

## **Guidance for Students and Parents**

### **What are the benefits of taking dual credit courses while still in high school?**

Dual credit courses offer high school students the opportunity to enroll in rigorous courses that further prepare them for postsecondary education. The Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program allows high school juniors and seniors to take courses, full-or part-time, at a postsecondary institution for high school and postsecondary credit. The PSEO program provides students with a greater variety of class offerings as well as the opportunity to pursue more challenging coursework than may be available at the high school. The tuition, fees and required textbooks are at no cost to students. Students may get a jump start on college by earning credits that may be applied toward their postsecondary education.

Concurrent enrollment courses (including “College in the Schools”) provide college-level courses, usually on the high school campus, rather than at the postsecondary institution. Students may earn both high school and college credit, just as they do with PSEO.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses are another route toward earning postsecondary credit while still in high school. A student participating in these two programs, however, does not generate a postsecondary grade and credit by taking the course. Postsecondary credit is generated by demonstrating proficiency on an AP or IB content-based examination given each spring. Proficiency scores may then be forwarded to a student’s chosen postsecondary institution.

### **Who is eligible for PSEO courses? What are the participation requirements?**

- Any public, nonpublic, home school or American Indian-controlled tribal contract or grant student classified as an 11th or 12th grader and accepted by a postsecondary institution may enroll either full or part-time in nonsectarian courses or programs at that postsecondary institution.
- Students participating in cultural exchange programs are not eligible.
- Nonpublic schools are not required to follow all sections of the PSEO law. Students and families attending nonpublic schools are encouraged to discuss the school’s PSEO policy with a counselor or programs advisor well in advance of participation in this program.
- New legislation passed in 2012 under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09, allows eligible 10th-grade students to enroll in one Career and Technical Education (CTE) course. In order to be eligible, a 10th-grade student must have taken the 8th-grade MCA reading test in the 8th-grade and have met the composite proficiency level of “meets or exceeds”. If the student meets this standard, they may be eligible to enroll in CTE courses, as identified by the Minnesota State College and University System (MNSCU) if they also meet the specific course requirements and pre-requisites of the CTE courses(s) they wish to enroll in. This option is open to Minnesota public school students. If the participating student then receives a grade of “C” or better in that course, the student is then eligible to take additional courses.
- Minnesota students who have open enrolled from the Minnesota school district where they reside into another Minnesota school district are eligible to participate in PSEO from the district into which they have open enrolled; students do not need to participate from their resident district.

- Higher education institutions determine admission standards to participate in specific PSEO programs and courses. School districts do not make this determination. The college also sets the number of classes a student can take.
- School districts cannot set course load requirements at the high school as a prerequisite for participating in PSEO. For example: a school district cannot require a student to take at least three courses at the high school in order to take a PSEO class.
- To assist districts in planning, students must notify their local districts of their intent to enroll by May 30th of each year of their intent to enroll in postsecondary courses during the following school year. A pupil is bound by notifying or not notifying the district by May 30. Districts may decide when or if to waive this requirement.

**Who is eligible for Concurrent Enrollment/ “College in the Schools” courses? What are the participation requirements?**

- Eleventh and twelfth grade pupils enrolled in a public or nonpublic school or an American Indian-controlled tribal contract or grant school eligible for aid under 124D.83.
- A ninth or tenth grade student enrolled in a district or an American Indian-controlled tribal contract or grant school eligible for aid under 124D.83 may enroll in concurrent enrollment/college in the schools classes under M.S. 124D.09, subd. 10 if there is a need for additional students to offer the class.
- Minnesota students who have open enrolled from the Minnesota school district where they reside into another Minnesota school district are eligible to participate in PSEO from the district into which they have open enrolled; students do not need to participate from their resident district.
- Many high schools are cooperating with colleges and universities to provide college courses at the high school. Students may wish to take these courses. Many Minnesota colleges accept credit transfers of these courses in the same manner they would accept credits from another college; some do not. Students should check that the college they plan to attend will apply these credits toward their chosen college degree.

