

Montana University System Dual Enrollment Update

Program Growth and Impact

Dual enrollment continues to grow across the state of Montana. For 2014-15 the program had a total of 4,074 enrollments (Figure 1). Dual enrolled students completed more than 14,000 credits either at our college campuses, online, or at their high school. The geographic reach extends across the state, with students from 107 public and private high schools participating (Figure 2). About 62% of the credits earned by dual enrollment students this year were delivered at a high school by college faculty or a qualified high school instructor. High school-based dual enrollment is a pragmatic approach that works in our large and rural state; it brings the rigor of the college classroom to high school students regardless of how close they are to a college. Of the more than 350 sections of dual enrollment taught on-site at Montana high schools, 75% were in general education content areas. The remaining 25% were in Career Technical Education (CTE) areas. CTE dual enrollment is expanding in the state, and several colleges added new options with partner high schools in welding, health sciences, construction, and computing. These courses offer tremendous opportunities for students to participate in career exploration, experience college rigor, and explore connections with high demand careers available through the state's two-year college system.

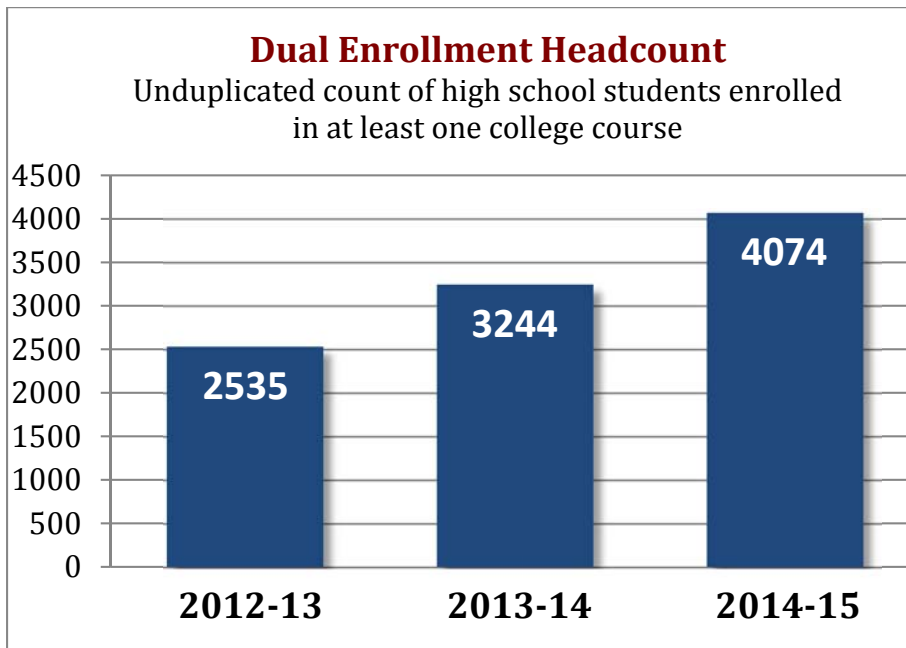


Figure 1 Annual student headcount in dual enrollment by academic year. Prepared by Deputy Commissioner Tyler Trevor.

