively).

Based on CEDARS data, Advanced Placement continued to be the largest dual credit program with continued growth of 13.1 percent over the past three years. The most significant expansion has been ninth grade participation, up 98.8 percent since 2011.

Overall, some dual credit programs such as AP, IB, and Cambridge continue to grow. Student costs for these programs tend to be low or non-existent and the programs are offered on high school campuses.

College in the High School and Running Start are growing. However, barriers such as college/university fees and transportation can adversely impact underrepresented student populations' participation. In response, Running Start is being offered on high school campuses by some universities.

Tech Prep lost all federal funds which were critical to the development and maintenance of agreements between colleges and school districts. This program is an essential piece of the dual credit system in Washington. It is designed to provide dual credit opportunities in technical fields of study, critical to meeting Washington's workforce needs.

**Table 2: Dual Credit Program Participation**

Student enrollment	2011	2013	% change
Advanced Placement	42,904	48,540	+13.1
Cambridge	27	1273	+461.5
College in the High School	13,081	17,108	+30.1
International Baccalaureate	5129	7000	+36.5
Running Start	16,855	17,527	+4
Tech Prep Eligible	117,270	115,798	-1.3

## Conclusion and Next Steps

Providing the Legislature with student data from the previous school years (2012–13) has presented some challenges. The submission of data from local school districts to the CEDARS system is not always complete by October. This means there should be some caution in interpreting the results. OSPI has enacted a rule supporting the timely submission of student data, beginning this year ([WAC 392-117-038 – Failure to meet CEDARS submission requirements](#)). District reporting of student information going forward should be more complete and available within legislative deadlines.

OSPI is also working with the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) to address discrepancies in data reporting between CEDARS and the Student Enrollment and Reporting System (SERS). The ERDC team is identifying and addressing a few data quality issues that impact Running Start reporting.

## Acknowledgments

This report is the result of collaborative efforts among multiple agency staff as well as local, state, and organizational dual credit program stakeholders.

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<http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/2013documents/DualCreditPrograms.pdf>

“International Baccalaureate Washington State IB Schools 2012.” International Baccalaureate Organization:  
[http://www.ibo.org/school/search/index.cfm?programmes=DIPLOMA&country=US&region=WA&find\\_schools=Find](http://www.ibo.org/school/search/index.cfm?programmes=DIPLOMA&country=US&region=WA&find_schools=Find)

“Tech Prep: Increasing Credit Options and Technical Skills.” OSPI:  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/careertech/TechPrep.aspx>

“2011–12 - Academic Year Report, December, 2012.” State Board for Community and Technical Colleges: <http://www.sbctc.edu/college/d-acad2011-12.aspx>

“2011–2012 Running Start Annual Progress Report.” State Board for Community and Technical Colleges: <http://www.sbctc.edu/college/d-high-school-reports.aspx>

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Dual Credit Programs (OSPI Program Briefs)

**Advanced Placement (AP)** — The AP program allows students to take rigorous, college-level courses while still in high school. With 34 courses in a variety of subject areas, AP provides willing and academically prepared high school students with the opportunity to study and learn at the college level. Students may earn college credit and/or advanced placement into upper-level college courses by taking AP exams. Many colleges and universities recognize AP courses when making admissions decisions.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**Cambridge International Exams** — The Cambridge Program offers an international, pre-university curriculum and examination system, emphasizing the value of a broad and balanced education for academically able students. Students meet international standards in this academically rigorous course of study. Students may enroll in up to 13 college-level courses within the program's three curriculum groups: 1) mathematics and science, 2) languages, and 3) arts and humanities. Just as with IB and AP, colleges and universities have recognition policies for the awarding of credit based on exam scores.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**Career Link** — Offered at South Seattle Community College and designed for 16–21 year olds who have dropped out of high school or are on the verge of dropping out. Students can accumulate high school and college credits, earning their high school diploma while preparing for college and getting a start toward a certificate or associate degree.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**College in the High School (CHS)** — A program in which a high school and a college or university enter a contract to have a college course taught in the high school by a college/university-approved high school teacher. The agreement between the school and college/university is governed by a local contract. High school students enrolled in CHS are officially enrolled in the college or university. The students must meet college/university- course requirements and pre-requisites. Student outcomes in CHS courses are assessed by the same standards used for the course when offered the college/university with the opportunity to earn full college credit.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**Gateway to College** — The Gateway to College program is a national dropout recovery and scholarship program, allowing students between the ages of 16 and 20. These students may not have been successful in high school. This program gives them an opportunity to get back on track and earn a high school diploma. Students complete their high school diploma requirements at community or technical colleges while earning college credits toward an associate degree, transfer credits, or a certificate.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**International Baccalaureate (IB)** — The IB program is designed as an academically challenged and balanced program of education with final examinations. The high school program is normally taught over two years and has gained recognition and respect from the world's leading universities. Students may take individual IB courses or may study up to six courses at standard or higher level in an effort to earn an IB diploma.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**Running Start** — Running Start is a program that allows 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to take college courses at Washington's 34 community and technical colleges along with Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Washington State University, Northwest Indian College, and Spokane Tribal College. Running Start students and their families do not pay tuition. However students do pay college fees, buy their own books, and provide their own transportation. Students receive both high school and college credit for these classes. The colleges participating are reimbursed by the K–12 districts whose students participate in the program.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

**Running Start for the Trades** — This program was initially established to provide graduating high school students with opportunities to enter registered apprenticeship programs. This program is not currently funded by the state. However, some activity continues between OSPI, the Department of Labor and Industries, and a few local school districts.

