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dual enrollment special report

for Nebraska Public Schools
& Postsecondary Institutions



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nswers

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*These provisional results are based on certified NSWERS data as of March 13, 2025.
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ABOUT NSWERS

The Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) is a collaboration among Nebraska's six community colleges, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska State College System, the University of Nebraska System, and in affiliation with the Nebraska Department of Labor to enable seamless integration of data across educational and workforce systems, provide data literacy education, and promote the use of this data to further evidence-based policy and practices across the educational systems of Nebraska.

SPECIAL REPORTS

NSWERS' *Special Reports* examine one topic across two or more education and/or workforce outcomes. In this case, the report highlights the differences between students who participate in dual enrollment and those who do not, across all four NSWERS education outcomes; high school graduation, college going, postsecondary persistence, and postsecondary graduation.

ATTRIBUTION

You must clearly attribute this work to the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System and provide a print or digital copy of the work to support@nswers.org.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to share the 2025 NSWERS Special Report on Dual Enrollment in Nebraska, a detailed look at an educational pathway that offers high school students across our state the chance to earn college credits early. Building on last year's report, this edition brings fresh data, broader analyses, and—new for Nebraska—insights into how dual enrollment directly influences postsecondary award attainment. It's a resource designed to inform and support decision making for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders throughout our state.

Dual enrollment opens doors for students, blending high school and college experiences in ways that can shape their futures. But understanding its true impact requires more than anecdotes—it demands reliable information and careful analysis. That's where the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) comes in. Through the dedicated collaboration of Nebraska's Community Colleges, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska State College System, the University of Nebraska System, and the Nebraska Department of Labor, we've created a resource that connects the dots across education and workforce outcomes. This report reflects that effort, offering a clear, longitudinal view of dual enrollment's reach and its effects on students.

What makes this work stand out is its depth and focus. We evaluate participation trends, highlight disparities, and measure outcomes like high school graduation, college enrollment, and degree completion. For the first time, we also estimate the causal effects of dual enrollment—showing not just who succeeds, but how much of that success stems from the program itself. These findings provide a practical foundation for discussions about dual enrollment in Nebraska.

I extend my sincere gratitude to our partners, whose shared commitment makes this report possible, and to the NSWERS team, whose careful work turns data into understanding. I also want to give special appreciation to Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education for their continued support and encouragement of this report. Together, we're providing a valuable tool to help Nebraska's education community make informed decisions that can pave the way for more students to learn, grow, and succeed in Nebraska.

Sincerely,



Matthew J. Hastings, Ph.D.
Executive Director, NSWERS

For the digital version of the *2025 Dual Enrollment Special Report*
and dual enrollment supplemental materials, please visit:

**insights.nswers.org/
special-report/
2025-dual-enrollment**

about dual enrollment

INTRODUCTION

Dual enrollment is an avenue by which high school students can take college-level courses. These courses may be taught at their high school by a teacher approved to teach college-level courses or directly at a Nebraska postsecondary institution. Dual enrollment is an important way to expand access to college-level education by providing high school students with opportunities to take advanced coursework and earn college credit.

Dual enrollment participation varies widely across the state. This reflects the unique and varied opportunities for dual enrollment in each public school, district, and service region. The data presented in this report identifies trends in dual enrollment and impact estimates of dual enrollment on core educational outcomes that educators, administrators, partners, policymakers, and other stakeholders can utilize to better understand dual enrollment in Nebraska.

The data for this report comes from the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS), with information provided by its partner and affiliate agencies and institutions. NSWERS develops and maintains the data system to provide research and analyses on student and workforce outcomes, and to support decision making in these sectors.

BACKGROUND

Dual enrollment has a history of state support. In 1995 the Nebraska Transfer Initiative was established to help students, parents, teachers, and counselors determine the transferability of community college course credits, including dual enrollment course credits, across Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions. Ten years later, in 2005, dual enrollment standards were included in Nebraska's Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education to create statewide consistency in how dual enrollment courses are offered, taught, and credited. Although these standards provide a framework, they are not yet supported through a state statute.

In 2007 Nebraska's Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship Program was established to support dual enrollment opportunities for Nebraska students from low-income families. In 2019, a joint committee of representatives from the Nebraska State Board of Education and Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) assembled to identify ways to overcome barriers to dual enrollment credit programs. This committee put forth sixteen recommendations for policy action. The Nebraska Department of Education and the CCPE have committed to making those recommendations a reality, supporting the expansion of dual enrollment credit opportunities for all students across the state.

MOTIVATION

Dual enrollment involves resource investments from both dual enrollment providers and participants in terms of time, money, and effort. As such, it is crucial to understand the benefits of dual enrollment for students to ensure that these investments in dual enrollment pay off for Nebraska students.

There is strong evidence that dual enrollment causes educational benefits in the United States (Schaller et al. 2023). Research specific to dual enrollment in Nebraska has found that dual enrollment participation and completion increased rates of high school graduation, college enrollment, and college persistence (Lee et al. 2022; Dash 2017). Furthermore, a previous NSWERS report found strong associations between dual enrollment participation and credit earning with additional outcomes including college graduation (Nguyen 2024). This report expands on these previous works in myriad ways.

Firstly, via the NSWERS Data System, additional cohorts of students can be analyzed. Previous impact analyses included only high school students from 2012-2013 and 2017-2018 and the NSWERS *2024 Dual Enrollment Special Report* included data on high school students between 2014 and 2020 (Nguyen 2024). This report includes up to the 2021-2022 high school cohort.

Secondly, in this report we extend the previous research on dual enrollment in Nebraska to determine the effect of dual enrollment participation on college certificate and degree attainment, marking the first time this has been done in Nebraska. These extensions of previous work provide more timely and relevant information for decision making by partners, policymakers, and other stakeholders about dual enrollment in Nebraska.

OVERVIEW

This report is organized in two sections, with additional online materials. The first section, “Dual Enrollment in Nebraska,” contains descriptive statistics on dual enrollment participation and credit earning trends over time, geography, and across various demographic characteristics. This provides useful information on the accessibility and uptake of dual enrollment among Nebraska’s public high school students.

The second section, “Educational Outcomes,” provides information on the benefits of dual enrollment for participants. This includes the difference in attainment rates for different outcomes including on-time high school graduation, college enrollment, college persistence, and college degree attainment.

Importantly, estimates of the causal effect of dual enrollment on participants are provided. A causal effect measures how much of the difference in success is due to dual enrollment itself, rather than other factors. For instance, students in dual enrollment programs often have higher grades in high school compared to those who are not in the program. These higher grades can help them achieve more

in their education, independently of their dual enrollment participation. If these pre-existing differences between dual enrollment participants and non-participants are not accounted for, this biases the estimated effect of dual enrollment on student outcomes.

The statistical methods used in the special report uncover the unique contribution of dual enrollment participation to educational outcomes. Therefore, these causal findings can be interpreted as the effectiveness of dual enrollment participation for improving core educational outcomes and can support data-informed decision making about dual enrollment policy in Nebraska.

Additional information is included as online supplementary material and can be found at: insights.nswers.org/special-report/2025-dual-enrollment. These supplements include a technical appendix which details the methods used to generate the data and statistics in this report and additional data on how dual enrollment participation varies according to key demographic characteristics, risk factors, and academic achievement during high school.

TERMS & DEFINITIONS

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment programs provide opportunities for high school students to earn college credit before high school graduation. Per the definition of dual enrollment in Nebraska in LB 814 (2023), a student is considered dually enrolled if they have a postsecondary transcript showing they took at least one for-credit course in a term that started before they graduated high school. In this report, the term “dual enrollment” refers to any course which meets the previous condition. That means that dual enrollment may include “dual credit” type coursework in which a student earns both high school and college credit as well as “concurrent enrollment” coursework in which a high school student is directly enrolled in college and earns college credit.

Note: NSWERS’ dual enrollment calculations do not include courses from private and tribal institutions, Advanced Placement (AP) college credit, or public institutions that have not provided data applicable to this report (i.e., Central Community College). Private or home schooled high school students in Nebraska are not included in this report. These data are not currently included in the NSWERS Data System.

DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPANT

Also referred to as a dual enrollee or participant, this is a student at a public high school in Nebraska who has participated in one or more dual enrollment courses during their high school career but did not necessarily earn college credit.

DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDIT EARNER

A dual enrollment participant, or enrollee, who earned college credit. Earning college credit means the student received greater than zero (0) grade points on their postsecondary transcript for one or more college-level courses while dually enrolled.

EXPECTED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION YEAR COHORT

A high school cohort is a group of Nebraska public high school students with the same expected four-year high school graduation year. For example, if a student is in the 2020 cohort, they entered ninth grade for the first time in the 2016–2017 school year and were expected to graduate in the school year ending 2020. This report only includes information on Nebraska public high school students; it does not include data on private or out-of-state high school students who may receive college credit from Nebraska postsecondary institutions.

TERMS & DEFINITIONS

LONGITUDINAL DATA

This report presents longitudinal data in two ways. The aggregation method used is specified in the chart x-axis or table columns, as needed.

- **Cohort year:** this type of longitudinal aggregation groups students based on the expected high school graduation year cohort (defined above).
- **School-year ending:** this type of longitudinal aggregation is based on the school year ending, e.g., the 2021-2022 school year is denoted 2022. This aggregation includes students from across grade levels and cohorts.

The contents of this report are based on the most recent and certified data available in the NSWERS Data System. This report includes data for students from the 2016-2022 expected high school graduation year cohorts. Data used for each table and graph are specified in the accompanying text.

key findings



KEY FINDINGS

DUAL ENROLLMENT IN NEBRASKA

- Dual enrollment participation has increased over time.
- see p16** ▶ 33 percent of the 2022 cohort participated in dual enrollment, up from 26 percent among the 2016 cohort.
- see p17** ▶ The percentage of participants who earn any college credit has decreased slightly over time, from 96 to 92 percent between the 2016 and 2022 cohorts. However, the total number of credit earners has generally increased since the increase in total participation numbers has offset the decrease in dual enrollment course pass rates.
- The average participant earns about one semester of college credit through dual enrollment.
- see p26** ▶ The average number of college credits earned by participants in the 2022 cohort is 12.3 semester hours. This is about one full-time semester of college and is an increase from the average of 8.9 semester hours earned by the 2016 cohort.
- see p61** ▶ Greater amounts of dual enrollment credit earning is associated with faster college award attainment.
- There are demographic differences in dual enrollment participation.
- see p36** ▶ White students are the most likely to participate in dual enrollment with over 35 percent of white students in the 2022 cohort participating. In contrast, Hispanic students earn dual enrollment credit at roughly 19 percent and around 11 percent Black students earn dual enrollment credit.
- see p37** ▶ Females are more likely to participate in dual enrollment than males which is a consistent finding across cohort years. In 2022, 56 percent of participants were female and 44 percent were male.
- ▶ These demographic differences may reflect differences in access, interest, or academic qualifications.