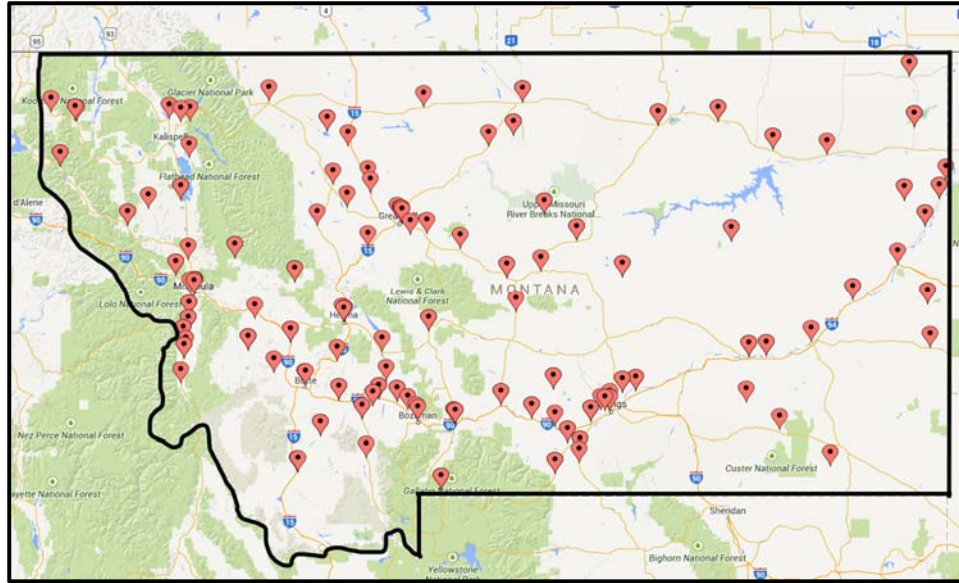


Figure 2: Geographic extent of dual enrollment participation in Montana 2014-15 academic year. Each marker indicates at least one dual enrolled student participant through a public school district or private high school. Includes online, college-based, and high school based dual enrollment. Home school students are not included in the plot. Based on data from Deputy Commissioner Trevor, plot prepared by A. Williams.

The 14,000+ credits taken this year represent thousands of students across our state that have a solid start on a postsecondary degree at a substantial cost savings. This year Montana students and families saved nearly 3 million in tuition by participating in dual enrollment, but the benefits of this program extend far beyond the financial realm. Dual enrollment directly benefits our colleges and universities because they receive better-prepared students who are more knowledgeable of our programs and the demands of college. Preparedness, persistence, and attainment are a boon to the MUS as well as to our students. Dual enrollment students are more likely to matriculate to our colleges than those with no experience with a campus. In MUS campuses tracking capture rates, we find they are on trend with other large dual enrollment programs across the country ~ 30-40%. It is evident that these students become familiar with the campuses with which they are dually enrolled and the quality programs they offer, many will follow their credit. Furthermore, these students are better prepared when they come to college. Recent data compiled by Deputy Commissioner Tyler Trevor supports this for students who enter the Montana University System (Figure 3). In comparison to their non-participating peers, dual enrollment students have a 16% higher rate of first year retention, take and complete more credits in their first year, and are better academically prepared, as reflected by higher first year GPA's. All this indicates that Montana dual enrollment students are more likely to complete their degrees and in a timely manner, something several large, robust national studies have shown¹.

¹ *i.e. Adelman, 2006; Allen et. al., 2008; An, 2013; Karp et. al., 2007; Morrison, 2008; Swanson, 2008; Wang et. al., 2015*

Dual Enrollment Success Measures

Entering Students that Earned Dual Enrollment Credit in Montana vs. All Other Entering
Fall 2013 Entering Cohort

	RETENTION	GPA	CREDITS EARNED	CREDITS EARNED
	Fall to Fall	After 1 year	After 1 year total credits including transfer credits	After 1 year credits earned in 1st year of college
DE Students (students entering with dual enrollment credit earned in MT)	84%	3.1	35.5	28.6
All Other Entering Students	68%	2.8	28.9	24.2

Figure 3 Dual enrollment student performance in areas associated with student success and degree attainment vs. non-dual enrollment peers. (N=504) (Data from Dep. Commissioner T. Trevor and excerpted from CCM U-System Accountability Report, January 2015)

Dual Credit Incentive Program: Year One



In its first year, the Dual Credit Incentive Program issued more than 300 Credit-for-Credit coupons (C4C's) to more than 190 instructors for a total of 1093 credits. The program rolled out with no appreciable logistical snags in either issuing or redeeming the C4C's thanks to the hard work of a dedicated operations team of OCHE/GSL staff including: Sheila Newlun, Mike Mazanec, Robin Graham, Ron Muffick, Amber Dullum, Deputy Commissioner Tyler Trevor, and Amy Williams; as well as great coordination with campuses across the state. Instructors have started to redeem C4C's either themselves or by assigning them to students, children, friends, or colleagues and there is a lot of buzz about the program in general.

