

Study summary

Earning College Credits in High School: Options, participation, and outcomes for Oregon students

Ashley Pierson, Michelle Hodara, & Jonathan Luke

Study available to download at: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/REL_2017216.pdf

Please contact Dr. Pierson with any questions at: Ashley.Pierson@educationnorthwest.org

The study focuses on accelerated college credit options offered through Oregon community colleges. These include dual credit (in which high school students earn both high school and college credit by taking a college course at their high school) and dual enrollment (in which high school students earn both high school and college credit by taking a college course at the college campus or online). This study examines the characteristics of students who enroll in these classes, equity gaps in enrollment, and the relationship between students' participation in dual credit and later education outcomes, including high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary persistence.

Participation and outcomes findings:

- Twenty-nine percent of Oregon students expected to graduate in the 2012-13 school year took dual credit courses through a community college during high school.
- Dual credit students typically enroll and earn credit in three dual credit courses and more than 90 percent of students pass the community college dual credit courses in which they enroll.
- The rates at which students who participate in dual credit programs graduate from high school, enroll in college, and persist in the first year of college are higher than the state average.

Equity gap findings:

- Community college dual credit students are more likely to be White, female, high achievers, and not eligible for the federal school lunch program.
- Male students in all racial/ethnic groups participate in community college dual credit at lower rates than female students, and in each racial/ethnic group the gender gap in participation is similar (see figure 4 in report and on reverse).
- Students eligible for the federal school lunch program in all racial/ethnic groups participate in community college dual credit at lower rates than students who are not eligible, but in each racial/ethnic group the gap in participation between eligible and non-eligible students varies (see figure 5 in report and on reverse).
- Among high-achieving high school students, participation in dual credit courses varies by race/ethnicity (see figure 6 in report and on reverse).

Implications:

Oregon stakeholders can better understand:

- The characteristics of accelerated college credit options in the state
- Dual credit programs' equity gaps, which can inform outreach efforts to students participating at lower rates, such as rural, economically disadvantaged, and racial/ethnic minority students)
- Data that should be reported to the state to conduct analyses that improve monitoring and evaluation of accelerated college credit programs

Nationally, this study offers an example to other states of potentially useful analyses to inform improvements to these types of programs and ways to explore equity gaps in education.

Figure 4. In all racial/ethnic groups male high school students in Oregon participated in dual credit at lower rates than female students, 2005/06–2012/13

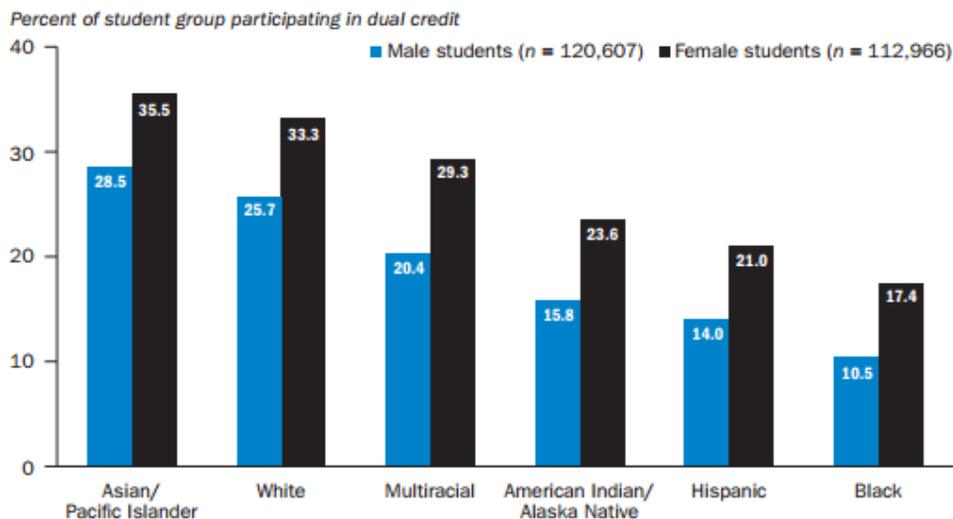


Figure 5. In all racial/ethnic groups high school students in Oregon who were eligible for the federal school lunch program participated in dual credit courses at lower rates than students who were not eligible, 2005/06–2012/13

