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September 27, 2010

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Legislative Education Study Committee  
**FR:** Ally Hudson  
**RE: STAFF REPORT: DUAL CREDIT PROGRAM REPORT**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Dual credit programs allow high school students to take courses offered through a postsecondary educational institution and earn credit at the high school level and the college level simultaneously. As mentioned in previous reports to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC), dual credit is frequently said to fulfill a number of purposes and produce a number of benefits, among them:

- providing high school students an introduction to college life;
- affording high school students access to college-level material;
- shortening the time – and thereby the expense – required to complete a postsecondary degree;
- suggesting college as a possibility for students who had not previously considered it;
- enhancing the academic and vocational offerings of the school district; and
- leading to better completion rates for students in both high school and college.

The dual credit program in New Mexico seems to be fulfilling such purposes and producing such benefits. From an estimated figure of 10,000 during school year 2008-2009, actual enrollment during school year 2009-2010 grew to almost 11,000 with nearly 20 percent of

those students taking two or more classes. In addition, respondents to an LESC questionnaire (described below) indicate the extent of support for the program across all school levels:

- “The dual credit program is a must for today’s student. If New Mexico wants to continue to focus on preparing students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we owe it to our students to continue educational options such as dual credit. LCPS data indicates that students participating in dual credit experience improved academic performance in all of their courses.” – Las Cruces Public Schools
- “[It is a] tremendous opportunity for our students. Those who are ready to move on and achieve are not held back. Dual credit provides a safe transitional experience from high school to college and improves student confidence.” – Cesar Chavez Charter School
- “Our school is 100% free/reduced lunch. 98% of our students would be the first in their family to attend college. Thanks to this program, our students can get their feet wet in a college class while they still have us to support them with both academic and attendance issues.” – Los Puentes Charter School
- “The experience at NMHU has been that the Dual Credit Program allows for equal access to post secondary education for all students. It also provides an opportunity for students to challenge themselves by taking rigorous academic courses while in high school. The program has provided the insight for students to get a realistic sense of the skills and commitment necessary to succeed at the university level.” – New Mexico Highlands University

During the 2009 interim, the committee heard a staff presentation about the implementation of the dual credit program in school year 2008-2009. Among its topics, the 2009 report focused on the need for reliable data, the need for uniformity in program features and requirements, and the status of the appropriation for textbooks and course supplies.

Addressed in this report are the following topics, some of them updates to points noted in 2009 and others developments in 2010:

- progress in data collection;
- the need for uniformity in program features and requirements;
- reimbursements for dual credit textbooks and course supplies;
- the implementation of HB 90, *Native American Schools Dual Credit Program*;
- the amendments to agency rules;
- electronic uniform master agreements;
- acceptable course structures;
- other issues raised by respondents to the LESC questionnaire;
- policy options; and
- background.

Finally, to address these topics this report relies in part upon data provided by the Higher Education Department (HED), included as an attachment (*New Mexico Dual Credit Program for Academic Year 09-10*). The report also employs information gleaned from the responses to

a brief questionnaire about the implementation of the dual credit program that LESC staff sent to each of the 24 public institutions of higher education in New Mexico offering classes for dual credit (11 of 24 respondents or 46 percent), the superintendents of the state-supported schools (one of three respondents or 33 percent), and a sample of traditional high schools (21 of 28 respondents or 78 percent) and charter high schools (five of 11 respondents or 45 percent). This questionnaire is not presented as a scientific survey, but rather as an indication of the sorts of experiences with the dual credit program occurring at the school level throughout New Mexico. For that reason, the report does not contain a statistical analysis of the responses, but rather employs data and remarks from those responses as illustrations of points raised in the report.

## **PROGRESS IN DATA COLLECTION**

The Public Education Department (PED) dual credit rule specifies that PED and HED “shall verify and reconcile the respective dual credit reports at the end of each academic year” and “shall annually report to the legislature the estimated cost of providing the statewide dual credit program, including tuition, fees, textbooks, and course supplies.” As this report will illustrate, PED and HED continue to collect, compile, and disseminate data that answer not only basic questions about the dual credit program but also more detailed questions related to student demographics, student academic success, and secondary and postsecondary participation levels.

In addition, the two departments’ data sets are more closely aligned. Whereas in 2009 there was a discrepancy of approximately 50 percent between PED and HED data on the basic point of the number of students enrolled in dual credit classes, the discrepancy in 2010 is only 10 percent. One explanation for the improvement in data collection, HED and PED suggest, is familiarity with reporting requirements. That is, as districts and institutions become more comfortable with the data systems and information being requested, the reliability of the data improves.

The Attachment illustrates still more progress. Presently, HED can report not only the number of students but also their gender, ethnicity, high school grade level, number of classes taken, frequency of subjects taken, and grades earned (by gender and ethnicity).<sup>1</sup> At the institutional level, HED data reveal numbers and percentages of dual credit enrollment, methods of course delivery and locations of courses, average GPA per course location, and average GPA per course location and institution.

In addition, HED has used data from school year 2008-2009 to show graduation rates and student success at the postsecondary level. For example, in school year 2008-2009 there were 4,524 seniors participating in the dual credit program, of which 4,117 (or 91 percent) graduated in the same academic year and 3,031 (or 67 percent) attended postsecondary institutions in fall 2009. According to HED, the percentage of students directly attending a postsecondary institution “is higher than our regular high school to college going rate within the state which is usually in the 50 percent range.” Additionally, HED reports that 389 (or 8.6 percent) of these students entered college with enough credit hours to be classified as sophomores or higher, and 4,434 (or 98 percent) are seeking degrees.

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<sup>1</sup> Slide 5 of the Attachment outlines all of the types of dual credit data that are collected.

HED data from school year 2008-2009 also indicate that students who participated in the dual credit program “are attending both two and four year institutions at an equal ratio.” Furthermore, the majority of these students are full-time, with 95 percent taking at least 12 credit hours and 45 percent taking 15 credit hours or more. As a final note, HED reports that 65 percent of these students did not take any remedial courses during the fall 2009 semester.

While details from these data will appear throughout the rest of this report, some other highlights from school year 2009-2010 data presented in the Attachment should be noted here:

- 5,273 (or 48 percent) of dual credit students are Hispanic, compared to 3,515 (or 32 percent) white; 1,208 (or 11 percent) providing no response; and 549 (or 5.0 percent) American Indians);
- approximately 8,788 (or 80 percent) of dual credit students are juniors or seniors in high school;
- approximately 7,360 (or 67 percent) of students earn an A or a B in their dual credit coursework; this does not include the 1,318 (or 12 percent) of students who earn a grade classified as “other” which includes pass/fail, credit/no credit, and withdrawals;
- female dual credit students earn, on average, higher grades than their male counterparts.<sup>2</sup> For example, 44 percent of females earn a grade of A in their coursework, as opposed to 38 percent of males; and
- on average, 18 percent of dual credit courses are web-based.