These data include records for public high schools and public postsecondary institutions in Nebraska. Data not provided by Central Community College.

KEY FINDINGS

CAUSAL EFFECTS OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

The following causal effect estimates are for the participants in the most recent available cohort year for each outcome.

Dual enrollment participation generally causes modest (high school graduation, persistence) to large (college going, graduation) benefits for participants. However, there is not evidence of benefits in persistence or graduation for dual enrollment participants who attend a four-year institution out of state.

- see*
p42 • Dual enrollment participants were four percentage points more likely to graduate high school on time.
- see*
p46 • Participants were 10 percentage points more likely to enroll in college within 16 months of high school graduation.
- see*
p50
and
p52
and
p54 • Participants who went to college were more likely to persist in college by nine percentage points at Nebraska two-year institutions, four percentage points at Nebraska four-year institutions, and no statistically discernible difference in persistence at out-of-state four-year institutions.
- see*
p59
and
p68 • Participants were overall 13 percentage points more likely to attain a postsecondary award within six years of high school graduation. However, among those who attended out-of-state four-year institutions, there was no significant effect of dual enrollment on award attainment.

dual enrollment in nebraska

In this section, basic statistics are presented regarding dual enrollment in Nebraska. This includes insights about the number of participating students, who participates, where students participate, and outcomes of dual enrollment participation.

*These provisional results are based on certified NSWERS data as of March 13, 2025.
The provisional results in this report may change because of data resubmissions by NSWERS Partners and/or Affiliates. While NSWERS strives for accuracy and reliability, official estimates should be obtained directly from the respective partners. For updated results, please contact support@nswers.org.*

HIGH SCHOOL COHORT, PARTICIPANTS, & EARNERS

How many Nebraska students take one or more dual enrollment courses?

The number of students participating in dual enrollment has grown over time. The rate (count) of dual enrollment participation was 26 percent (6,524 participants) in 2016 compared to 33 percent (9,073 participants) among the 2022 expected graduation year cohort (figures 1 and 2).

2022 HIGH SCHOOL COHORT ATTEMPTING DUAL ENROLLMENT

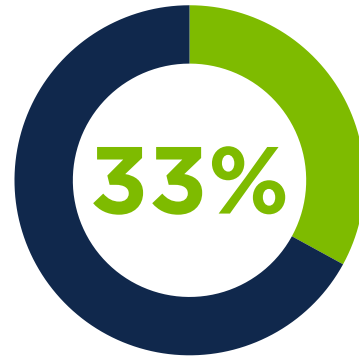


Figure 1: Percent of the high school cohort attempting dual enrollment.

NEBRASKA HIGH SCHOOL COHORT, PARTICIPANTS, & EARNERS

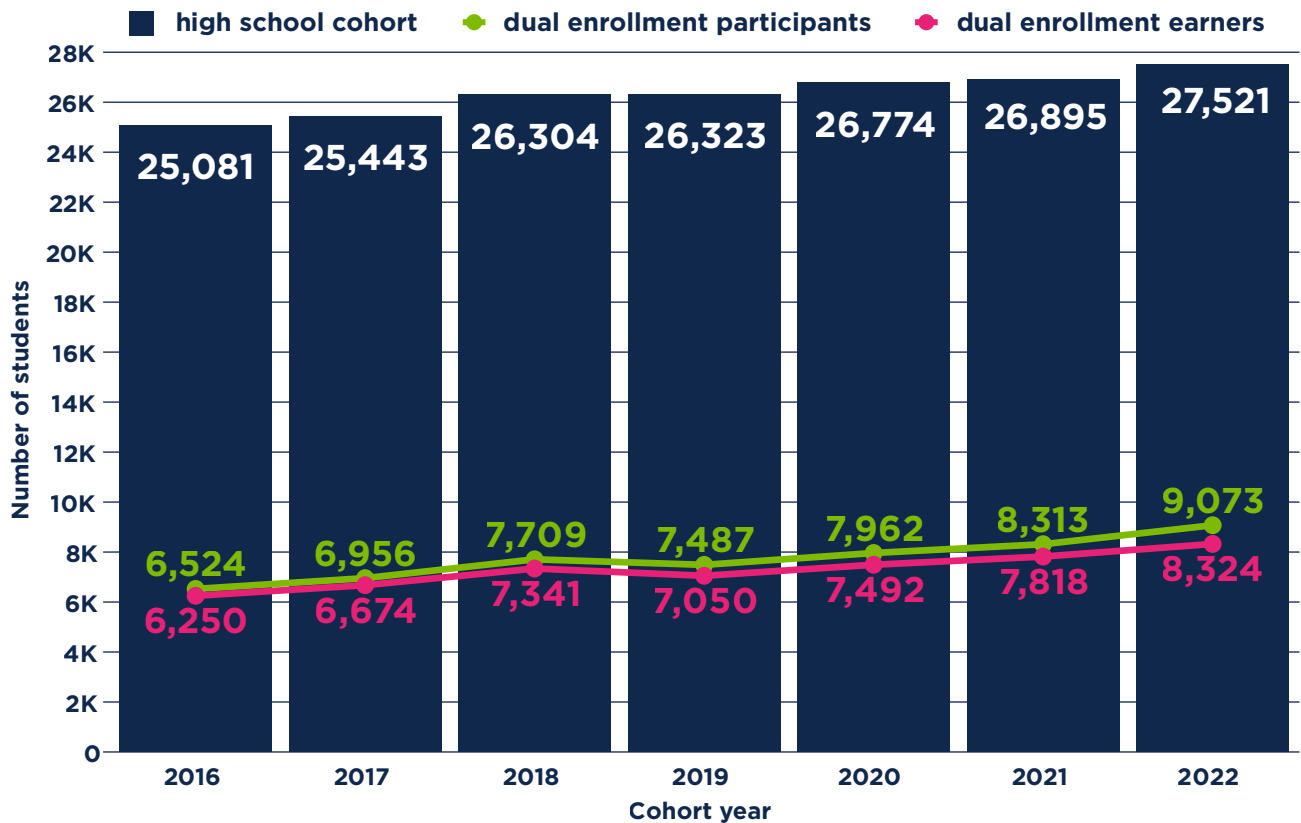


Figure 2: Counts of the high school cohort, dual enrollment participants, and dual enrollment earners.

HIGH SCHOOL COHORT, PARTICIPANTS, & EARNERS

What percent of Nebraska students earn dual enrollment credit?

The majority of dual enrollment participants earn college credit. However, the rate at which participants earn credit has decreased over time from 96 percent to 92 percent (figure 3). Despite the decrease in the rate at which participants earn credit, the total number of credit earners has generally increased over time because the increase in dual enrollment participation has offset the decreased rate at which participants earn credit (figure 2).

RATE OF COLLEGE CREDIT EARNING AMONG DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPANTS

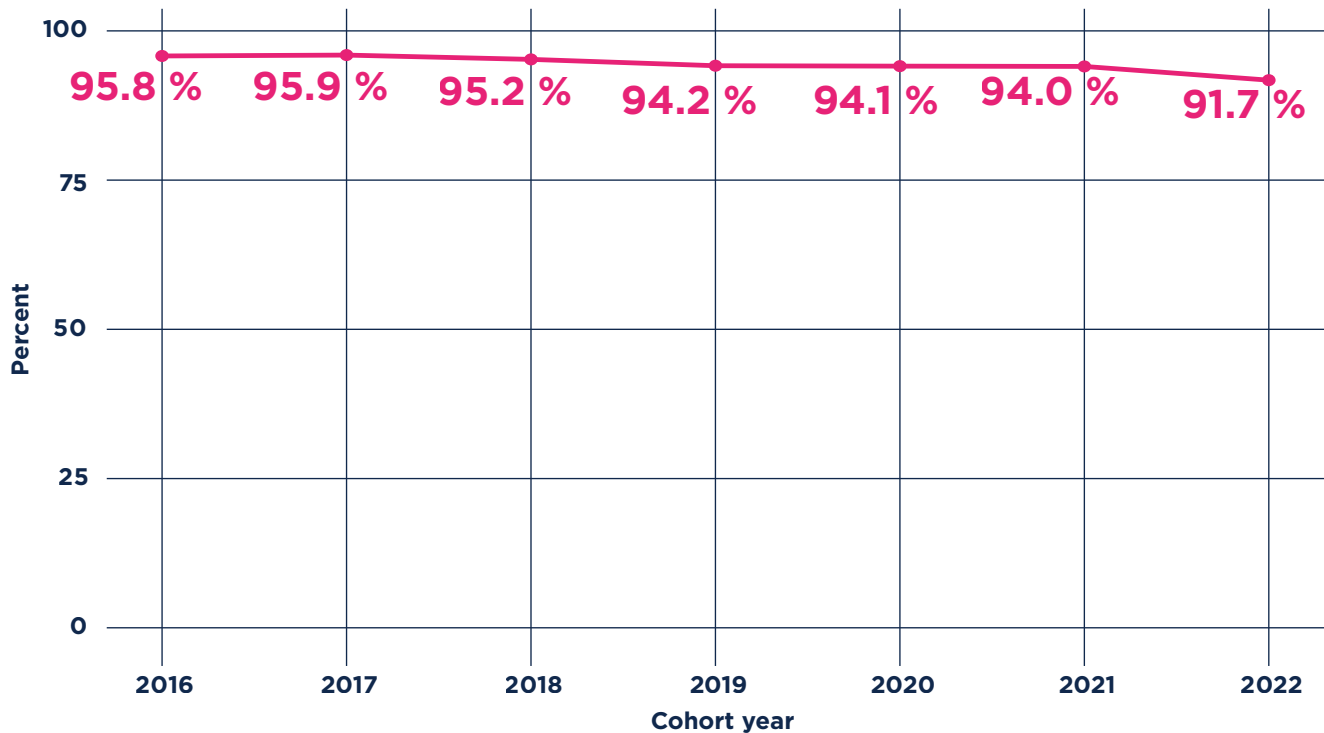


Figure 3: Percentage of students who earned credit by cohort year.

POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Through what colleges do Nebraska students access dual enrollment courses?

Just over 65 percent of dual enrollment is provided via community colleges (figures 4 and 5, and table 1). The remainder is provided by four-year institutions, most of which is taken via the University of Nebraska System with the rest from the Nebraska State College System.

Note that these dual enrollment counts only include dual enrollment taken at Nebraska public postsecondary institutions and do not include data from private institutions or tribal colleges since these institutions do not currently provide data to the NSWERS Data System. Moreover, these data only include high school students who attended public high schools.

SYSTEM SHARE OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2022 COHORT

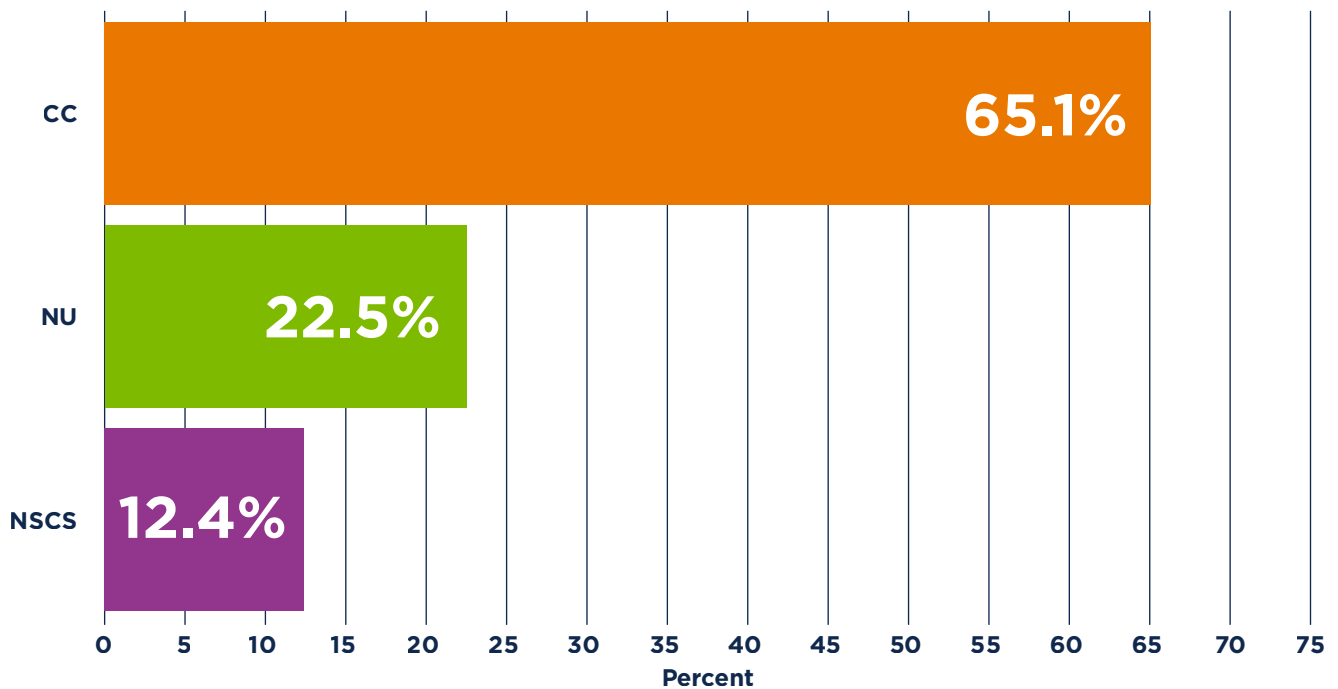


Figure 4: The percentage of the 2022 dual enrollment participant cohort enrolled at each public postsecondary system: Community Colleges (CC), University of Nebraska (NU), and Nebraska State College System (NSCS). Students may be counted multiple times if they were dually enrolled at more than one postsecondary system.

POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Where do students within each high school cohort participate in dual enrollment?

PARTICIPATING POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

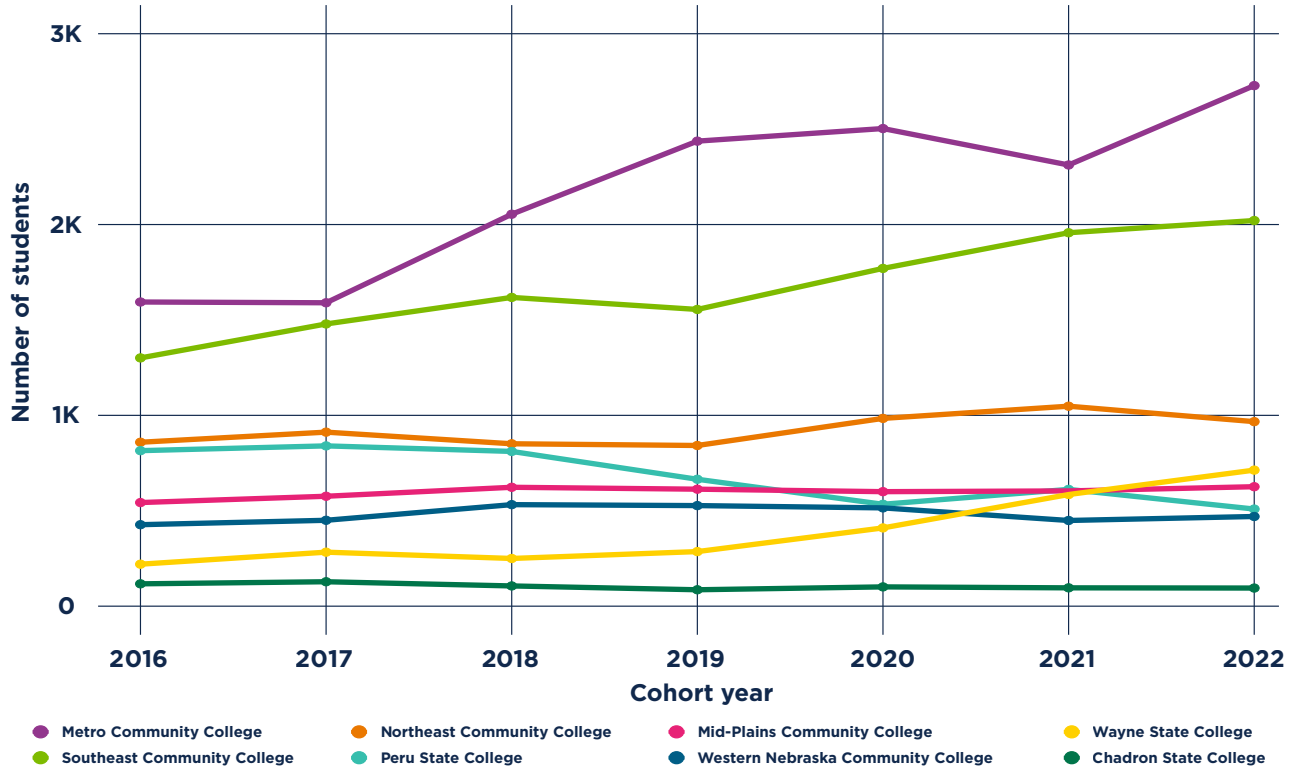


Figure 5: The count of dual enrollment participants at each public Nebraska postsecondary. Students may be counted multiple times if they were dually enrolled at more than one postsecondary institution.

Table 1: Duplicated count of dual enrollment participants by postsecondary institution and cohort

Institution	2016 Cohort	2017 Cohort	2018 Cohort	2019 Cohort	2020 Cohort	2021 Cohort	2022 Cohort
Metro Community College	1,594	1,590	2,054	2,437	2,503	2,312	2,728
Southeast Community College	1,301	1,479	1,618	1,555	1,770	1,957	2,021
Northeast Community College	859	912	851	842	984	1,048	967
Wayne State College	220	283	250	286	410	585	713
Mid-Plains Community College	543	576	623	613	600	604	626
Peru State College	815	840	811	665	534	612	509
Western Nebraska Community College	427	450	532	527	515	449	470
Chadron State College	117	128	106	86	101	96	95

Data is not available for Central Community College because the relevant historical data has not been submitted to the NSWERS Data System. Campus-level data is not shown for the University of Nebraska by request of their system office.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE AREAS

How does dual enrollment participation differ geographically?

Since students typically take dual enrollment coursework at their high school or at a local postsecondary institution, the total counts of dual enrollment participation are weighted towards high population areas around Lincoln and Omaha (figure 5 and table 1). However, the rate of participation varies across community college service regions. Among recent cohorts, the participation rates in the Northeast Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, and Western Nebraska Community College service regions exceeded 40 percent, some of the highest rates of dual enrollment participation in Nebraska. These rates include dual enrollment students who participate via any public Nebraska postsecondary, not just at the community college for which the service region is named.

Note, the rates of dual enrollment participation are lower in Central Community College's (CCC) service region compared to other service regions because CCC has not yet contributed the necessary historical enrollment data to identify dual enrollment students in the cohort years included in this report. The current reported dual enrollment participants in CCC's region were enrolled at nearby postsecondary institutions. This is because the reported rates of dual enrollment participation include any dual enrollment taken by high school students in each service region and students can take dual enrollment at other two or four year colleges and universities in the state. The rate of dual enrollment participation in this region will likely be higher once data from CCC is available for inclusion in this report.

