

Dual Enrollment in Georgia: Program Background and Student Participant Profile

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It is increasingly recognized that college-level education and some form of postsecondary credentials are important preparation for well-paying jobs and career advancement. Preparing high school students to gain access to, persist in, and successfully complete postsecondary credentials are preferred outcomes of credit-based transition programs such as dual enrollment. Georgia offers a dual enrollment program to high school students through Georgia's technical colleges designed to increase access to and success in postsecondary education, particularly for those students who might otherwise not consider postsecondary education an option after graduation, or who might be at risk of dropping out of high school prior to graduation.

University of Georgia (UGA) researchers Lynch, Harnish, Fletcher, Thornton, and Thompson (2007) conducted a statewide study of this dual enrollment program which detailed characteristics of the dual enrollment programs across Georgia, presented a profile of the students who participated between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2004, and provided preliminary indicators of the program's impact on postsecondary enrollment in technical colleges, other public colleges in Georgia, and the workforce.

Background on Dual Enrollment in Georgia

Lynch, et.al., (2007) examined dual enrollment (DE) programs in Georgia using a variety of methods including on-site visits to a sample of participating high schools and technical colleges, survey information from program administrators and teachers, and longitudinal data analysis of DE participation and postsecondary education (PSE) enrollment of DE students over four years. Highlights from the findings and conclusions from the study follow.

Dual Enrollment Opportunities

Each of the 34 technical colleges in Georgia and the four University of Georgia institutions with technical divisions offer some version of dual enrollment to high school students in their service areas. High school dual enrolled students are able to earn both secondary and postsecondary course credit in technical college

courses made available for dual enrollment in one of the six technical college non-core, technical program areas: agricultural/natural resources, business, computer information systems, health, industrial, and personal/public services.

Technical Colleges Enrolling Dual Enrolled Students

All 34 state technical colleges and three of four University System of Georgia (USG) institutions with technical divisions enrolled Georgia high school students in DE courses at some point between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2004, serving a total of 17,442 students (unduplicated count). The table below illustrates the numbers of students taking part in dual enrollment courses during the years of the study.

Year(s) of dual enrollment participation	N=17,442	
	#	%
2002 only	2,860	16.4
2003 only	3,419	19.6
2004 only	6,138	35.2
2002 & 2003	1,428	8.2
2002 & 2004	38	0.2
2003 & 2004	2,851	16.3
2002; 2003; & 2004	708	4.1

Program Funding

Dramatic growth in the number of Georgia technical colleges offering dual enrollment courses began in 1994 after the introduction of the Georgia Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally (HOPE) Scholarship program. This program made available HOPE Grant funds to pay student costs for enrolling in certificate or technical diploma programs of study at the technical colleges.

Administration and Operation of Dual Enrollment Programs

Findings revealed some similar policies and some variation in the administration and operation of DE programs across the state.

- ❖ High school students must meet the same admission requirements as technical college applicants to participate in dual enrollment

- ❖ Dual enrollment courses are taught at both high school and technical college campuses
- ❖ Most technical colleges' academic/credit instruction units administered dual enrollment programs except at one-fifth of the colleges where the economic development/training unit was responsible
- ❖ Decisions on which classes to offer were primarily based on one or more combinations of the following:
 - what high school educators indicated they would like to see offered
 - what high school students indicated they would be interested in taking
 - availability of instructors to teach the courses
 - offering courses that the high schools did not have the equipment or facilities to support
- ❖ Some, but not all, DE programs had a clearly articulated program of study between high school and technical colleges, particularly those in business, computer information systems, and health technologies

High School Dual Enrolled Students

Analyses of student datasets resulted in the following descriptive findings of the 17,442 dual enrolled students.

Dual Enrolled Student Demographics

Equal numbers of male and female students were served by DE programs in Georgia. Nearly three-fifths of participants were white and almost two-fifths were black which relative to the racial/ethnic breakdown of all students in Georgia illustrated that white students were overrepresented in the DE group by about 5%, black students were served by DE in proportion to the total student population, and other categories of minorities were slightly under-represented. One-third of participants were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (indicator of low socio-economic status) which was slightly higher than the overall student population is Georgia (31%). The table below depicts the percentages for all Georgia students and DE students.