In spite of the improvements in data for school year 2009-2010, an area that may be in need of improvement is that of a seamless data system that connects student information from pre-kindergarten through postsecondary education. One questionnaire respondent from Portales High School acknowledged this need by stating, “it would be great if the information we had in our database was accessible to the colleges and universities. It would make the enrollment of students more efficient.”<sup>3</sup>

## **THE NEED FOR UNIFORMITY IN PROGRAM FEATURES AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **Provisions for Uniformity in Current Law or Rule**

As noted in the 2009 report, a number of provisions are in effect to facilitate the uniform management of dual credit throughout the state.

- The two state agencies that administered the program – HED and PED – jointly promulgated rules to address the details of the program, and they collaborated on any proposed amendments. These rules also created the Dual Credit Council, a six-member group that hears appeals from secondary or postsecondary schools and that considers issues not covered by the rules.
- Both state law and agency rules require the use of a uniform master agreement, a document signed by representatives of the secondary and postsecondary schools that

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<sup>2</sup> Slides 13 and 14 of the Attachment illustrate course grade distributions by gender.

<sup>3</sup> For information about P-20 student data, see “LESC Staff Report: P-20 Education Data System,” September 27, 2010.

enumerates the responsibilities of the parties involved and that, through an appendix, lists the courses approved for dual credit between those two institutions. Pursuant to agency rules, this agreement “specifies the means by which the state will provide equal opportunities to all public high school students who wish to participate in the dual credit program.”

- In addition to the course and student eligibility requirements, agency rules require each student wishing to participate in the dual credit program to complete a student request form, which requires a variety of standard demographic information, including the PED-issued student ID (identification) number used in the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS).

Despite these provisions to facilitate uniformity, considerable variety still exists in the ways that dual credit courses are managed. Of course, given the diverse nature of the state and the educational institutions and opportunities it provides, absolute uniformity in every detail may be neither achievable nor desirable. Although progress appears to have been made in this area since 2009, as illustrated below, the practices reported through the LESC questionnaire and the data collected by HED suggest that uniformity remains a somewhat elusive goal.

## **Varied Practices**

### ***Student Eligibility***

As noted under “Background,” below, state law provides two criteria for student eligibility to participate in the dual credit program: enrollment in at least half of the required credits and permission of the secondary school. In addition, agency rules require the secondary and postsecondary schools to collaborate with each other in determining “the required academic standing of each student eligible to participate in the dual credit program.” Sometimes, according to responses to the LESC questionnaire, this standing is determined by a minimum GPA – from 2.0 to 3.5; other times by minimum scores on placement exams such as Compass and Accuplacer or standardized exams such as the ACT and SAT; and still other times by a student’s grade level: 9<sup>th</sup> grade with a waiver, 10<sup>th</sup> grade or above, or 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade only.

Because of fiscal constraints, the cost of textbooks, and a desire to make some dual credit experience available to as many students as possible, a number of secondary schools have placed other conditions or restrictions on students’ eligibility for dual credit courses, as explained in the questionnaire responses:

- Both Artesia High School and Aztec High School have limited the number of credits each student can earn per semester through the dual credit program. In the case of Artesia, students can earn no more than 12 credit hours per semester, while in Aztec students are limited to two dual credit courses per semester. In both cases students can take additional classes under a similar arrangement known as “concurrent enrollment,” in which the students are responsible for all costs.
- Citing an accreditation issue brought up by the Higher Learning Commission, Luna Community College has elected to offer the dual credit program primarily to juniors and

seniors. Only those freshmen and sophomores who are deemed to be “Albert Einstein in modern day clothing” are accepted into the program prior to their junior year.

- Four questionnaire respondents indicated that their high school allows freshmen and sophomores to participate in the dual credit program with either a recommendation from the student’s teacher in the prior grade or school board approval.

As a final point on student eligibility, the president of one of the state’s public postsecondary institutions has suggested that the state’s recent high school graduation requirements (effective for the graduating class of 2013) may create a barrier for some students to obtain a high school diploma. Specifically, the president expressed concern over the requirement to complete either an AP, honors, online, or dual credit course when some of the high school students in the college’s geographic service area are not academically prepared to complete any of these four components. The president suggested that students should have an option available to them should this be the only prerequisite standing in the way of their graduation.

### ***Course Locations***

As slide 18 of the Attachment illustrates, 45 percent of the dual credit courses in school year 2009-2010 were taught on high school campuses and 55 percent on college campuses. These data contrast with the 50/50 ratio from school year 2008-2009 reported during the 2009 interim. Although the presence of dual credit courses on high school campuses supports the goal of increasing access to college-level content, one might question whether it satisfies the goal of providing students a college experience. There may also be some question about the comparative rigor of the courses offered at the two locations. Slide 20 of the Attachment shows an average GPA of 2.86 for dual credit courses taught at the college and an average GPA of 3.16 for those courses taught at the high school: a difference, in terms of letter grades, between a C+ and a B-. Notably, the average GPA by course location is the same as that reported in 2009.

Regarding dual credit classes taught on a high school campus, responses to the LESC questionnaire indicate that:

- more of the classes are taught by college faculty than by high school faculty;
- most, though not all, of the high school teachers hold post-baccalaureate degrees;
- most, though not all, hold adjunct faculty status with the postsecondary institution; and
- most of the classes are offered during the regular school day.

### ***Compensation for High School Teachers***

The variation in the rate of compensation for high school teachers who teach courses for dual credit that was reported in 2009 has persisted in school year 2009-2010. The reported rates range from a high of \$600 per class for an instructor at Mesalands Community College (MCC) with a Doctorate degree, to a low of no compensation at several postsecondary institutions including the University of New Mexico (UNM) and New Mexico State University (NMSU). Between those extremes, stipends of \$200 or \$250 per course are the most common.

Among other variations:

- some institutions, such as New Mexico Junior College (NMJC), provide a \$100 stipend to cover the cost of additional reporting functions; and
- several institutions vary the amount of the stipend depending upon the instructor's level of higher education (i.e. bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree).

Perhaps the most unusual compensation arrangement is the one used by Luna Community College (LCC). For academic courses, if enrollment is six students or more, the reimbursement at the end of the term is \$500; if the enrollment number is less than six, then the reimbursement amount is \$100. For vocational courses, if enrollment is five students or more, the reimbursement at the end of the term is \$500; if the enrollment is less than five students, then the reimbursement amount is \$100. In order to receive their reimbursement, instructors at LCC must also:

- submit mid-term and final grade rosters;
- attend mandatory orientations;
- submit course syllabi;
- ensure completed admission applications and registrations for eligible dual credit students; and
- complete the add/drop withdrawal forms when students are no longer enrolled at LCC.

