



Dual Credit Programs/Subsidized Fees

1. **Purpose:**

Funding is intended to support the administration of programs and grants which increase equitable access to dual credit programs. This includes awarding grants to districts adopting strategies to promote equitable and sustainable dual credit programs and/or demonstrating a need to support student access and completion by reducing out-of-pocket costs and/or expanding program offerings. Included in these strategies are efforts to subsidize test fees for Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International (CI), and International Baccalaureate (IB) dual credit exams and reduce or eliminate College in the High School (CHS) course fees for students who qualify as low-income

2. **Description of services provided:**

Funds were directed to schools and districts in the following ways:

- Grants for dual credit programs:
 - Consolidated Equity and Sustainability (CES) Grant, including the College in the High School subsidy program described in RCW 28A.600.290.
 - CI/IB Test Fee Waiver Program.
- College Board direct-billing agreement for AP exam fee waivers for low-income students.
- Contract with Always Be Learning (ABL) to provide statewide support to local education agencies (LEAs) for analyzing and developing master schedules that promote academic acceleration and college and career readiness through an equity and inclusion lens.

With \$3.25M available to LEAs through the CES Grant, almost all recipients were awarded College in the High School subsidy funding, and 57% received funding for both College in the High School subsidies and other activities intended to increase equity in and sustainability of dual credit programs. These activities included contracting with Always Be Learning and Equal Opportunity Schools to improve master scheduling practices and evaluate programs; investing in professional development to ensure teachers were adequately prepared and/or certified to teach dual credit courses; further subsidizing dual credit costs (Running Start costs, exam fees, textbooks, supplies, etc.); engaging in outreach and marketing to students and families from groups underrepresented in dual credit; partnering with institutes of

higher education (IHEs) on articulation agreements and curriculum development; and purchasing industry-standard equipment for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Credit programs.

In addition to local activities, OSPI staffing costs funded under this proviso focused on the following:

- Statewide policy and program coordination among K12 and postsecondary partners.
- Dual credit technical assistance and grant management services to schools and districts.
- Provision of academic guidance and support about dual credit opportunities related to the High School and Beyond Plan
- Professional training provided to school counselors and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Directors and teachers.
- Data collection and analysis required for local and statewide reporting and program improvement purposes.

3. Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:

Consolidated Equity and Sustainability (CES) Grant: The CES grant merged two existing programs – College in the High School (CHS) subsidies and the Equitable, Sustainable Dual Credit grant – to continue access to subsidies while promoting other methods of increasing equity and sustainability in dual credit programs. As a competitive grant, applications were evaluated by a review committee on both narrative response quality and the need demonstrated by the applicant. CHS subsidy requests and Equity and Sustainability activities were generally considered independently, except when requested together. For the former, priority was given to LEAs meeting eligibility requirements set in statute (RCW 28A.600.290) – small and/or rural schools with CHS programs and students residing 20 or more miles from a Running Start college. Additional considerations for both CHS subsidies and Equity and Sustainability activities included the LEA's proportion of free and reduced-price (FRPL)-eligible students, past subsidy/grant utilization, submission of required annual reports, and average application score.

AP Test Fee Waiver Program: Through a direct billing agreement with the College Board, AP exam costs for low-income students were reduced by the College Board and subsidized by state funding managed by OSPI. Costs for students identified as low-income on AP orders placed with the College Board were paid directly by OSPI.

CI/IB Test Fee Waiver Program: Districts partnering with Cambridge International (CI) and International Baccalaureate (IB) applied for test fee waiver funding through iGrants, submitting final exam counts and costs for reimbursement at the end of the spring term. Students receiving test fee waivers must be enrolled in CI or IB courses

and be classified as low-income by demonstrating eligibility for free or reduced-price lunches or through other accepted additional methods.

Beneficiaries in 2021-22 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	102 (CES Grant/CHS Subsidy Recipients)
Number of Schools:	290 (Test Fee Waiver Recipients)
Number of Students:	N/A
Number of Educators:	N/A
Other:	Test Fee Waivers Used - 12,588 (reflects exams, not students)

Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 2.83

Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 1

FY22 Funding:	State Appropriation:	\$4,894,000
	Federal Appropriation:	\$0
	Other Fund Sources:	\$0
	TOTAL (FY22)	\$4,894,000

4. Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?

No

5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2022	\$4,894,000	\$4,894,000
2021	\$4,894,000	\$4,894,000
2020	\$4,894,000	\$4,894,000
2019	\$4,894,000	\$4,893,999
2018	\$4,894,000	\$4,236,705

6. Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:

Program	Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
CHS Subsidies	2021	127 Schools/Districts
	2022	75 Schools/Districts
Equity and Sustainability Grants	2021	10 Schools/Districts
	2022	27 Schools/Districts
Test Fee Waivers	2021	297 Schools; 12,957 Exams (not Students)

	2022	290 Schools; 12,588 Exams (not Students)
--	------	--

7. Programmatic changes since inception (if any):

CHS subsidy funding was merged with the Equitable and Sustainable Dual Credit Grant in the form of the Consolidated Equity and Sustainability Grant. This was done to promote equity and accessibility in dual credit programs, encourage broader participation, and reduce underspending by increasing flexibility in the utilization of grant funding. With the expansion of CHS eligibility to the 9th and 10th grades, CHS subsidies were also made available to these students and credit limitations were lifted. The CES grant was competitive and allowed LEAs to request funding for CHS subsidies and/or additional equity and sustainability activities. Applications were reviewed by a committee, scored on narrative responses to seven questions, supplemented by demographic and enrollment data, and evaluated for quality and demonstrated need. Award recommendations were compared to prior years' expenditures and adjusted to reflect the applicants' grant utilization more accurately.