2022 COHORT DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION RATES BY COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE REGION

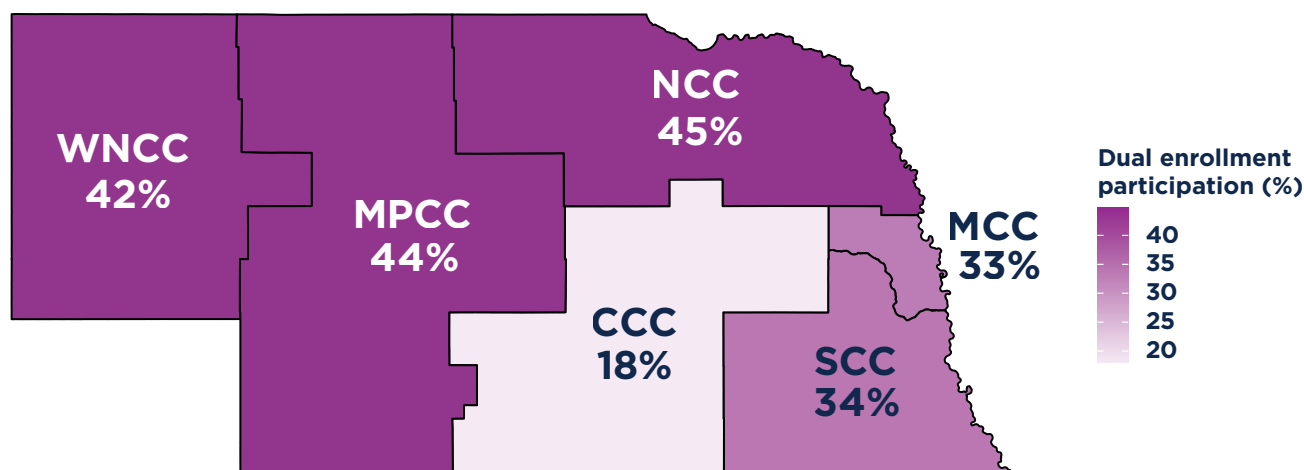


Figure 6: The 2022 cohort year participation rate of high school students within each service region. Not all participants attend a community college and these rates include students who are enrolled at four-year public colleges and universities within the service region.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE AREAS

How does dual enrollment participation differ geographically?

DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION BY COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE AREA

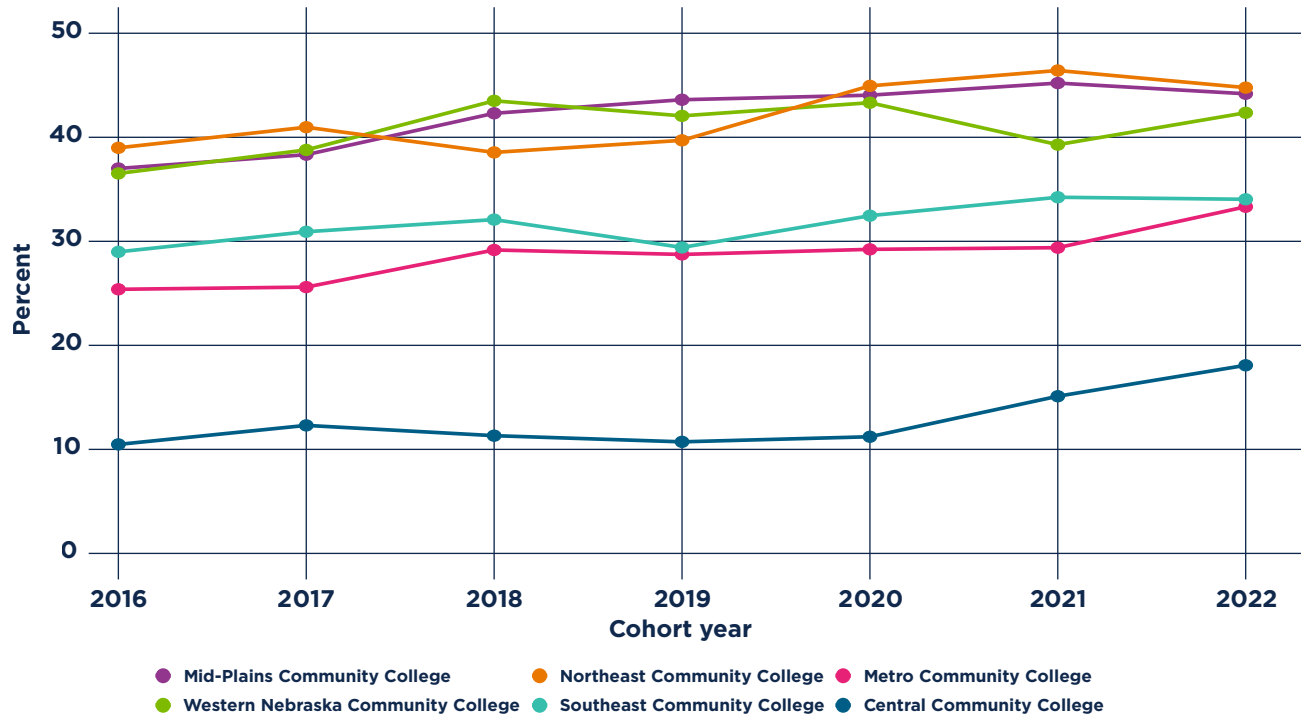


Figure 7: The cohort year participation rate within each service region across cohort years. Not all participants attend a community college and these rates include students who are enrolled at four-year public colleges and universities within the service region.

Table 2: Participation rates of dual enrollment participants by community college service area

Institution	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Northeast Community College	39.00%	41.00%	38.50%	39.70%	44.90%	46.40%	44.80%
Mid-Plains Community College	37.00%	38.30%	42.30%	43.60%	44.00%	45.20%	44.20%
Western Nebraska Community College	36.50%	38.80%	43.50%	42.10%	43.30%	39.30%	42.40%
Southeast Community College	29.00%	30.90%	32.10%	29.40%	32.50%	34.20%	34.00%
Metro Community College	25.40%	25.60%	29.20%	28.70%	29.20%	29.40%	33.30%
Central Community College	10.50%	12.30%	11.30%	10.70%	11.20%	15.10%	18.10%

Data is not available for Central Community College because the relevant historical data has not been submitted to the NSWERS Data System.

DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS

From which districts/schools do Nebraska students access dual enrollment?

Generally, the number of high schools and K-12 school districts with dually-enrolled students has remained steady over the study period (figure 8).

DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN DUAL ENROLLMENT

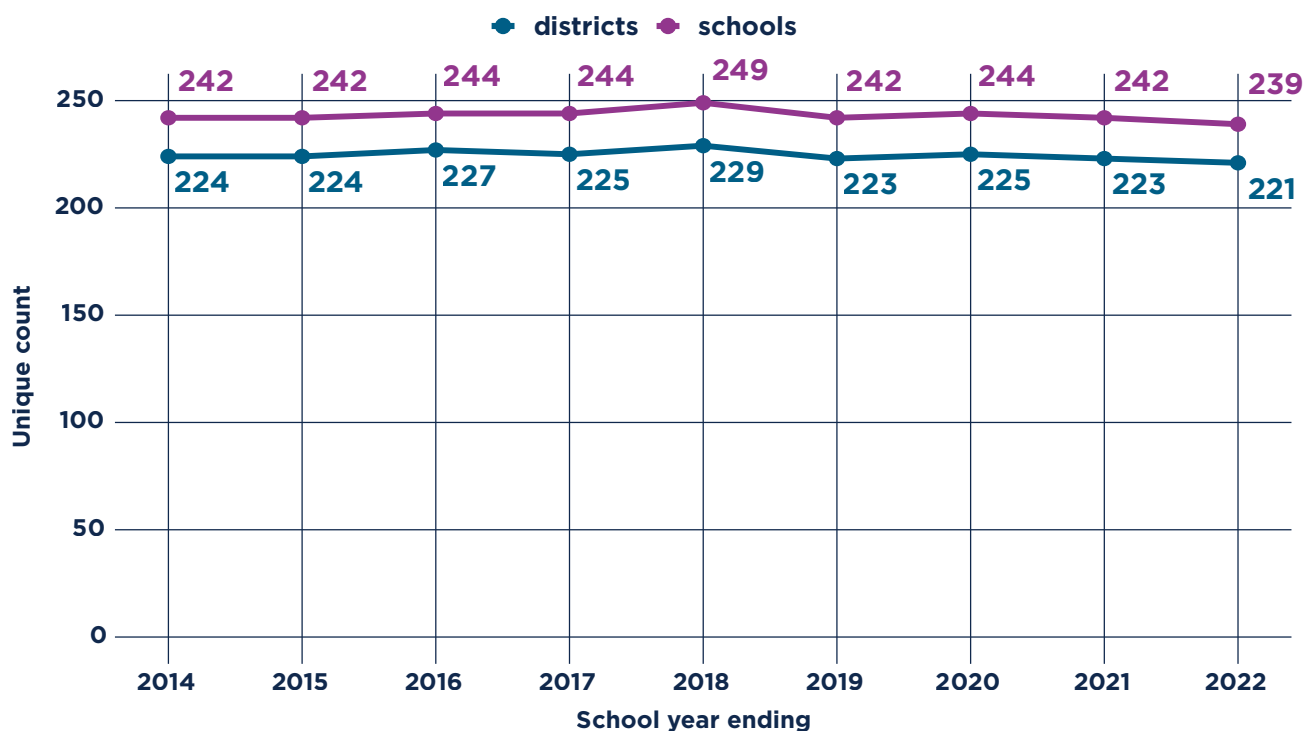


Figure 8: The total number of districts and schools at which students were recorded as participating in dual enrollment.

DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS

Which districts have the highest dual enrollment student participation?

The rise in student dual enrollment since 2014 can be attributed, for the most part, to the three largest school districts in Nebraska (figure 9 and table 3). Omaha Public Schools, Millard Public Schools, and Lincoln Public Schools claim the highest dual enrollment numbers. Gretna Public Schools and Papillion La Vista Community Schools come in fourth and fifth for enrollment, respectively. All told, these five school districts have 5,029 dual enrollment students, or 55 percent of all Nebraska participants taking dual enrollment courses.

Two districts, Bellevue Public Schools and Westside Community Schools, while not historically in the top five districts, made recent gains in 2022. In the 2021-2022 school year, Bellevue Public Schools reached the fourth highest count of dual enrollment participants, and Westside Community Schools exceeded the participation counts of Papillion La Vista Community Schools.

STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN DUAL ENROLLMENT BY DISTRICT

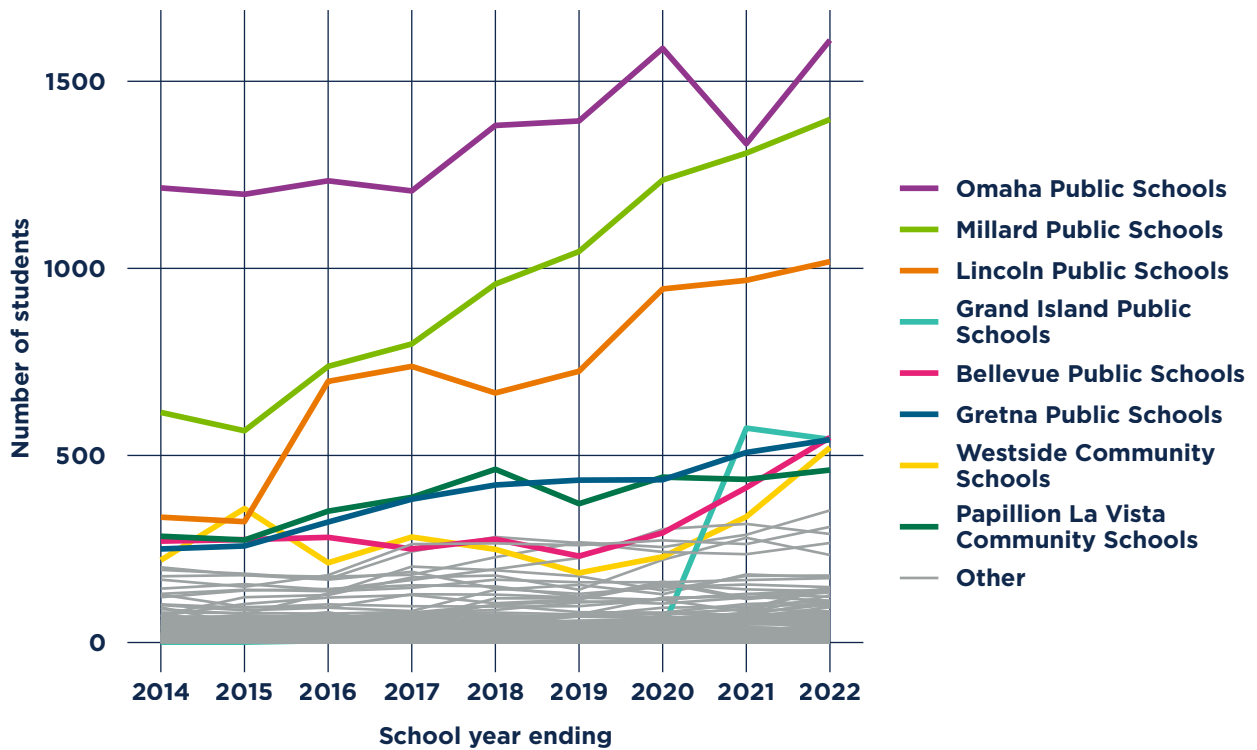


Figure 9: The total number of dual enrollment participants over time at each public school district in Nebraska.

DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS

Which districts have the highest dual enrollment student participation?

Table 3: Top districts by dual enrollment counts.

School year ending	Omaha Public Schools	Millard Public Schools	Lincoln Public Schools	Grand Island Public Schools	Bellevue Public Schools	Gretna Public Schools	Westside Cmty Schools	Papillion La Vista Cmty Schools
2014	1,215	615	335	*	271	250	220	284
2015	1,198	566	323	*	275	258	358	274
2016	1,234	738	698	*	281	322	213	351
2017	1,207	798	738	13	250	383	282	388
2018	1,382	958	667	10	276	421	249	463
2019	1,394	1,045	725	*	231	434	186	371
2020	1,588	1,236	945	37	293	435	229	442
2021	1,333	1,308	968	573	414	508	336	436
2022	1,610	1,398	1,018	543	548	542	521	461

GRADE LEVEL

In which grades do Nebraska students take dual enrollment courses?

Dual enrollment courses are taken in every high school grade (9-12). Most courses are taken in the second half of high school, whereas typically only a few hundred ninth graders are dually enrolled in any given school year (table 4, figure 10). In recent years there are over 10,000 students dually enrolled while in grades 11 and 12. This may reflect rules for dual enrollment access in Nebraska which are generally open to eleventh and twelfth graders who meet grade point average (GPA) requirements to participate in dual enrollment.

Table 4: Dual enrollees by grade level

School Year Ending	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
2014	71	435	2,917	5,026
2015	178	555	2,935	5,080
2016	259	680	3,609	5,308
2017	305	785	3,960	5,544
2018	273	765	3,903	6,173
2019	242	766	3,908	6,115
2020	223	1,185	4,573	6,734
2021	291	1,383	5,082	6,846
2022	438	1,520	5,332	7,617

COUNT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPANTS BY GRADE LEVEL

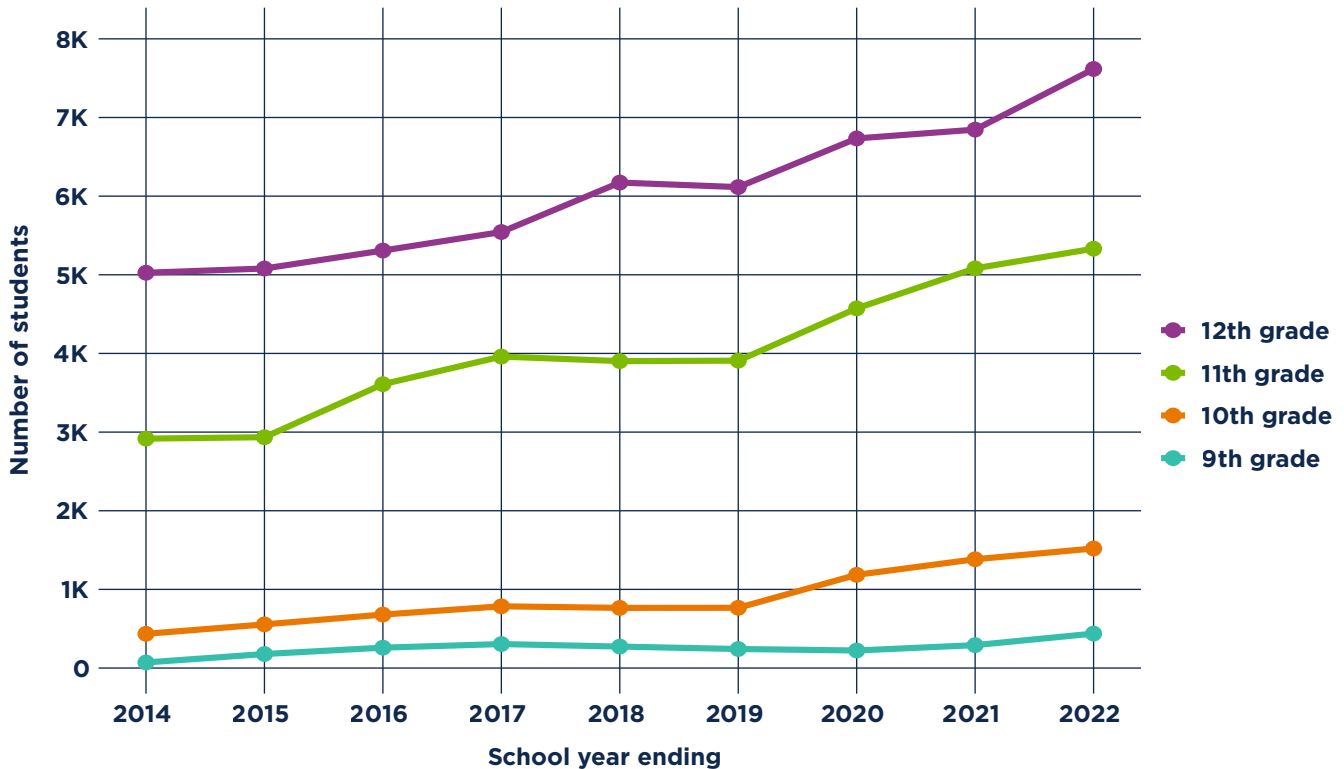


Figure 10: The total number of dual enrollment students enrolled each year by their grade level.

COLLEGE CREDIT THROUGH DUAL ENROLLMENT

How many dual enrollment credits do Nebraska students earn?

The number of dual enrollment credit hours earned by dual enrollment participants has increased over time as more students participate in dual enrollment. The average credits earned per student is 12.3 semester hours among the 2022 cohort, which is up from 8.9 semester hours among the 2016 cohort (figure 11). This means the average dual enrollment participant earned the equivalent of one full semester of college before graduating from high school.

AVERAGE DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDITS EARNED PER STUDENT



Figure 11: The average total number of semester hours earned by dual enrollment participants by cohort year.

COLLEGE CREDIT THROUGH DUAL ENROLLMENT

How many dual enrollment credits do Nebraska students earn?

Generally speaking, most Nebraska students earn no dual enrollment credit (table 5). Among students who do earn credits, most earn six or fewer credits. However, there is an increasing minority of students who earn 24 or more college credits via dual enrollment, the equivalent of earning an entire year of college credits (figure 12).

