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4 Out of 5 High Schools Offer Dual Credit Courses

- By Dian Schaffhauser
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More American schools are allowing students to earn both high school and college credit by passing the same course. According to a [new survey](#) published by [The National Center for Education Statistics \(NCES\)](#), the number of public schools enrolling students in dual credit courses had reached 82 percent during the 2010-2011 school year. That's up from 71 percent during 2002-2003, the last time the survey had been done. Dual enrollment classes allow students to earn both high school and postsecondary credits simultaneously. In the latest survey, high schools reported the enrollment of two million students in dual credit classes.

About half (51 percent) of high schools reported that students took such courses with an academic focus, in subjects such as English, math, or science, among others. Of those, 45 percent reported that students paid all or some of the tuition, 46 percent reported that students paid fees, and 47 percent reported that

students paid for books. Schools or districts also paid a fair amount. Forty-three percent said they paid all or part of the tuition, 33 percent paid fees, and 44 percent paid for books.

A third of schools--34 percent--reported that students took dual credit courses with a career and technical or vocational focus--such as computer technology, automotive technology, or healthcare. For those schools, 28 percent reported that students paid full or partial tuition, 34 percent reported that students paid fees, and 31 percent reported that students paid for books. In this case, it was more common for the expenses to be covered by the school or district. Forty three percent said they covered at least some of the tuition, 34 percent covered fees, and 44 percent bought books.

The largest number of dual credit classes was taught at locations specifically for high school students; the count of high schools with that set-up was 51 percent for academic subjects and 34 percent for career and technical subjects. Classes were also taught on college or university campuses; 43 percent of high schools followed that structure for academic subjects and 21 percent reported the same for the vocational areas. However, four times as many high schools reported academic subjects being taught through distance education than career and vocational subjects, at 28 percent versus 7 percent.

"We are incredibly pleased to see such outstanding growth in dual enrollment courses," said Nikolai Vitti, superintendent of [Duval County Public Schools](#) in Florida. "These courses create a college-going culture in high schools that motivate students to begin thinking about college and careers. This culture builds students' self-esteem and helps them to realize that they are actually college-ready."

Calling the growth in concurrent enrollment "remarkable," Sandy González, associate for continuing education at [Schenectady County Community College](#) in New York and president of the [National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships \(NACEP\)](#), noted that, "Colleges and universities increasingly recognize the need to share resources and create a more continuous education system for students." The NACEP accredits the college courses offered by high schools in their dual-enrollment programs.

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