8. Evaluations of program/major findings:

Demand for AP, CI, and IB test fee waivers increased, likely due to COVID recovery. The \$246,273 awarded for CI/IB exam fees exceeded the budgeted amount by almost \$50,000 and the College Board reported a 13% increase in AP exam fees statewide. The test fee waiver program is effectively used and the \$0 co-payment for students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch has helped eliminate barriers to students attaining dual credit; however, even with almost \$1M allocated to the program, the growing demand will soon exceed the funding available.

With respect to the grant funds expended via College in the High School subsidies and the Consolidated Equity and Sustainability Grant, many LEAs were appreciative of the opportunity to utilize one application for multiple activities and took advantage of the flexibility it afforded them. While many innovative projects and initiatives were proposed in the application process, however, the amount available for them was limited due to need to prioritize CHS subsidies. The merger also seemed to exacerbate the existing challenge of how to equitably distribute CHS subsidies, especially when grant applications rely heavily on CHS enrollment projections. There continues to be an inadequate amount of funding to meet the actual demand as reflected in districts' estimates, and the per-credit cost of CHS classes increases annually with inflation. In August 2022, for instance, CES Grant applications amounted to over \$7M with just over \$3M in available funding. In short, the process of subsidizing the CHS program is inefficient and restricts LEAs' ability to leverage funding for meaningful dual credit program improvement elsewhere.

9. Major challenges faced by the program:

The \$4.89M dual credit proviso is generous; however, almost two-thirds of it is used to subsidize low-income student costs through test fee waivers and CHS subsidies alone. As evidenced by College Board-reported increases in AP exam-taking, the 23% spike in CI/IB test fee waiver requests, rising CHS and RS fees, and the \$7M in applications for FY23 CES Grant funding, the amount available is insufficient to meet the needs of all low-income students and the LEAs that serve them, and it certainly doesn't stretch far enough to reduce costs for students who are not classified as low-income. It is important to note, too, that Running Start costs (transportation, textbooks, and supplies) and fees – which can exceed 10% of college tuition costs – remain a barrier for students that cannot be addressed with the funding available.

This reliance on subsidization not only limits the funding available for other program improvement and expansion activities, but also impacts staff capacity at both the state and local level. The process of disbursing proviso funding through grants is administratively burdensome. It requires multiple levels of grant development, maintenance, review, marketing, training, and administrative support at OSPI and grant-writing, enrollment projection and tracking, reporting, and outreach at LEAs. While funding is often prioritized for small, under-resourced schools, those are the very schools least likely to apply for it due to staff size or limitations. Ultimately, students suffer when access to funding is dependent upon the LEA's capacity to apply for it.

10. **Future opportunities:**

Through the Consolidated Equity and Sustainability Grant, OSPI provided LEAs with increased flexibility and encouraged them to consider new and innovative approaches to eliminating equity gaps, expanding dual credit, and making their programs more effective and sustainable. Many partnered with Always Be Learning (AbL) and Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) to engage in equity-centered assessment activities and master scheduling revisions to improve the efficacy and availability of dual credit programs. The CES Grant will continue to emphasize equity, use of data, outcome assessment, strategic planning, outreach, partnership, and fiscal responsibility in its materials, allowable activities, and application. OSPI will continue to refine this and other grants, while providing technical assistance and professional development to spur innovation, collaboration, data-informed decision-making, sustainable systemic change and equity-focused program improvement.

To that end, the agency itself has utilized proviso funding to partner with Always Be Learning to support and supplement its contracted work with various districts. Funding also supports personnel committed to expanding dual credit through oversight of school counseling programs, data analysis and reporting, professional development, technical assistance, and cross-agency and LEA collaboration and planning. In partnership with SBCTC, ICW, WSAC and the Council of Presidents, OSPI

has offered monthly dual credit workshops and the agency will also be working to build upon two years' of CTE Dual Credit research undertaken with SBCTC and RTI International through the Perkins-funded CTE Dual Credit Special Project. With ERDC, OSPI is working to improve dual credit data collection and reporting and will continue to make recommendations to further our understanding of enrollment and participation trends, dual credit application, and equity gaps.

11. Statutory and/or budget language:

ESSB 5693, Sec. 522(1) - \$4,894,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 and \$4,894,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 are provided for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to administer programs and grants which increase equitable access to dual credit programs, including subsidizing or eliminating student costs for dual credit courses or exams. By November 2022, the office shall submit a report to relevant committees of the legislature describing options for entering into statewide agreements with dual credit exam companies that will reduce the overall costs for all students and eliminate costs for students who are low income.

12. Other relevant information:

N/A

13. Schools/districts receiving assistance:

See [OSPI's grantee list](#).

14. Program Contact Information:

Name:	Tim McClain
Title:	Dual Credit Program Supervisor
Phone:	201-341-2955
Email:	Tim.McClain@k12.wa.us