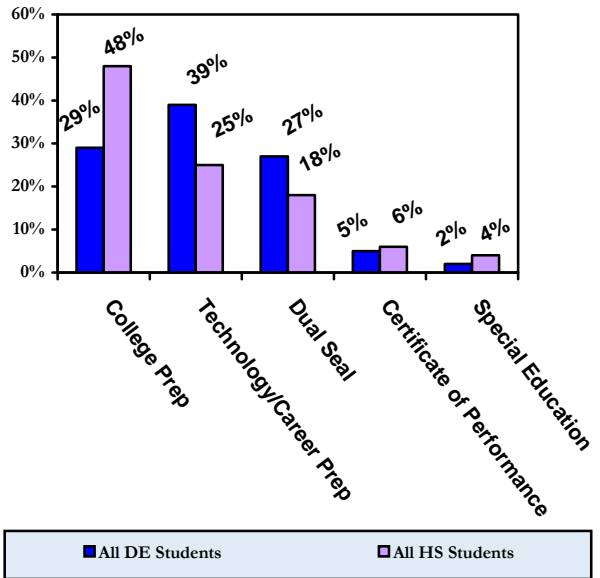
	All Georgia High School Students*	Dual Enrolled Students (N = 17,442)
Race/ Ethnicity		
White	54%	59%
Black	37%	37%
Hispanic	4%	2%
Asian	3%	2%
Other	1%	1%

	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch	
Eligible	31%	33%
Ineligible	69%	67%
Gender		
Male	50%	50%
Female	50%	50%

*Percentages averaged for all Georgia high school students from FY02-FY04, n=385,026

Eight percent of DE students had been retained in grade level (4-5% lower than the general student population), and approximately 8% participated in remedial education while in high school. Approximate percentages of dual enrolled high school students registered in each of the six program areas identified for state technical colleges were as follows: industrial (30%), business (29%), health (16%), computer information systems (16%), personal/public services (9%), and agriculture/natural resources (1%). One in four DE students earned one or more technical certificates of credit from a technical college prior to high school completion.

The chart below illustrates the types of diplomas high school DE students and the general student population earned during the term of the study. As shown, although DE students were more likely to have earned a technology/career prep diploma (39%), many earned a college prep diploma (29%) or a dual seal diploma—both technology/career prep and college prep (26%). A very small proportion earned a certificate of performance (5%) or special education diploma (~2%).



As part of the survey questionnaires, high school administrators and dual enrollment instructors were asked to indicate what they thought motivated students

to participate in dual enrollment courses from a specific list of choices. Results showed that these two stakeholder groups had different perceptions. High school administrators ranked the top three motivators in the following order:

- ❖ Have an opportunity to take a class that this high school does not offer
- ❖ Take a class that is relevant to their chosen career
- ❖ Have an opportunity to take a class of special interest

Dual enrollment instructors' responses showed that they believed the top three motivators were:

- ❖ Get a head start on college programs
- ❖ Increase the likelihood of finding employment after high school
- ❖ Increase the likelihood of getting a good/better, higher paying job

Student focus group responses suggested that students found all of these to be motivators.

Various descriptive data sources on the 17,442 high school students dual enrolled with a Georgia technical college during the years 2001-2004 led researchers to deduce that “dual enrollment attracted primarily, but not exclusively, high-achieving students who were career oriented; motivated through real-world, work-based courses; and who will probably pursue further education, most often targeted toward a specific career, industry, or profession” (Lynch, et. al., 2007, p. 4).

Preliminary Findings for Dual Enrolled Students Who Transitioned to Postsecondary Education

Student data included preliminary information on 9,358 former dual enrolled high school students (unduplicated count) who transitioned into Georgia public colleges or universities by December, 2005. A larger proportion of DE students transitioned to a USG college or university than attended a technical college, and a subset of 934 students (5%) attended both. The table below demonstrates the breakdown.

DE High School Students N= 17,442	DE Students Transitioning to a GA Technical College		DE Students Transitioning to USG Institutions	
Transitioning through December 2005	n	%	n	%
	4,732	27.1	5,560	31.9

Researchers concluded that dual enrollment in Georgia was increasing access to postsecondary education for participants. The transition rate for *all* Georgia high school graduates for the five years preceding the study was 45% and during the timeframe of the study rose to 47%. Yet, the transition rate to PSE for DE participants was 54% in the same time period meaning that about 7% more DE students matriculated to Georgia postsecondary public institutions than was true for all students.