#### **REIMBURSEMENTS FOR DUAL CREDIT TEXTBOOKS AND COURSE SUPPLIES**

Another issue identified in the 2009 report that persists in 2010 is the method for distributing funds appropriated to help secondary schools fulfill their requirement of providing textbooks and course supplies for their students who take dual credit classes. Although the Legislature has appropriated funds for this purpose in FY 09, FY 10, and FY 11, the Legislature has not passed either of two LESC-endorsed bills (2009 and 2010) that would have created a dual credit textbook fund in law and provided a mechanism for allocating and distributing funds. Moreover, the joint HED and PED evaluation of the dual credit program in 2009 recommended no legislation on this issue because the dual credit textbook fund process was under administrative review "for improvement."

According to PED, the textbook reimbursement amounts for school year 2009-2010 were determined based on answers the districts gave on the annual Program Budget Questionnaire. Not all the textbook money was encumbered immediately. Subsequently, many districts expressed concern that they did not understand the questionnaire and had therefore either under-estimated or failed to include any request for dual credit textbook monies.<sup>4</sup>

Other concerns arose in responses to the LESC questionnaire. When asked what components or requirements of the dual credit program they would change, the most common recommendation was to improve the textbook adoption and reimbursement processes by:

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<sup>4</sup> State-supported schools do not fill out the questionnaire and were not included in the initial allocation. Presently, the status of reimbursement to state supported schools is that a payable has been accrued and transfers are awaiting Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) approval.

- providing reimbursements at a faster rate;
- training state workers so that they understand the adoption and reimbursements processes;
- returning calls or emails when schools are asking for assistance from either PED or HED;
- providing schools and institutions with contact numbers for PED and HED personnel in charge of the dual credit program;
- if possible, providing districts with a budget similar to the other instructional materials funds so that planning can take place at the local level; and
- encouraging postsecondary institutions to establish a minimum of a three-year adoption cycle for dual credit course textbooks.

One challenge that echoed throughout the survey responses was that of college textbook adoption cycles. As an extension of academic freedom, postsecondary instructors are allowed to choose the text for their course every semester. Consequently, textbooks for the same course may change frequently. However, when colleges change the textbook for a dual credit course on an almost annual basis, the high schools are forced to purchase the new course materials and the cost for dual credit courses is exacerbated while “the [old] textbooks are stored and basically become ‘white elephants,’” as one respondent called them.

The timeliness of reimbursements from PED was another prominent issue. As one respondent from a state-chartered charter school noted, “in the 2009-2010 school year we submitted a reimbursement request in November, 2009 and did not receive the reimbursement until July, 2010. Many phone calls and emails went unreturned making this process extremely frustrating.”

For FY 10, an appropriation of reverting funds in the amount of \$1,402,500 was made for dual credit textbooks and course supplies. According to PED, districts requested and were paid \$543,795.02 by the end of the fiscal year. The remaining balance of \$858,750.98, was not requested by districts, nor paid by PED. As these funds were identified as reverting, they will likely be reverted.

In August 2010, PED staff, including the department’s legal counsel, discussed ways to strengthen the STARS reporting requirements on districts, such as course reporting and student identification numbers, as well as the possibility of tying textbook reimbursements to data reporting requirements. According to PED, the department has worked with the Dual Credit Council and the Secretary of Public Education Designee to communicate with school districts and secondary schools concerning textbook reimbursements.

In correspondence with the LESC, representatives of PED and HED outlined the past, current, and future challenges of the dual credit textbook funds:

- Past: As changes were made to requirements for the fund in FY 10, the unintended consequence of the new requirements was that the information needed for the program manager to approve requests for reimbursement was not available for the second semester until the fiscal year was over. This had a dampening effect on the amount of reimbursements requested.

- Current: In FY 11, the departments are headed for the same time crunch as existed in FY 10. The existing structure will continue to have a dampening effect on reimbursements unless the funds become non-reverting. Only by making the funds non-reverting will HED and PED have the time to gather the required information to make thorough decisions about allowable and appropriate expenditures and then reimburse districts for their second-semester expenses.
- Future: PED and HED are currently in discussions about how to make the process more efficient. However, this will not change the need for the funds to be non-reverting because the information on second semester classes that is needed to determine the appropriateness of the reimbursement request will not be available until after the end of the fiscal year.

In response to these challenges, HED and PED staff are asking the LESC to consider and provide direction on the following ideas for textbook funding distribution:

- create a plan that is in line with LESC-endorsed legislation calling for an April allocation and a June disbursement, with the addition of a one-year delay on the funding of textbooks;
- maintain the current method of requests for reimbursement (RFR) with stronger audit procedures, including:
  - Ø a request to the Legislature that textbook funds be non-reverting; and
  - Ø a link between the STARS data reporting requirements and textbook reimbursements; and
- move the textbook reimbursement process to HED and disburse course materials through postsecondary institutions' bookstores.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF HB 90, *NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOOLS DUAL CREDIT PROGRAM***

Perhaps the most significant development in 2010 was the enactment of legislation (HB 90, or Laws 2010, Chapter 36) to include federal Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) high schools and tribal colleges in the dual credit program. The legislation also defines the terms “bureau of Indian education high school” and “tribal college.”

While this legislation expanded the opportunities for participation in the dual credit program, it also created the need for new administrative procedures, particularly with regard to tuition reimbursement. Because tribal colleges are not funded through the higher education funding formula, HED was compelled to devise a different method for reimbursing tribal colleges when they waive tuition for dual credit students. The Deputy Secretary of HED has recommended that the reimbursement of the waived tuition for dual credit students attending one of the tribal colleges should be handled through HED in the form of a General Fund appropriation (to the department) and then disbursed to the tribal colleges. According to the Deputy Secretary, “this option would be better than creating separate line item appropriations in HB 2 or appropriating the money to [the Indian Affairs Department] for subsequent disbursement.” The Deputy Secretary further explains that the reimbursement appropriation “should be through HED

because the department calculates and certifies the [monetary] amounts, as is the case with the dual credit tuition reimbursement for the other public postsecondary institutions.”

Due to the two-year lag between an academic year in which tuition is being waived and the fiscal year in which the reimbursement takes place, the first year in which the tribal colleges will be reimbursed for dual credit enrollment is FY 13. To this end, HED says that it will include the tribal college reimbursement in its funding request for higher education for FY 13, which is due November 1, 2011.