Table 5: Percent of dual enrollment credit hours earned

Cohort year	0 Credit	1-6 Credits	7-12 Credits	13-24 Credits	24+ Credits
2016	74.4	13.4	6.2	4.9	1.2
2017	73.1	13.2	6.6	5.7	1.3
2018	71.3	13.9	7.1	5.7	2.1
2019	72.2	12.6	7.2	5.8	2.3
2020	71.0	12.7	6.9	6.7	2.7
2021	69.8	12.5	7.1	7.2	3.3
2022	67.9	12.9	7.5	7.9	3.9

PERCENT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDIT HOURS ATTEMPTED

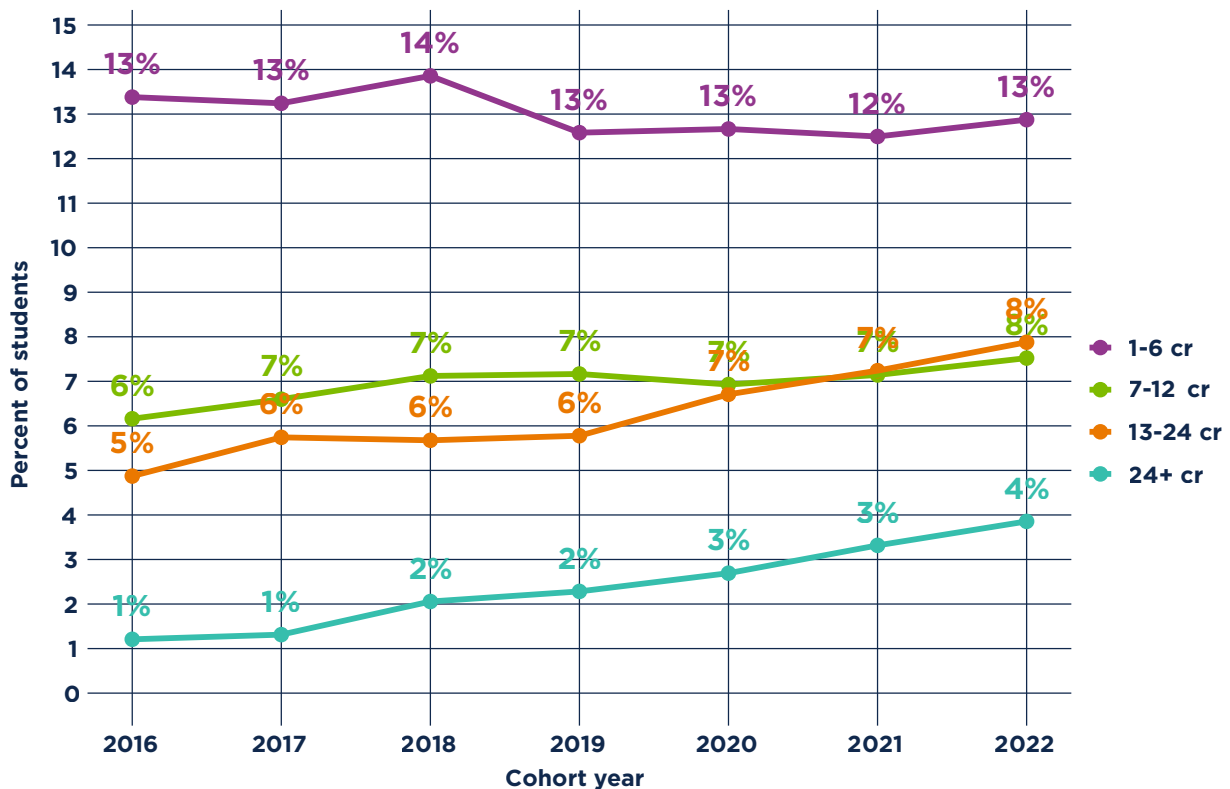


Figure 12: The percentage of student cohorts that earned certain ranges of dual enrollment credit. The percentage of students that earned zero credit hours are not shown.

COLLEGE CREDIT THROUGH DUAL ENROLLMENT

How many dual enrollment credits do Nebraska students earn?

The total number of college credit hours earned by dual enrollment participants has climbed over time as there have been increases in both the number of participants and the average number of credits earned by each participant (figure 13).

NUMBER OF DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDIT HOURS EARNED

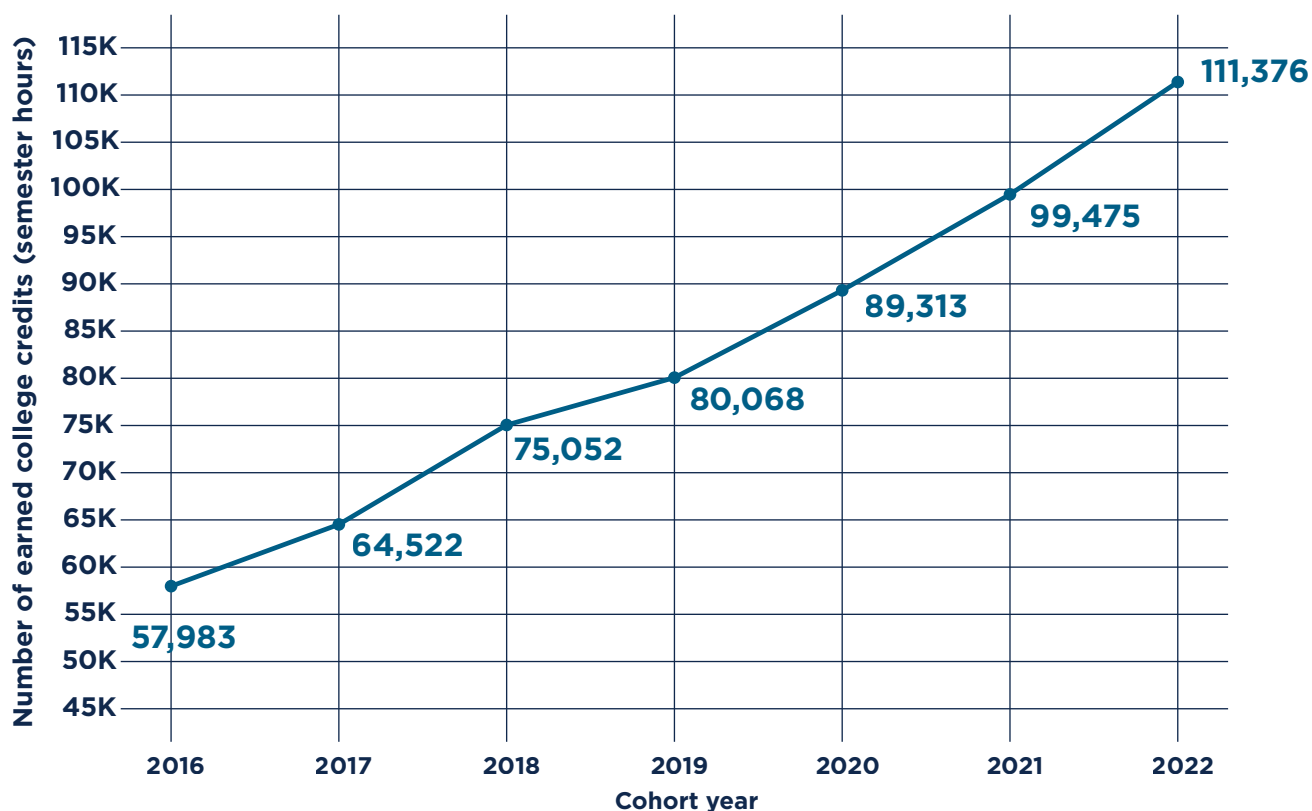


Figure 13: The total number of dual enrollment semester hours earned.

COURSES & COURSE SUBJECTS

What dual enrollment courses and subjects do Nebraska students take?

The number of dual enrollment course subjects taken in Nebraska has, for the most part, remained consistent over time. However, the number of unique courses offered to dual enrollment participants has generally grown since 2015 (figure 14). This expansion is giving Nebraska students more opportunities to complete dual enrollment courses in desired subjects.

DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES & COURSE SUBJECTS

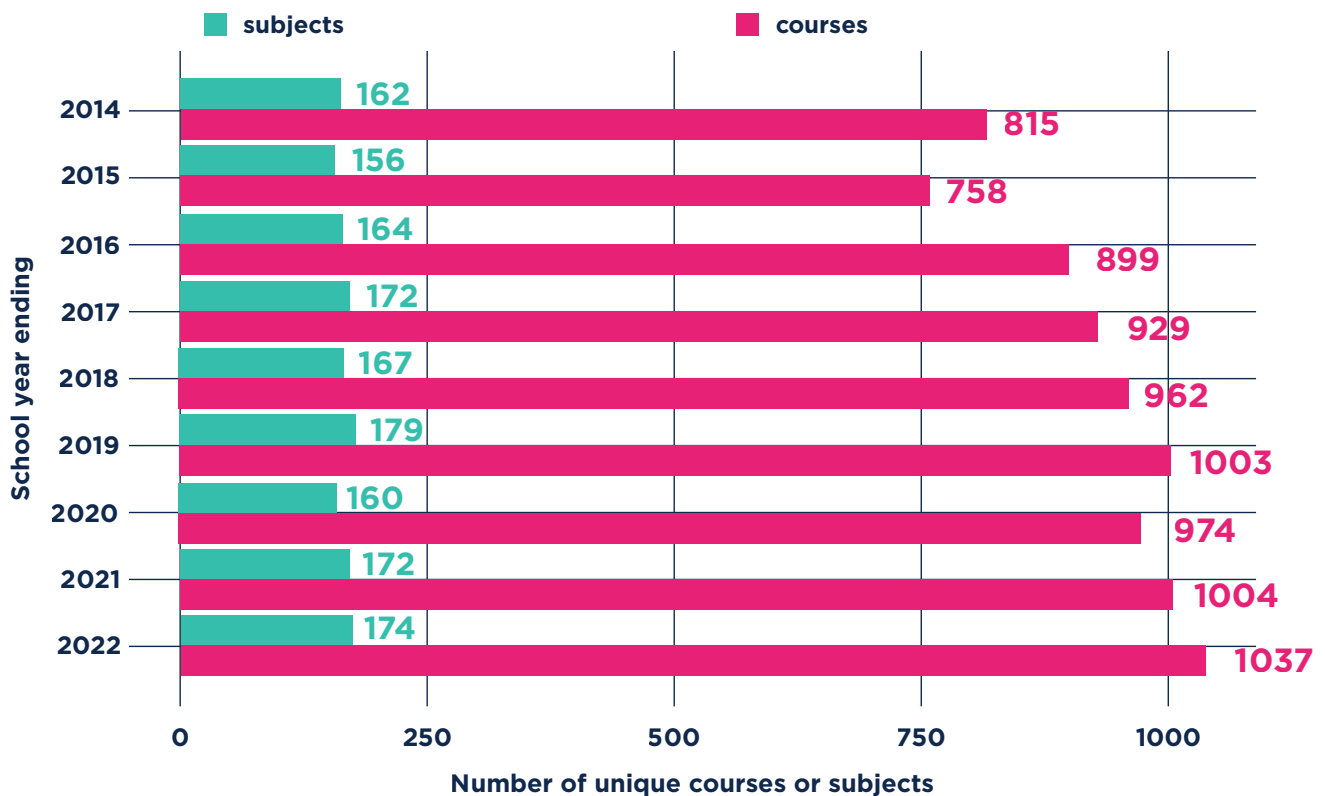


Figure 14: The unique counts of dual enrollment subjects and courses taken over time.

COURSE SUBJECTS

What dual enrollment subjects do Nebraska students take?