Technical College Enrollees

All 34 technical colleges reported registering former dual enrolled students at some point during the initial study. Datasets revealed that for the 27% of students who enrolled in a technical college after high school graduation:

- ❖ 53% earned a technology/career preparatory high school diploma, nearly 20% earned a dual seal high school diploma, and 14% graduated with a college preparatory diploma
- ❖ DE students were more likely to have taken their first dual enrolled courses in 12th (65%) or 11th (26%) grade
- ❖ Over 75% dual enrolled for just one year while in high school
- ❖ About 35% were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch while in high school, compared to 31% in the general high school population at the time
- ❖ The greatest percentages of transitioning students were white (61%) and female (55%). Blacks were slightly underrepresented proportionately, and a smaller proportion of other minority students (Hispanics being most pronounced) transitioned than were represented in the overall high school population.
- ❖ Almost three-quarters of students enrolled in a technical college during the same year they graduated from high school (fall, winter, or spring term after HS graduation)
- ❖ Approximately 27% enrolled in a health technologies program, 25% in an industrial technologies program, 15% in personal/public service, 14% in business, 10% in computer information systems, and one percent in agriculture/natural resources; about 10% were not in an award program (Note: students may have enrolled in more than one program).

USG College or University Enrollees

All USG colleges and universities in the state had some post-high school graduation attendance from students who had dual enrolled. The following provides a description of the 32% of students who matriculated

into a USG college or university after high school graduation.

- ❖ 46% graduated from high school with a college preparatory diploma; 38% earned a dual seal diploma, and 15% graduated with a technology/career preparatory diploma
- ❖ Students were more likely to have taken their first dual enrolled courses in 12th (59%) or 11th (32%) grade
- ❖ 71% participated in DE for just one year while in high school.
- ❖ Transitioning students were more likely to be white (62%) and female (56%). Blacks were underrepresented proportionately, and Asian students were over-represented compared to other minorities and white students.
- ❖ About 24% were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch while in high school, compared to 31% in the general high school population at the time.
- ❖ Nearly four-fifths of students transitioning to a USG college or university did so during the same year they graduated from high school (fall, winter, or spring term after HS graduation)
- ❖ USG transitioning students declared majors primarily in four areas: liberal arts and sciences, general studies and humanities (28%), health professions and related clinical sciences (11%), business (7%), and biological and biomedical science (6%); however, more than 22% were undeclared.

Academic Success in Postsecondary Education

Dual enrolled students experienced academic success after transitioning to postsecondary institutions; 81% who enrolled in technical colleges and 77% of those in USG institutions earned a letter grade of A, B, or C on all college-level course work. Most transitioning DE students (75%) did not require remediation upon acceptance to a technical college or USG college or university, similar to students in the general population (74%). Transitioning students earned credentials in PSE programs. Through December 2005, 675 former dual enrolled students completed 761 credentialed programs from a technical college, the majority being short technical certificates of credit (TCC) and two-year diplomas, and 106 students completed programs at a USG college mostly earning certificates or associate degrees.

Differences Between Students Who Transitioned to Technical Colleges and USG Institutions

Primary differences noted between students who transitioned to technical colleges or USG colleges or universities were in the type of high school diploma earned and numbers of students eligible for free and

reduced-price lunch. DE students who transitioned to a technical college were more likely to earn a technology/career preparatory high school diploma (53%) than USG enrollees (15%). Likewise, 46% of students who transitioned to USG institutions earned a college preparatory high school diploma compared to 14% of students entering technical colleges. A greater proportion of students entering USG colleges or universities earned a dual seal diploma (38%) than did those matriculating to a technical college (20%). About 35% of students who transitioned to a technical college were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch while in high school; fewer students eligible for free or reduced price lunch transitioned to a USG institution (24%).

In Conclusion

The findings from the Georgia dual enrollment study led UGA researchers to conclude the following:

- ❖ Dual enrollment increased access to college for more high school students
 - Especially to technical colleges
 - Especially for those who earned a high school career and technical diploma
 - For those students from low-income groups who attended two-year and technical colleges
 - For work-oriented students
- ❖ Dual enrollment students demonstrated success with college studies as illustrated by:
 - The grades they earned
 - Earned credentials (TCC, diplomas, and degrees)

Researchers also surmised that numbers of students attending postsecondary institutions would continue to increase as more of the dual enrolled students who had yet to graduate at the time of the study completed high school.

This brief has been prepared by the Education Policy and Evaluation Center in the College of Education at the University of Georgia. Principal Investigator on the Dual Enrollment project was Dr. Richard Lynch, co-Director of the Occupational Research Group. The content of this brief has been extracted from: Lynch, R. L., Harnish, D., Fletcher, G., Thornton, G., & Thompson, J. (September 2006, modified 2007). Dual enrollment in high schools and technical colleges of Georgia: Final report. Occupational Research Group, UGA. The report is available at: http://www.coe.uga.edu/ORG/research/dual_enrollmen t.html