Below is an update on the status of tribal colleges’ preparedness for dual credit students in the fall 2010 semester:

- Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA): HED has had multiple phone meetings with IAIA, has conducted site visits, and has provided technical and policy assistance for data submission to the department. IAIA is almost ready to submit data to HED.
- Diné College: HED has had multiple meetings via phone. The college also has HED’s “Dual Credit Checklist.” Additional meetings need to be scheduled in order for Diné College to be ready for full implementation of HB 90.
- Navajo Technical College: HED has had multiple meetings via phone. However, additional meetings need to be scheduled and the “Dual Credit Checklist” needs to be sent to the college.
- Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI): HED has had a single meeting via phone. Additional meetings need to be scheduled and the “Dual Credit Checklist” needs to be sent to the college.<sup>5</sup>

Related to the implementation of HB 90, Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) has requested an opportunity to review and provide input on the revisions to the uniform master agreement between the secondary and postsecondary entities, as well as any other forms that may need revising. According to a representative at PED, the draft revisions are almost complete. Upon completion of the draft revisions, and in response to the request for review and input, PED and HED plan to set up a meeting with the Dual Credit Council members, tribal college representatives, and BIE representatives (including SFIS).<sup>6</sup>

#### **AMENDMENTS TO AGENCY RULES**

Another development in 2010 was a number of revisions to the agency rules that govern dual credit. Since the enactment of the dual credit legislation in 2007, HED and PED have promulgated identical agency rules to implement the program. In spring 2010, however, in

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<sup>5</sup> On August 6, 2010, SIPI lost its accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (a Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools). Both HB 90 and NMAC 6.30.7 state that a tribal college must be accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Consequently, high school students taking classes at SIPI cannot participate in the dual credit program until SIPI re-gains its accreditation.

<sup>6</sup> There are eight BIE high schools in New Mexico: Navajo Preparatory School, Shiprock Northwest High School, Alamo Day School, Pine Hill School, To’hajiilee-He Day School, Wingate High School, Santa Fe Indian School, and Mescalero Apache School.

order to avoid duplication and the possibility of conflicting rules, HED held hearings that led to the repeal of the HED rules, replaced by a cross-reference to the PED rules, effective May 14, 2010.

Also in 2010, PED made several substantive amendments to that agency's rules:

- In an effort to clarify the program's objectives, the rule now specifies two purposes of dual credit:
  - Ø as “[providing] high school students the opportunity to enroll in college-level academic or career-technical courses offered by a post-secondary educational institution”; and
  - Ø “[increasing] the overall quality of instruction and learning available through secondary schools, [permitting] those enrolled students to simultaneously earn credit toward high school graduation and a post-secondary degree or certificate”.
- Although courses in physical education represented a small proportion of the dual credit courses reported in 2009, they raised questions about suitability for dual credit, at both HED and PED. Specifically, the departments questioned whether this type of course fulfilled the purposes of dual credit. As a result, both agencies agreed to amend agency rule to exclude physical education activity courses from dual credit.
- With the inclusion of core courses into the dual credit program, current rule clarifies that dual credit courses must meet PED standards and benchmarks.
- Other PED rule amendments correspond to the inclusion of BIE high schools and tribal colleges in the dual credit program by:
  - Ø expanding the definition of “district” to “Local Education Agency” (LEA) to include BIE high schools; and
  - Ø including “tribal colleges” in the formal definition of postsecondary institution.

These amendments went into effect August 16, 2010.

### **ELECTRONIC UNIFORM MASTER AGREEMENTS**

In correspondence with the LESC, PED and HED have noted that it is difficult to maintain real-time versions of the uniform master agreement due to their paper format. In addition, the departments have stated that storing current agreements can be a cumbersome endeavor. In an effort to address these issues, PED has proposed the following timeline for the creation of an electronic uniform master agreement:

- Fall 2010: research and document requirements (with input from PED, HED, and representatives from schools districts and postsecondary institutions);
- Fall/Winter 2010: design and review the draft uniform master agreement;
- Winter 2010: develop the programs, databases, documents, processes, and reports required for an electronic agreement;
- Winter/Spring 2011: create a proto-type and conduct testing with limited districts and postsecondary institutions;

- Summer/Spring 2011: conduct pilot and integration testing with STARS; and
- July, 1 2011: full implementation of the electronic uniform master agreement.

PED and HED will also need to see if districts and postsecondary institutions can provide the necessary data with the current level of funding. To this end, PED has suggested that the department's staff may need to be augmented in order to provide support and ongoing maintenance for this project.

### **ACCEPTABLE COURSE STRUCTURES**

Since the implementation of agency rules, a course credit ratio of 3:1 has been required – that is, three hours of college credit for one high school unit. In the past year, HED has been made aware of several situations where dual credit courses are being offered in a year-long format (as opposed to the more traditional semester-long format). The majority of courses offered through this arrangement are taught on the high school campus. In this situation, a course such as English 101 is taught from August to May during the regular high school day, whereas on a college campus it would be taught during a single semester.

It could be argued that students who are allowed to master a college curriculum over the course of a year have an advantage over those students taking the same course in a semester format. This situation raises the question whether students experience college-level rigor if they are allotted twice the time to master the material.

Furthermore, while another section of the course being taught at the high school may be offered on the college campus, the structure of that course will undoubtedly be semester-long. HED argues that variant structures such as year-long vs. semester-long courses conflict with the requirement outlined in rule that courses “be accessible to members of the general public.” HED data suggest that some institutions may be abusing this practice. For instance, eight postsecondary institutions have reported dual credit courses ranging from 8.0 to 13 percent of their total institution credit hours, and four of those institutions host a majority of their dual credit courses on the high school campus. Yet because neither statute nor rule specifies a format for dual credit courses, it has been difficult for PED and HED to make a ruling on the eligibility for funding of these classes.

Accordingly, HED has determined that there is no easy methodology for determining whether the districts and postsecondary institutions are complying with the 3:1 credit ratio outlined in rule. With the two-year delay in funding calculations, HED has recently determined that it will not fund courses if the 3:1 ratio is not followed. While this decision may dampen the occurrence of a 6:1 credit ratio, it does not address the possibility of a 3:1 credit ratio being awarded to a dual credit course that is extended over a year-long period.

### **OTHER ISSUES RAISED BY RESPONDENTS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

In a question related to the effectiveness of the guidance that participants in the dual credit program have received from the district, PED, or HED, respondents indicated that there is room for improvement in this area. While a number of secondary and postsecondary respondents praised the knowledge and assistance from both HED and the postsecondary institutions, a

number of others expressed reservations about the guidance provided by PED. Below is a sample of questionnaire responses on the subject of guidance:

- “Though I cannot say this definitively, my sense is that the PED is not as involved with guiding the secondary schools. We continue to have counselors and staff...who do not know what a STARS ID is and do not provide them. They continue to look to us for guidance regarding policy, rewarding of credit, and appropriate courses for students – questions we (I don’t think) should probably be answering for the schools.” – Santa Fe Community College
- “Very limited guidance. Answers to questions had to be researched by district personnel, with no assistance from PED staff.” – Texico Municipal Schools
- “Guidance will be needed to help with alignment, benchmarks and standards [of dual credit courses]. High school guidance counselors need more training and understanding of the process of dual credit.” – University of New Mexico

Representatives of PED have said that the department is aware that this is an area in need of attention and additional resources. To that end, PED has indicated that it is investigating funding for a contracted staff person to be in charge of the dual credit program.

