



News Release

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High School Dual Credit Popular Option for Students

ABERDEEN, S.D. – The state’s initiative to financially support college-level dual credit courses taken by high school juniors and seniors is resulting in students with more college credit hours completed and higher GPAs, while also generating significant cost savings for those students and their families.

Research by South Dakota Board of Regents’ staff was undertaken to evaluate the academic and financial impacts of the program on high school students. The analysis looked at 557 degree-seeking students who had earned high school dual credit in the 2015 academic year, paying \$40 per credit hour for those courses.

The study found that those students, once they were enrolled in one of the state’s six public universities, completed more credit hours (28.4 vs. 25.5) and had significantly higher grade point averages (3.22 vs. 2.75) after the first year of college than students who did not complete any dual credit coursework.

“Financial benefits to students and families from the dual credit program are significant,” said Paul Turman, the regents’ vice president for academic affairs, who authored the study. Turman reported that students taking only one three-credit course in the dual credit program saved \$411 toward their total educational costs. In the study, 22 students were found to have enrolled in at least five courses each, which produced a savings of \$2,054 in higher education costs.

“The ability to complete a sizable portion, if not all, of the required 30 credit hours of general education has the potential to reduce the time to degree by up to a year, resulting in more than \$20,000 in savings for students/families through this program,” the study reported.

Turman also looked at whether completing dual credit courses in math would adversely impact a student’s performance in subsequent college math courses. Data show that dual credit students performed slightly better in those subsequent math courses than the general student population at a 69.3 percent pass rate compared to a 68.4 percent pass rate.