**Eligibility: Residency Requirements**

- Minnesota resident students attending public and private schools (including home schools) are eligible to participate in PSEO. This includes Minnesota resident students who are:
  1. Attending a public school district out of state through a tuition arrangement between the out of state district and the Minnesota public school district.
  2. Attending a nonpublic school in another state.
- South Dakota students attending a Minnesota district under the Minnesota-South Dakota Tuition Reciprocity Agreement (only includes border districts) are eligible to participate in PSEO.
- Students **NOT** eligible include:
  1. Minnesota resident students attending a South Dakota district under the Minnesota-South Dakota Tuition Reciprocity Agreement

2. Students in cultural foreign exchange programs and students from another country attending a Minnesota school under other Visas such as F1 or Visitors Visa.
3. Minnesota students enrolling in an out-of-state district for which the parent pays the tuition.
4. Parent and child living abroad with a residence in Minnesota are not eligible for PSEO. Parent and student must be living in Minnesota.

### **Choosing to participate**

Students should start by planning early. The decision to participate is an important one. The student will be expected to be a responsible, self-starting independent learner. Students should seek out additional information and counseling at the high school and at the postsecondary institution to ensure that they are making the best choice for themselves and their educational future.

### **What are the student participation limits in these programs?**

- A pupil who first enrolls in grade 9 for secondary credit may participate for four academic years. If first enrollment is in grade 10, they may participate for three academic years; for first enrollment in grade 11, two academic years; and for first enrollment in grade 12, one academic year. An academic year is defined as a school year, with participation varying from one course to several courses. Example: a student that takes PSEO classes for one semester during their eleventh grade year has used up one academic year. The student has one year of eligibility left as a twelfth-grade year student. Limits on participation apply to all options available under the PSEO law. If a student participates in courses to agreements or a concurrent enrollment course for a school year, the student has used up one academic year of eligibility.
- Students who have not successfully completed their senior year in high school and continue to work toward their diploma are considered to be "13th" graders. These students are not eligible to participate in PSEO if they have participated in PSEO as an 11th grader or a 12th grader. (They have already used their two years of eligibility.)
- Students who have not successfully completed their senior year in high school and qualify for the Graduation Incentives Program and continue to work toward their diploma are eligible to participate in the PSEO program if they have not previously participated. They are eligible to participate until they meet their graduation requirements or up to one academic year.
- The 2012 legislature removed the language that allowed a student that graduates midyear before their peers to generate funding as if they were enrolled through the entire school year. Therefore, students that graduate midyear are no longer eligible to participate in PSEO for the remainder of the school year. They are eligible up to the point the diploma is issued.
- For purposes of determining PSEO eligibility, a full-time student must give up a class to become eligible. For example: 1) a student takes a full course load without any study halls, the student would have to give up a class in order to be eligible. (If a student has a study hall, they typically would give up the study hall to participate in PSEO.) The student could take PSEO during the day or evening. If in the evening, the student would still need to give up a class during the day. The state would still reimburse the higher education institution for the PSEO classes.

- However, if the student didn't give up any classes, the student could still take PSEO but the student would have to pay their own tuition. In this situation, the PSEO class would be eligible for postsecondary credit. The student can also request that the PSEO class be applied towards secondary school credit. A district must accept the credit (see Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09, subdivision 12).
- Once a pupil has graduated from high school, he/she may not participate in PSEO. A pupil who has completed course requirements but who has not graduated may participate (Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09, subdivision 8).

### **What are the Participation Requirements for Students in Special Education?**

- Students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are eligible to apply to participate in the PSEO program available to all pupils in Minnesota. Eligibility requirements for acceptance into the program are determined by the postsecondary institutions.
- Special education students who meet the eligibility requirements and have been accepted into a PSEO program are held to the same participation limitations as students without disabilities.
- Students with IEPs that do not meet the eligibility requirements, enroll in a course that doesn't qualify as PSEO, or have exceeded their participation limitations can participate in postsecondary course consistent with the student' IEP via a student contract placement. The school district can enter into a student contract placement with the postsecondary institution. This arrangement is not PSEO and the funding for the cost of the student contract is handled through special education. .
- The postsecondary institution must inform the pupil of support services available; if the student's IEP provides for general education support and accommodations, the postsecondary institution must provide them and the postsecondary institution and the district shall negotiate an agreement on the rate to be charged for these services.