Among other points, respondents to the questionnaire offered the following observations and recommendations:

- “[PED or HED should develop a] comprehensive survey regarding best practices of institutions across the state so that individuals can learn from each other’s successes.” – Northern New Mexico College
- “Dual-credit enrollment growth is coming on top of already record college enrollments. The influx of additional students through dual enrollment is educationally positive but incredibly challenging for the colleges given delays in funding to staff this rapid enrollment growth. The large growth in student numbers challenges admissions, counseling, other student support services, and staffing...We are stretched significantly to assure instructional quality and needed supports for students new to college rigor.” – San Juan College
- “Offer workshops [explaining the dual credit program] to high school counselors, and parents.” – New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
- “Individual colleges/universities continue to have disparity between the scores students have to obtain on assessments (Compass, Accuplacer) to be eligible for admittance into academic or vocational courses. What is defined as a “vocational” course in one institution may or may not be classified as such in another. A point to consider is that public school curriculum is geared toward state standards, benchmarks and performance standards. The placement tests may or may not be.” – Loving High School
- “In general, there appears to be a disconnect between the need to monitor the academic progress of public school students enrolled in college courses and those of [traditional]

postsecondary students...College level instructors [should be encouraged] to provide academic progress for high school students outside of the mid-term grade.” – Loving High School

## **POLICY OPTIONS**

Given the information presented in this report about some of the issues affecting the smooth, uniform implementation of the dual credit program, the LESC may wish to consider the following policy options;

- reintroduce legislation to create a dual credit textbook fund and to prescribe or provide for a standard mechanism for allocating and distributing funds for dual credit textbooks and course supplies; and
- amend the dual credit legislation to clarify permissible course structures in terms of the ratio of the number of college credits earned to the number of high school units earned.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2007, LESC-endorsed legislation was enacted to create a dual credit program in state law. As amended in 2008 and 2010, the law governing dual credit:

- defines the term “dual credit program” as “a program that allows high school students to enroll in college-level courses offered by a public post-secondary educational institution or tribal college that may be academic or career-technical but not remedial or developmental, and simultaneously to earn credit toward high school graduation and a post-secondary degree or certificate”;
- establishes two eligibility criteria for students wishing to participate in the program:
  - Ø enrollment in a regular public school, charter school, state-supported school, or BIE high school in one-half or more of the minimum course requirements; and
  - Ø permission from a school counselor, the school principal, or the head administrator of a charter school or BIE high school;
- requires the school district, charter school, state-supported school, or BIE high school to pay for required textbooks and any course supplies through purchase arrangements with the bookstore at the postsecondary institution or some other cost-efficient method;
- requires the public postsecondary educational institution or tribal college to waive all general fees;
- requires HED to revise procedures in the higher education funding formula to address enrollments in dual credit courses and to encourage institutions to waive tuition for students taking those courses; and
- requires HED and PED to promulgate rules to evaluate the dual credit program and to make annual reports, including recommendations, to the Governor and the Legislature.

# NEW MEXICO DUAL CREDIT PROGRAM FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 09-10

August 10, 2010

New Mexico Higher Education Department

## Dual Credit Program Overview

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- High school students taking college level courses
  - Receive high school credit as well
  - Colleges waive tuition
  - High school pays for books
  - Depending upon the time and location, high school may provide transportation
  - Courses may be taught on:
    - High School Campus
    - College Campus
    - Online / Distance Ed
  - No remedial or courses not leading to a degree
  - No statewide participation restriction
    - Some colleges may require a placement test
- Provides high school students with college experience

## Dual Credit Program Overview

3

- 2007
  - ▣ Passage of statewide Dual Credit legislation
  - ▣ College courses that lead to a degree
  - ▣ No remedial courses
  - ▣ 3 college credit to 1 high school credit
- 2008
  - ▣ New legislation adding state supported schools
  - ▣ Data collection for Dual Credit begins
- 2010
  - ▣ NM adds tribal colleges and BIE schools
  - ▣ Include core classes from HS and restrict PE activity courses

## Potential benefits of the Dual Credit Program

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- Increase high school graduation and retention rate
- Increase the number of college bound students
- Increase college going rate
- Increase college graduation and retention rate
  - ▣ Less time to graduate
  - ▣ More completers
- Lower overall statewide cost to educate our students

## Types of Dual Credit Data Collected

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- SSN
- Unique ID (Statewide ID)
- Demographic
  - ▣ Name
  - ▣ Ethnicity
  - ▣ Gender
  - ▣ Birth date
- High School
- Postsecondary Institution
- Type of Courses Taken
- Credit Hours
- Grades
- Census Enrollment
- Year of High School Graduation
- Methods of Course Delivery
- Course Location

Higher Education data collection is based on enrollment snapshot taken on the Census date. Census dates occur usually on the 21<sup>st</sup> day after the beginning of the semester.

## Dual Credit Enrollment Information

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- |                  |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| □ Summer 2009    | □ Fall 2009      | □ Spring 2010    |
| ▣ 468 Courses    | ▣ 1,335 Courses  | ▣ 1,648 Courses  |
| ▣ 1,033 Students | ▣ 6,943 Students | ▣ 7,750 Students |
| ▣ 1,596 Records  | ▣ 11,672 Records | ▣ 12,572 Records |



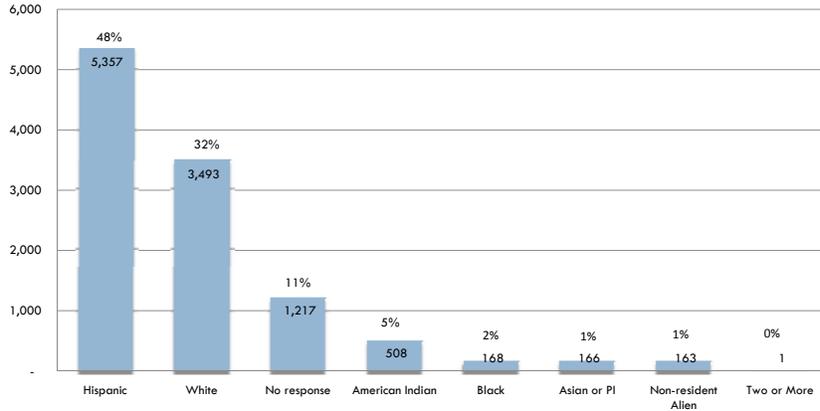
- Academic Year 2009-2010
  - ▣ 10,985 Unique Students (Census +)
  - ▣ 6,027 Female Students (Census Only)
  - ▣ 4,872 Male Students (Census Only)

Records refers to combination of courses and students. A single student can enroll in two classes which will result in two records.