Very few educators across the state are currently operating under the new temporary waiver option; however, based on campus reporting, this number will increase in the coming year. Recognizing this, we want to ensure that the Montana University System is the first and best source for education options for our teachers. Three campuses have added or augmented existing programs to meet areas identified as high need. This summer new or augmented courses in educator-friendly schedules and formats will be offered through MSU Billings, MSU Bozeman, UM, and Montana Tech. These courses are in content areas identified as high need and in formats most requested by educators; online, summer face-to-face, and online-face-to-face hybrid. An area of particular effort over the past year is the expanding need for training teachers to deliver courses in computer coding and programming. These courses are of tremendous interest to our high school students, and many teachers welcome additional training to skill-build for the added confidence in delivering the content to in the classroom. Our universities are answering demand. MSU Bozeman has added to their existing summer graduate course for teachers in computational

thinking and UM will be offering a computing course in the fall online for teachers. Additionally, several campuses have collaborated on a National Science Foundation grant application to create a set of computer science offerings targeted at teachers and featuring computing's emerging trends and topics. We are seeing solid system-level progress in meeting the needs of our educators and supporting their efforts to advance as professionals and engage in dual enrollment.

Outreach and Communication

Outreach continues to be an area of focus as communicating the value and impact of the dual enrollment and explaining its logistics is an important part of increasing utilization. Working in coordination with Montana Digital Professional Learning Network's, Curtis Biggs, OCHE launched a three-month targeted outreach effort called the *Wednesday Dual Credit 411*. This was a series of brief, topic-based webinars hosted by Mr. Biggs and Mrs. Amy Williams every Wednesday at 4:11pm. Topics and guests varied weekly but the format was consistent: a ten-minute informative presentation followed by a live question and answer session. Over 200 secondary and postsecondary education attendees from across the state joined the Dual Credit 411. Although targeted primarily at secondary stakeholders, there was strong attendance and participation by postsecondary education, creating an excellent, collaborative dynamic. The wide variety of presenters created multifaceted insight and depth of knowledge, valuable to participants regardless of their initial experience with the subject matter.

The overwhelmingly positive feedback about the Dual Credit 411 highlights the functionality of this format for use in our state. This type of format could prove highly useful to continue outreach efforts across the state.

The 411 Blasts were very informative and great way to directly interact and ask questions about the program. There had been some misinformation about it previously that was corrected by the facilitators. The interactive approach via distance was a great way to get information for busy folks. I also appreciated the time, because it fit around meetings that typically take place right after school and after things kind of calm down after the day.

Tim Tharp, Ed.D.
Superintendent/HS Principal/AD Sunburst Public Schools

Opportunities to attend and receive information for such a great statewide initiative come along so rarely. Fortunately for those in the state of Montana wanting to know more about the ability and opportunity to offer college courses to high school students, Amy Williams and Curtis Biggs put together a great system for delivering information on the high school dual credit system through the Dual Credit 411 every Wednesday at 4:11 p.m. ... The 10 minutes of prepared information and, at most, 15 minutes of Q&A in each session adequately addressed the weekly topic, and whet your appetite for the following session. Whether it was the deputy commissioner or lieutenant governor, all presenters appeared and sounded prepared to deliver content relevant to the establishment of a prosperous dual credit system for high schools in the state of Montana. ... All in all, the Digital 411 Dual Credit Blast was a fantastic professional development on an awesome opportunity for our students.

Alan Pule
GEAR UP Liaison-St. Ignatius School District No. 28

Strategies to Grow Dual Enrollment Opportunities

1. Continue efforts to grow high school based dual enrollment by continuing the heightened communication with administrators and teachers about the Dual Credit Incentive Program across the state.
2. Work with the campuses to create guidelines for consistency in dual enrollment web presence (Dual Enrollment Taskforce).
3. Increase Career and Technical Education (CTE) dual enrollment opportunities across the board with Big Sky Pathways.
4. Work with OPI to increase secondary school awareness of the benefits of student participation in dual enrollment and opportunities to create or grow a program in the high school.