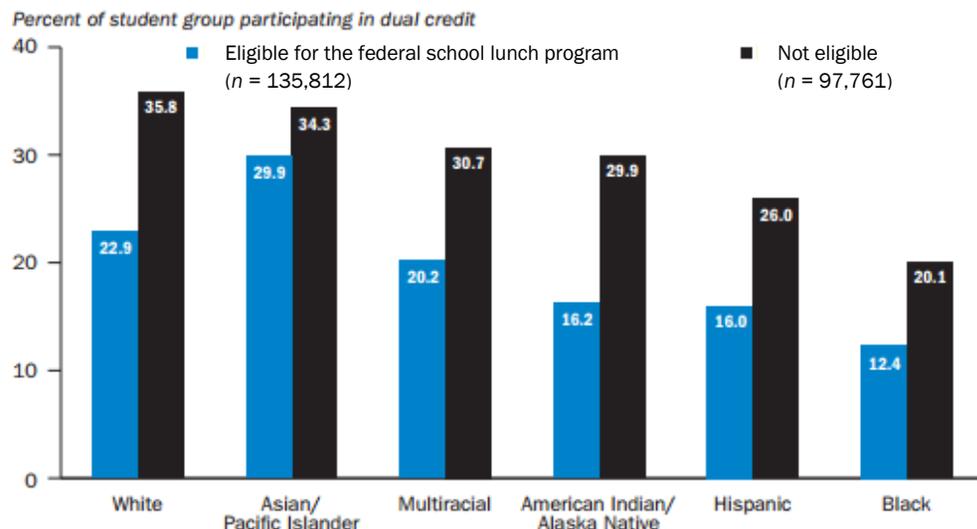
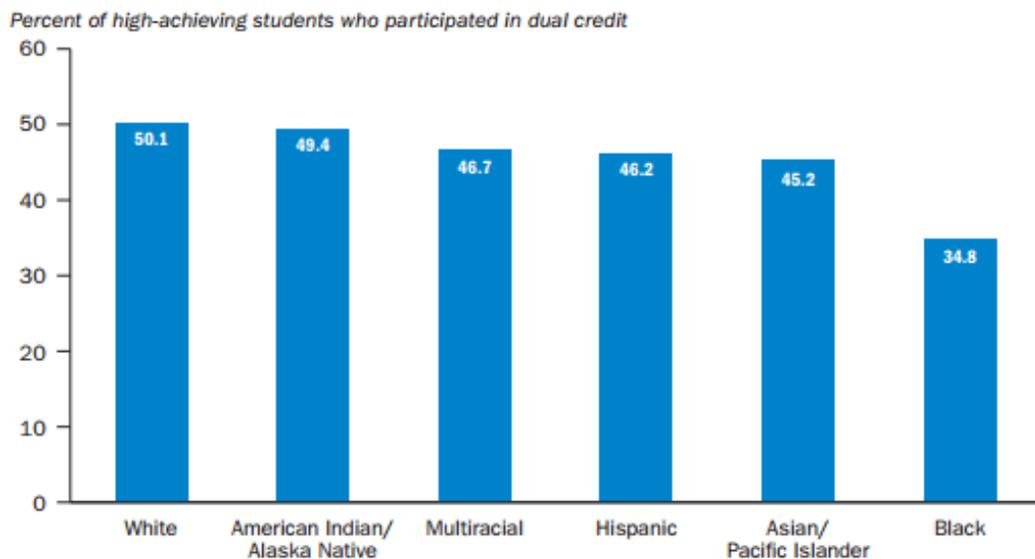


Figure 6. Among high-achieving high school students in Oregon, participation in dual credit courses varied by race/ethnicity, with the largest gap being between White and Black students, 2005/06–2012/13



Note: n = 33,038. High-achieving students are those who scored in the top 25 percent of students in both math and reading on the high school Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. Students who did not participate in dual credit might have participated in other accelerated college credit options for which data were not available.

Source: Authors' analysis based on data from the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development; see appendix B.

Figures from:

Pierson, A., Hodara, M., & Luke, J. (2017). *Earning college credits in high school: Options, participation, and outcomes for Oregon students* (REL 2017–216). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>