## Dual Credit Enrollment By Ethnicity

7

Academic Year 2009-2010

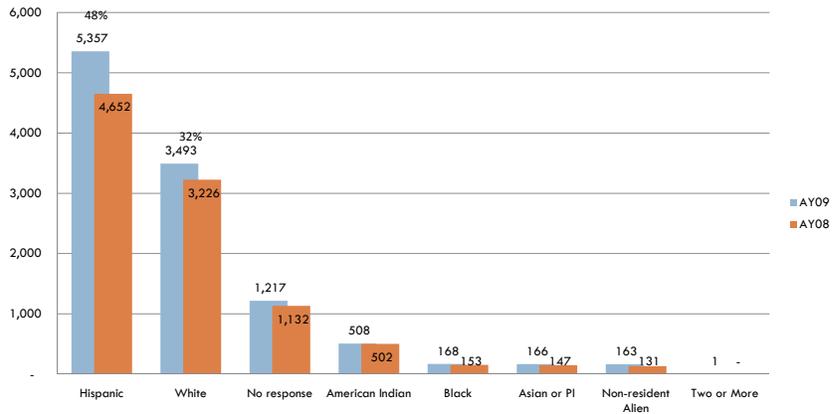


Non-resident Alien generally refers to a student that is not a U.S. citizen or does not have a permanent resident status

## Dual Credit Enrollment By Ethnicity

8

Academic Year 2008 and 2009 Comparison

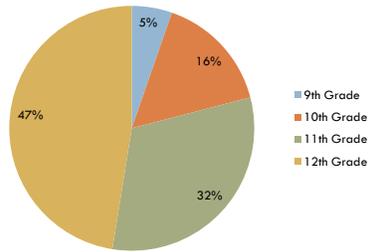


## Dual Credit High School Grade Level

9

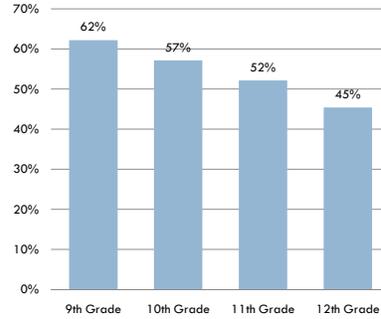
### Total Enrollment by HS Grade level

Academic Year 2009-2010



### Dual Credit students with free or reduced lunches

Academic Year 2009-2010

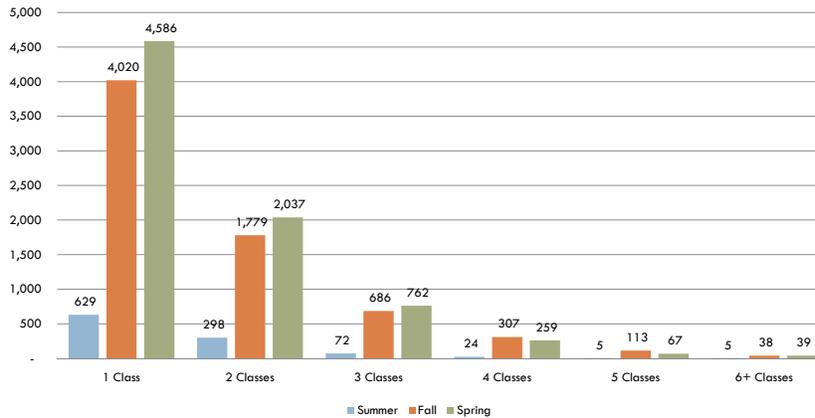


Source: HED and PED data match

## Number of Classes Taken

10

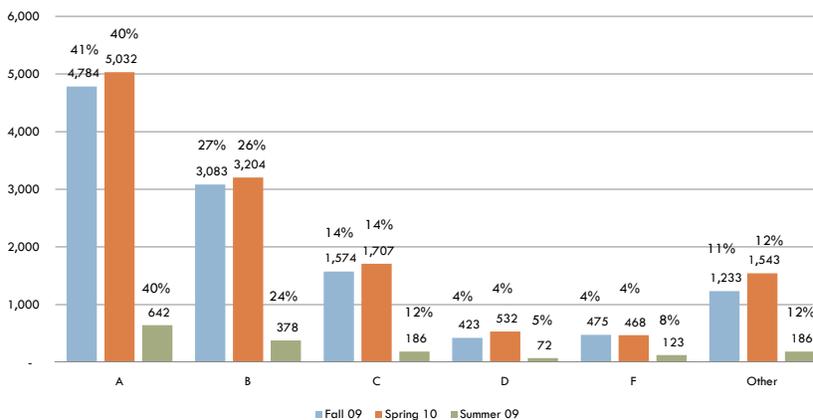
Academic Year 2009-2010



# Course Grade Distribution: All

11

Academic Year 2009-2010

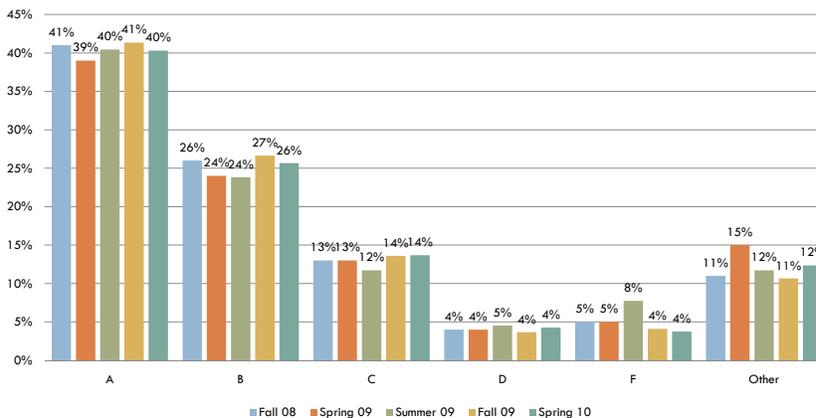


OTHER includes Pass / Fail, Credit / No Credit, Withdrawals, No Grade, etc.