English makes up roughly 19 percent of dual enrollment course subjects and nearly 15 percent in math. History (7 percent), psychology (5 percent), biology (5 percent), and speech and communication (4 percent) also have higher participation (table 6, figure 15). These course subjects are common general studies prerequisite courses for college degrees, reflecting the evident goals of participants to prepare for academic degrees by taking dual enrollment coursework.

Table 6: Top course subjects by total dual enrollments between 2014-2022

Subject	Enrollments	% of Total Dual Enrollments
English	47,954	18.8
Math	37,661	14.8
History	18,433	7.2
Psychology	13,399	5.2
Biology	11,599	4.5
Speech & Communication	9,388	3.7
Welding	7,186	2.8
Health	6,510	2.6
Sociology	6,294	2.5
Information Technology	5,987	2.3
Other	90,815	35.6

DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSE TAKING BY SUBJECT FROM 2014 TO 2022

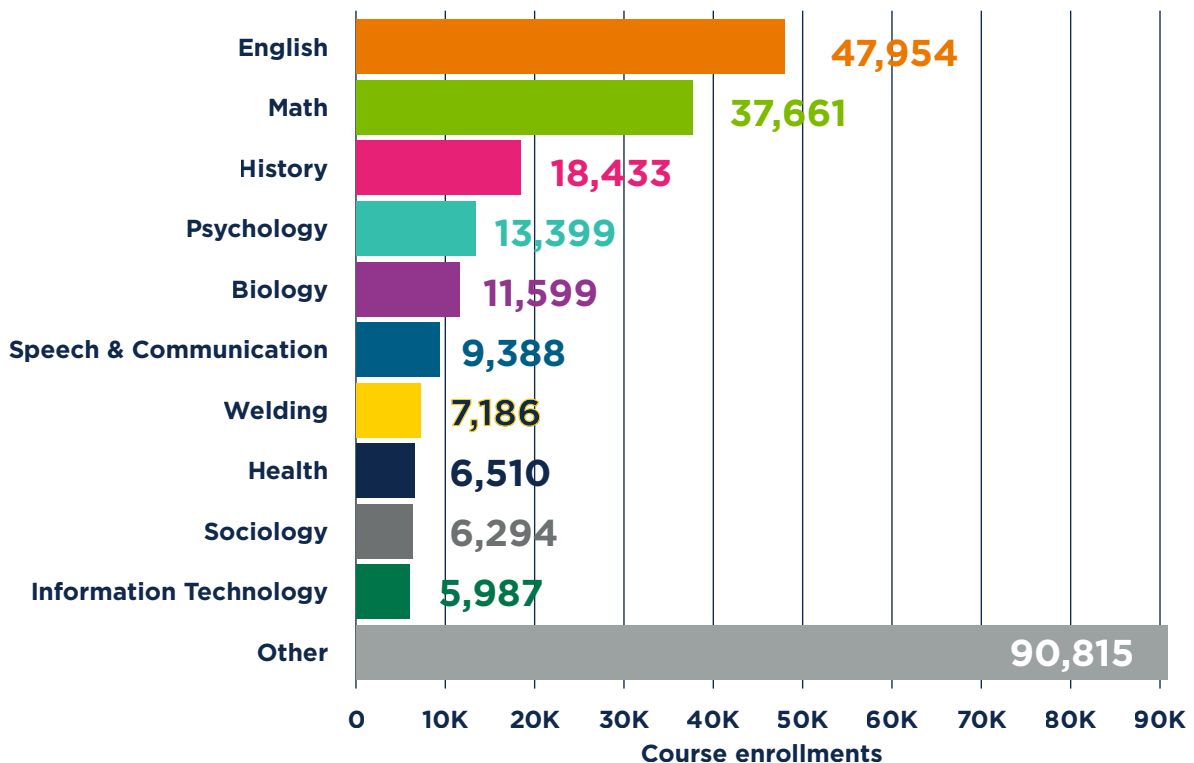


Figure 15: The unique counts of dual enrollment subjects and courses taken over time.

HIGH SCHOOL GPA

How do Nebraska dual enrollment students perform academically in high school?

The median high school grade point average (GPA) among dual enrollees is roughly 3.4 to 3.5 across cohort years, which is higher than among non-dual enrollees who earned between a 2.6 and 2.8 GPA across cohort years (figure 16). Notice that there is a pattern of decreasing GPAs among non-dual enrollment participants over time. This may reflect that, as more students participate in dual enrollment, the remaining non-participants on average have lower GPAs since participants are generally required to have above a 3.0 high school GPA to participate (see technical documentation).

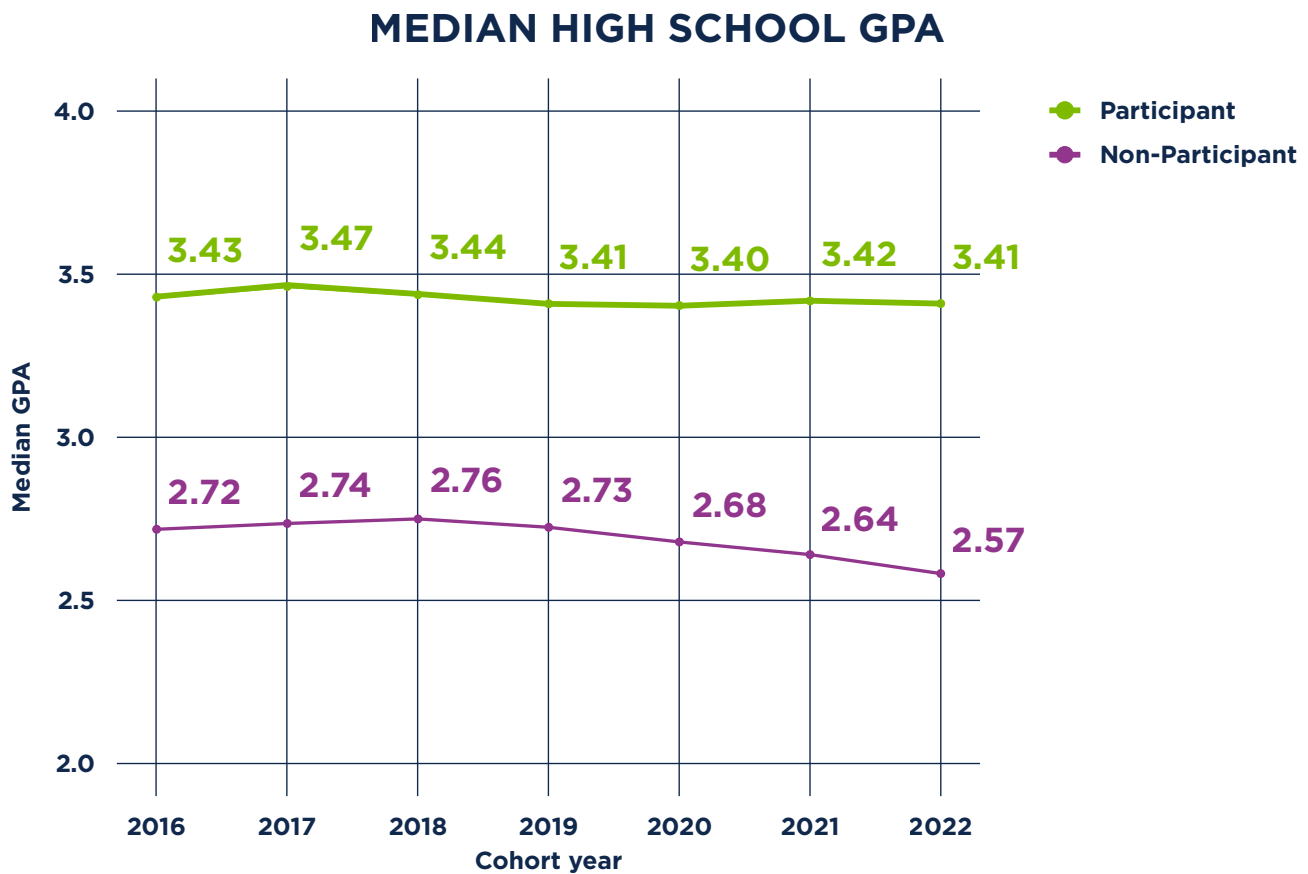


Figure 16: Median high school grade point average (GPA) by dual enrollment participation status over time.

POSTSECONDARY GPA

How do Nebraska dual enrollment students perform academically in college?

First-year postsecondary college GPAs are higher among dual enrollment participants than non-participants (figure 17). The difference in GPA between participants and non-participants depends on the type of postsecondary institution. At two-year colleges, dual enrollment participants have median GPAs of 3.2 whereas non-participants have median GPAs of 2.8. At four-year colleges, dual enrollment participants have median GPAs of 3.5 whereas non-dual participants have median GPAs of 3.2.