### **Which postsecondary institutions are eligible?**

"Eligible institution" means a Minnesota public postsecondary institution, a private, nonprofit two-year trade and technical school granting associate degrees, an opportunities industrialization center accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, or a private, residential, two-year or four-year, liberal arts, degree-granting college or university located in Minnesota. A list of postsecondary institutions approved to offer PSEO may be found on MDE's website: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/CollReadi/PSEO/040787>

### **What courses are eligible? What about grading and credits?**

- PSEO courses must be non-sectarian, college-level courses; they may not be developmental or non-credit bearing remedial courses.
- The high school determines the amount of credit to be awarded. However, no more than 7 quarter credits or 4 semester credits can be required to equal one year of high school credit in each subject. The number of courses/credits a student may take are determined by the postsecondary institution.

- When selecting courses, students should be mindful of high school graduation standards and requirements, checking with appropriate school personnel as to whether a specific course will fulfill district requirements.
- The high school should allow students flexibility in choosing generally comparable courses to meet requirements.
- Students may take one or more courses up to a full-time course load as defined by the postsecondary institution.

Many high schools are cooperating with colleges and universities to provide college courses at the high school. Students may wish to take these courses. Many Minnesota colleges accept credit transfers of these courses in the same manner they would accept credits from another college; some do not. Students should check that the college they plan to attend will apply these credits toward their chosen college degree.

Credits received at a postsecondary institution are on the student's record and count as courses completed at that institution. Transferring credits to another institution is dependent upon the transfer rules of that institution.

### **Can PSEO students still participate in high school activities?**

Students participating in PSEO are high school students and should not be prohibited from participating in activities sponsored by the pupil's high school (Minnesota Statutes, section 124.09, subdivision 11). Students participating in PSEO are eligible to participate in their high school graduation ceremonies.

### **What about tuition and fees?**

- Higher education institutions are reimbursed by the state for PSEO courses offered at the postsecondary institution.
- For concurrent enrollment courses/ college in the school /courses to agreement, classes that may be offered at the high school or on campus are paid by the school district.
- PSEO students cannot be charged for either high school or postsecondary credit earned through the PSEO program.
- PSEO students cannot be charged for non-optional fees that are charged by the postsecondary institution for attending the school.
- District-provided transportation services are not available for students participating in PSEO.
- Students from families whose income levels are at or below the federal poverty guidelines may qualify for mileage reimbursement. Eligible public school districts apply for mileage reimbursement program through MDE as a school district, and eligible non-public and home schooled students apply for mileage reimbursement through their postsecondary institution to MDE.
- All textbooks and equipment provided to a pupil and paid for by PSEO is property of the participating postsecondary institution. Each pupil is required to return all textbooks and equipment to the postsecondary institution after the course has ended. Textbooks or

equipment not returned after a reasonable time period may be charged to the student at the used price under the assumption that the students chose to keep the book or equipment.

- PSEO funding from MDE does not reimburse for “test out” fees at the college level.
- Higher education institutions cannot charge a fee to a PSEO student for an initial admissions test. Dependent upon a higher education institution’s policy on retest, a student may be charged for retesting.
- Concurrent enrollment or courses to agreement are funded through an arrangement between a college or university and a participating school district.. The agreement outlines the high school reimbursement to the college or university to cover the costs associated with the students receiving college credit. The books under these arrangements are typically regulated through the agreement and are usually covered by the high school district as the school district receives full state funding for the student.

### **How do I apply?**

The application for student registration for the PSEO program is available on the Career and College Readiness page area on the Minnesota Department of Education Website at: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/CollReadi/PSEO/index.html>.

This application form needs to be completed by the student, signed off by the parent if the student is under age 18 and signed off by the secondary school or home school parent if the student is determined eligible to apply for participation in the PSEO program. Students do not mail this form to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Students take the form, after section one and two are completed, to the postsecondary college for completion of section three.