# Course Grade Distribution: All

12

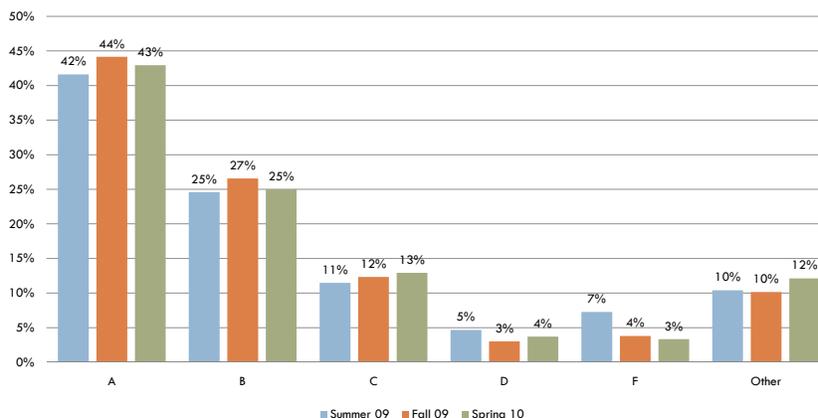
Academic Year 2008 and 2009 Comparison



## Course Grade Distribution: Female

13

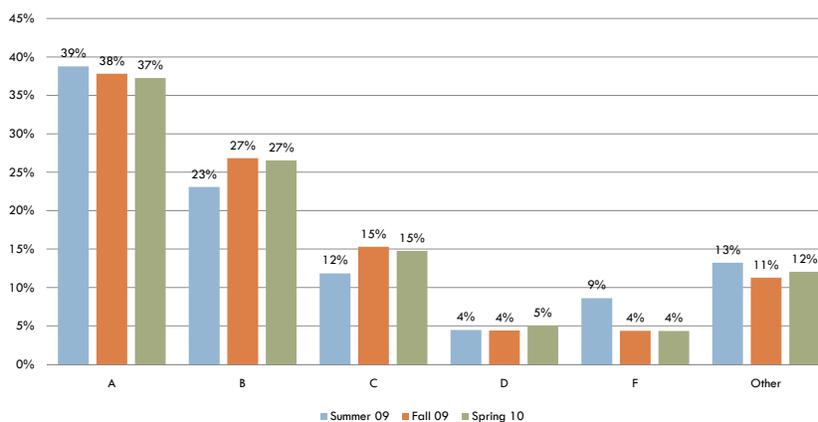
Academic Year 2009-2010



## Course Grade Distribution: Male

14

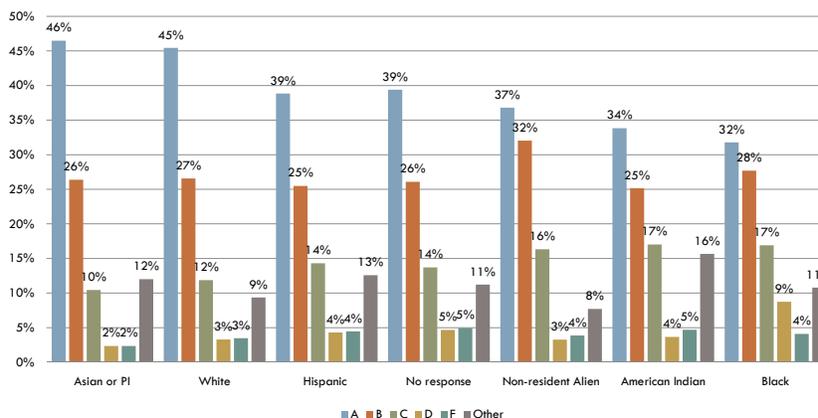
Academic Year 2009-2010



## Course Grade Distribution By Ethnicity

15

Academic Year 2009-2010

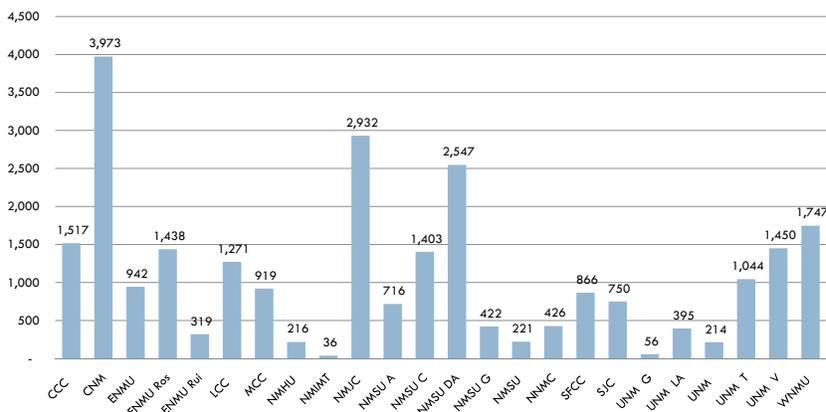


OTHER includes Pass / Fail, Credit / No Credit, Withdrawals, No Grade, etc.  
 Non-resident Alien generally refers to a student that is not a U.S. citizen or does not have a permanent resident status

## Dual Credit Enrollment at Postsecondary Institutions

16

Academic Year 2009-2010

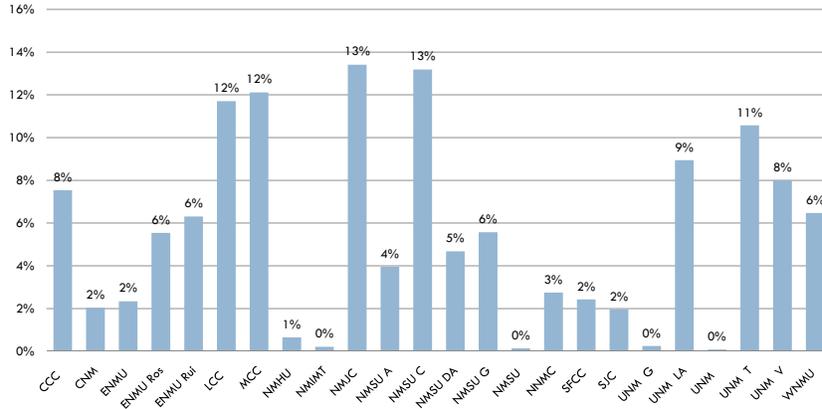


Complete list of institution abbreviations available on the last slide of this presentation