OSPI Program Brief: [S:\Navigation 101\Running Start\Running Start for the Trades](#)

**Technical College Direct** — Funded Enrollment Programs—Students from various school districts attend high school and college courses on a technical college campus. Enrollment in a technical college by high school students is linked to an interlocal agreement with a school district. State basic education apportionment dollars are paid directly to the technical college.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

- [http://www.lwtech.edu/enrollment/high\\_school\\_programs/lake\\_washington\\_technical\\_academy.html](http://www.lwtech.edu/enrollment/high_school_programs/lake_washington_technical_academy.html)
- <http://www.bates.ctc.edu/highschool/>
- <http://www.cptc.edu/nwcths>

**Tech Prep** — Tech Prep serves students in Grades 9–12. All Tech Prep dual credit classes are taken on the high school campus and are identified as Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes. CTE classes integrate academics with technical skills development to help prepare students for advanced education and careers related to “professional-technical” occupations.

Fact Sheet:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/DualCredit/StandardizedExams.aspx>

## Appendix B: Student Enrollment

**Table 3: Overall State Student Enrollment (2011–13)**

October Enrollment	Grades 9–12	Grades 11–12
2010–11	380,174	192,243
2011–12	377,866	194,243
2012–13	373,607	191,569

*Data Source: Comprehensive Education and Data Research System (CEDARS). OSPI Student Information Office, October 17, 2013.*

**Table 4: Number of Students Enrolled in Dual Credit–Eligible Courses (2011–13)**

October Enrollment	# of eligible students	% of eligible students
2010–11	177,774	46.8
2011–12	177,654	47.0
2012–13	173,917	46.6

*Data Source: Comprehensive Education and Data Research System (CEDARS). OSPI Student Information Office, October 17, 2013.*

**Table 5: Dual Credit Enrollment Programs Data Summary (2012–13)**

Program	# of schools	Enrollment	% of Eligible Students	% Free/ Reduced Lunch Eligible	% Male	% Female	% Special Ed	% Bilingual Program	% Gifted Program
Advanced Placement <sup>1</sup>	314	48,540	13	25.3	44.8	55.2	1.2	.9	15.9
College in the High School <sup>1</sup>	135	17,108	8.9	25.9	47.7	52.3	2.3	1.2	16.6
International Baccalaureate <sup>1</sup>	16	7000	1.9	29.6	47.2	52.8	2.4	1.8	32.9
Running Start <sup>1</sup>	427	17,527	9.1	28.5	40	60	1.0	.3	6.1
Running Start for the Trades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tech Prep Eligible <sup>1</sup>	373	116,114	31	43.8	53.4	46.6	9.7	3.5	5.2
Tech College Direct Funded Enrollment Programs <sup>*2</sup>	*3	635	.2	0	68.3	31.7	0	0	0
Cambridge International Exams <sup>1</sup>	2	1,273	.3	51.1	48.2	51.8	4.2	3.4	76
Career Link <sup>3</sup>	1	213	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gateway to College <sup>4</sup>	3	426	N/A	N/A	57.3	42.9	N/A	N/A	N/A

Data Sources: 1. Comprehensive Education and Data Research System (CEDARS). OSPI Student Information Office, October 17, 2013

2. OSPI Fiscal Service, September 2013

3. South Seattle Community College Career Link Program. Cutis Pederson, September 2013

4. Lake Washington Technical Academy and Highline Community College; Spokane Falls Community College, September 2013

\* = Clover Park Technical College has not submitted student CEDARS data for 2012–13 as of 10.14.13

**Table 6: Dual Credit Program Enrollment by Ethnicity (2012–13)**

Program	% American Indian / Alaskan Native	% Asian	% Black/ African American	% Hispanic/ Latino	% White	% Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	% Two or More Races	% Ethnicity Not Provided
Advanced Placement <sup>1</sup>	.7	13.2	3.1	11	65.9	.5	5.6	0
College in the High School <sup>1</sup>	.9	10.4	1.9	10.6	70.9	.3	5	0
International Baccalaureate <sup>1</sup>	.5	22.7	5.1	14.8	50.7	.6	5.7	0
Running Start <sup>1</sup>	.7	8.9	2.6	8.8	73.4	.3	5.3	0
Running Start for the Trades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tech Prep Eligible <sup>1</sup>	1.4	7	5.8	17.2	61.9	1	5.6	0
Technical College Direct Funded Enrollment Programs <sup>2</sup>	1.6	3.6	7.6	15.4	66.5	1.1	4.1	0
Cambridge Program <sup>1</sup>	.7	15.5	13.7	19.6	37.5	6	7	0
Career Link <sup>3</sup>	75% Students of Color							
Gateway to College <sup>4</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Data Sources: 1. Comprehensive Education and Data Research System (CEDARS). OSPI Student Information Office, October 17, 2013  
 2. OSPI Fiscal Service, September 2013  
 3. South Seattle Community College Career Link Program. Cutis Pederson, September 2013  
 4. Lake Washington Technical Academy and Highline Community College; Spokane Falls Community College, September 2013

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