## Dual Credit Hours as a Percentage of Total Institution Credit Hours

17

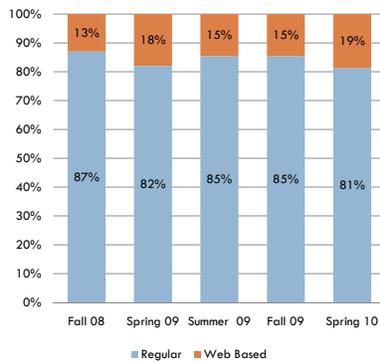
Academic Year 2009-2010



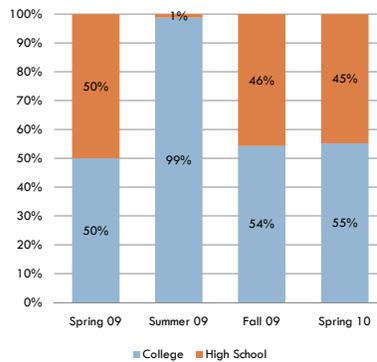
## Course Delivery and Course Location

18

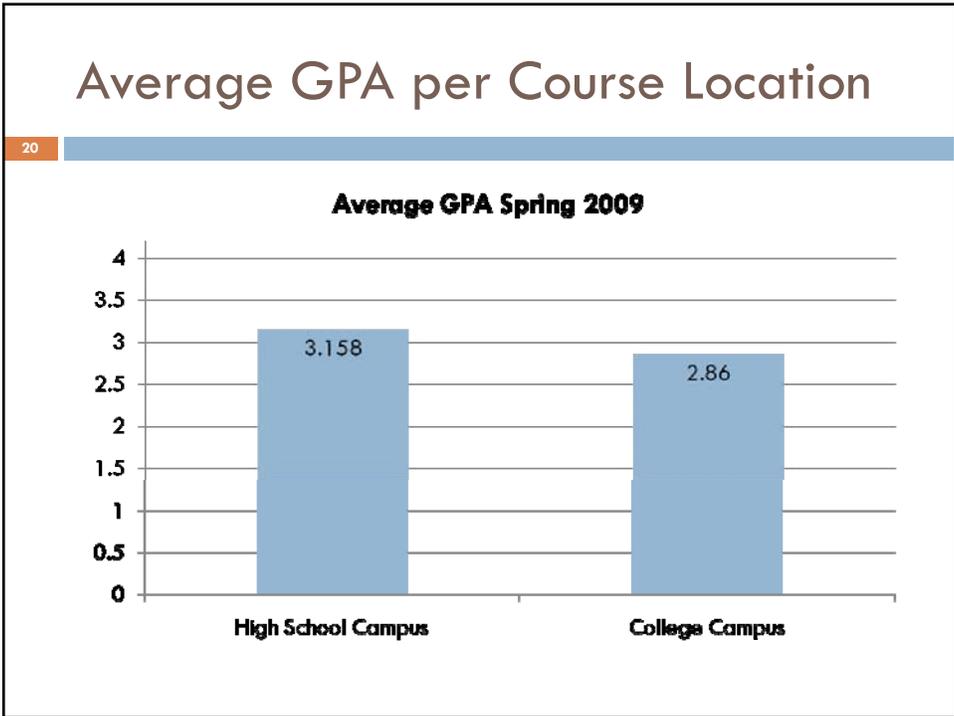
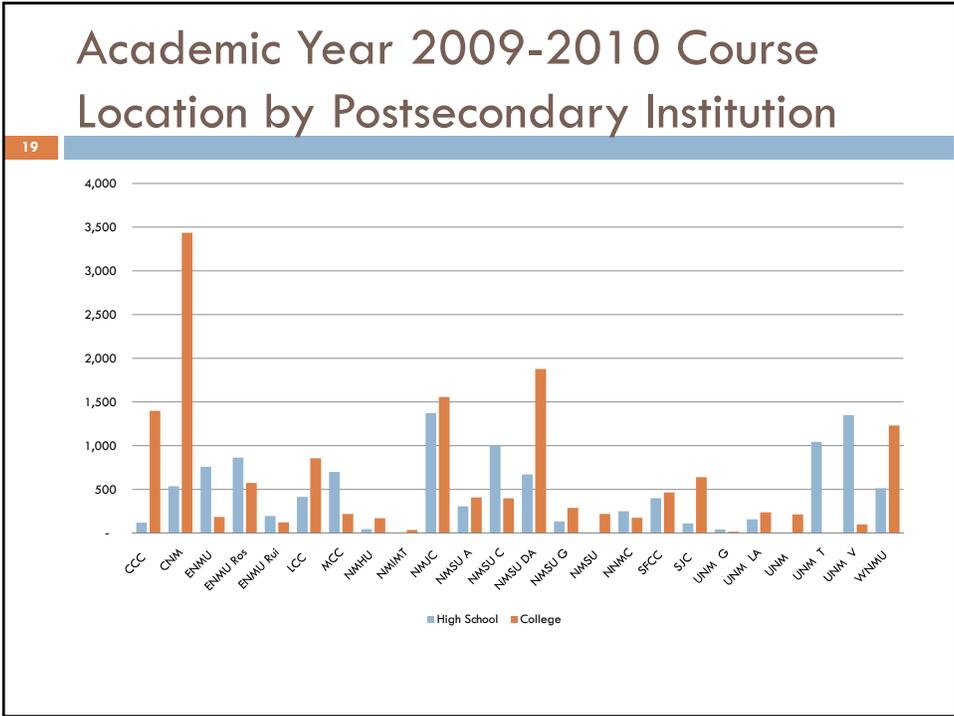
Online vs. Regular Instruction



High School vs. College Campus



Location data collection began in Spring 2009



## Is the Dual Credit Program Working?

21

- Number of High School seniors who participated in the Dual Credit program during 2008 AY: 4524
  - Of which who graduated during the same year:
    - 4126 (91%)
  - Of which who attended Postsecondary institutions in the Fall 2009:
    - 2,754 (67%)
    - This is higher than our regular high school to college going rate within the state which is usually in the 50% range
- 8.6% of these students entered college with enough credit hours (successfully transferred) to be sophomores or higher.
- Roughly 98% of these students are degree seeking

## Is the Dual Credit Program Working?

22

- Students are attending both two and four year institutions at a equal ratio (some students even choose to attend both types of institutions).
  - Number of students who decided to attend:
    - 2 year institutions: 1,494
    - 4 year institutions: 1,549
- Majority of these students are full time students.
  - 95% (2,617) of these students are taking at least 12 credit hours or more
  - 45% (1,261) of these students are taking at least 15 credit hours or more
- 65% (1,777) of these students did not take any remedial courses at all during the Fall 2009 semester

## Future area for consideration

23

- How to fund dual credit programs?
  - ▣ Text books
  - ▣ Courses
- Where should the dual credit courses be offered?
  - ▣ High School Campus
  - ▣ College Campus
- Should the dual credit students be taking courses with other college students
- Did the dual credit program make a difference?

## Institutional Abbreviation

24

Abbreviation		Institution and Campus Name	
Institution	Campus	Institution	Campus
CCC		Clovis Community College	Main
CNM		Central New Mexico Community College	Main
ENMU		Eastern New Mexico University	Main
ENMU	Ros	Eastern New Mexico University	Roswell Branch
ENMU	Rui	Eastern New Mexico University	Ruidoso Center
LCC		Luna Community College	Main
MCC		Mesa lands Community College	Main
NMHU		New Mexico Highlands University	Main
NMIMT		New Mexico Institute of Mining & Tech	Main
NMJC		New Mexico Junior College	Main
NMMI		New Mexico Military Institute	Main
NMSU		New Mexico State University	Main
NMSU	A	New Mexico State University	Alamogordo Branch
NMSU	C	New Mexico State University	Carlsbad Branch
NMSU	G	New Mexico State University	Grants Branch
NMSU	DA	New Mexico State University	Dona Ana Branch
NNMC		Northern New Mexico College	Main
SFCC		Santa Fe Community College	Main
SJC		San Juan College	Main
UNM		University of New Mexico	Main
UNM	G	University of New Mexico	Gallup Branch
UNM	LA	University of New Mexico	Los Alamos Branch
UNM	V	University of New Mexico	Valencia Branch
UNM	T	University of New Mexico	Taos Branch
WNMU		Western New Mexico University	Main