2022 MEDIAN FIRST-YEAR POSTSECONDARY GPA

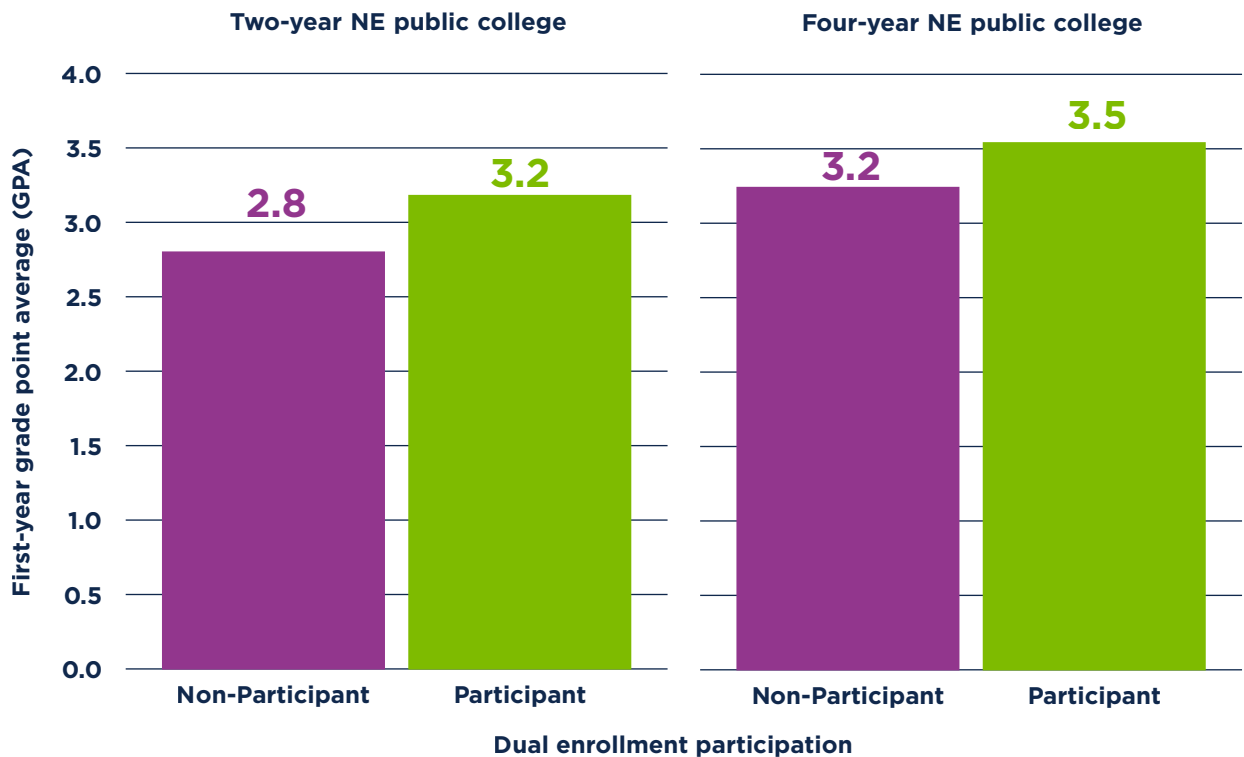


Figure 17: Median first-year postsecondary grade point average (GPA) by dual enrollment participation status in 2022 among those who attended a Nebraska public postsecondary institution.

POSTSECONDARY GPA

How do Nebraska dual enrollment students perform academically in college?

While first-year postsecondary GPA may have increased over time, the gap between dual enrollment participants and non-participants has persisted (figure 18).

MEDIAN FIRST-YEAR POSTSECONDARY GPA

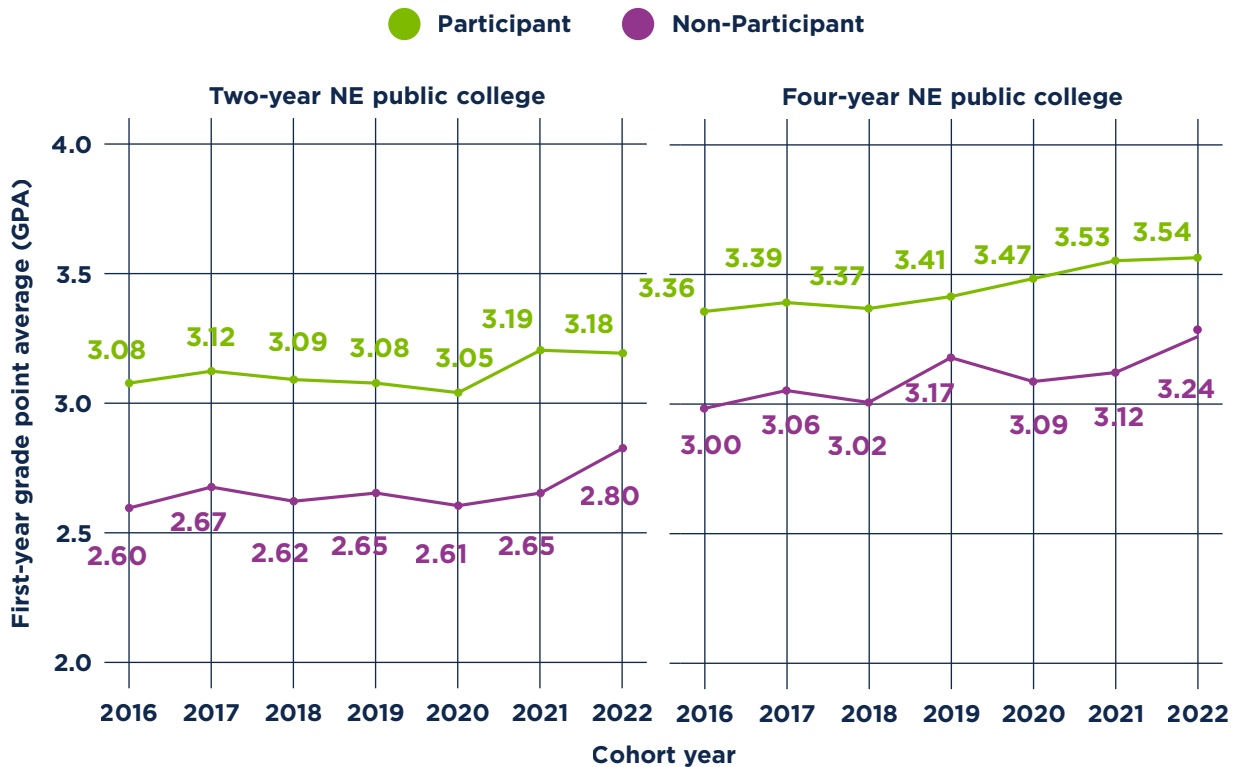


Figure 18: Median first-year postsecondary grade point average (GPA) by dual enrollment participation status over time among those who attended a Nebraska public postsecondary institution.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

How many CTE dual enrollment courses are offered to Nebraska students?

Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses make up 22 percent of the total courses taken by participants in the 2022 cohort (table 7). Both general education and CTE courses have increased over time, although the enrollment in general education courses has increased at a faster rate than increases in CTE enrollments (figure 19 and table 7).

Table 7: Types of dual enrollment courses taken over time

Year	% CTE	CTE Enrollments	Gen. Ed. Enrollments	Total Enrollments
2014	18.3	3,489	15,615	19,104
2015	18.1	3,566	16,188	19,754
2016	22.1	5,145	18,146	23,291
2017	22.9	5,979	20,126	26,105
2018	22.5	6,342	21,820	28,162
2019	24.7	7,345	22,358	29,703
2020	21.6	7,318	26,583	33,901
2021	20.9	7,510	28,444	35,954
2022	21.5	8,427	30,824	39,251

DUAL ENROLLMENT BY COURSE TYPE

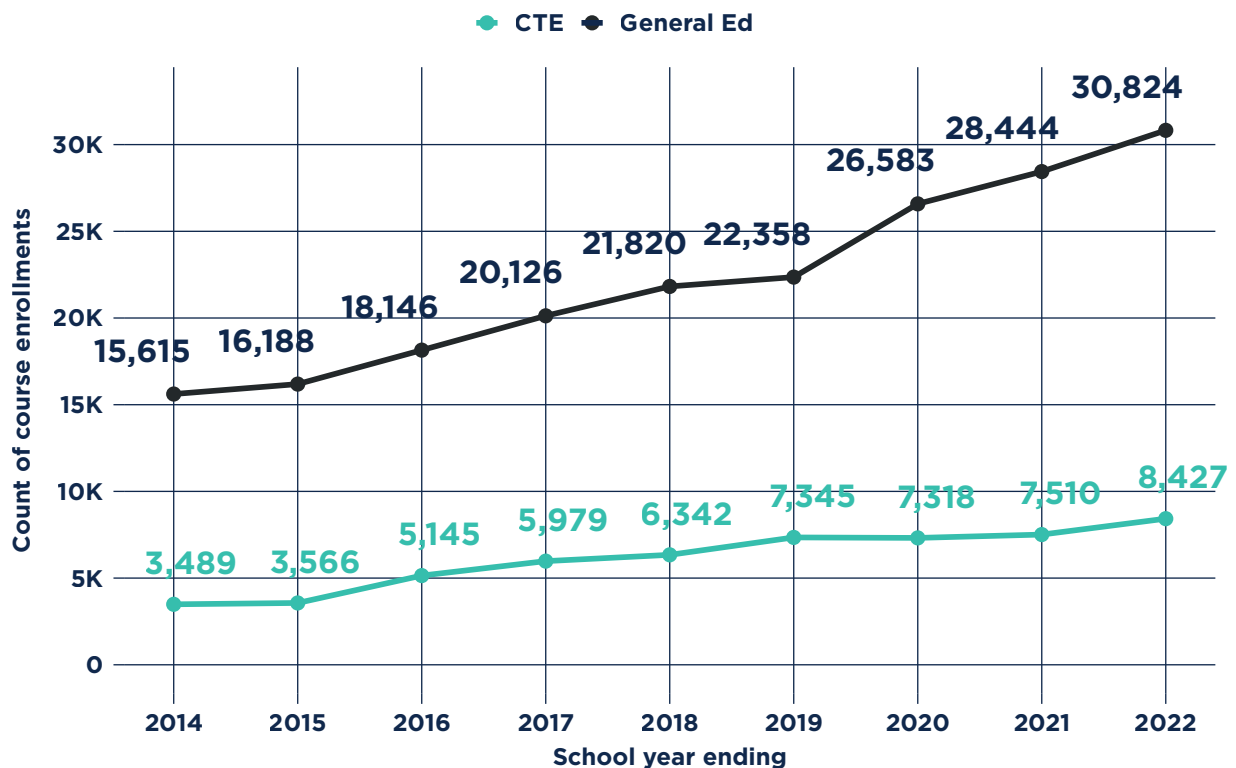


Figure 19: Total course enrollments over time between general education and career and technical education courses.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

What are the top CTE subjects that dual enrollment students take?

Welding and Information Technology are the top two CTE dual enrollment courses, with 6,742 and 5,986 enrollments, respectively (table 8, figure 20). Subjects in health, business, criminology, education, construction, and automotive complete the top ten CTE courses.

Table 8: Top Ten Career and Technical Education (CTE) subject areas by enrollments (2014 - 2022)

Subject	Total Enrollments
Welding	6,742
Information Technology	5,986
Healthcare Provider	4,798
Business Administration	3,661
Health Info Management	3,634
Criminology	3,182
Nursing	2,829
Early Childhood Education	2,569
Architecture/Construction	2,083
Automotive/Diesel	1,941

TOP TEN CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SUBJECTS TOTAL COURSE ENROLLMENTS BETWEEN 2014 TO 2022

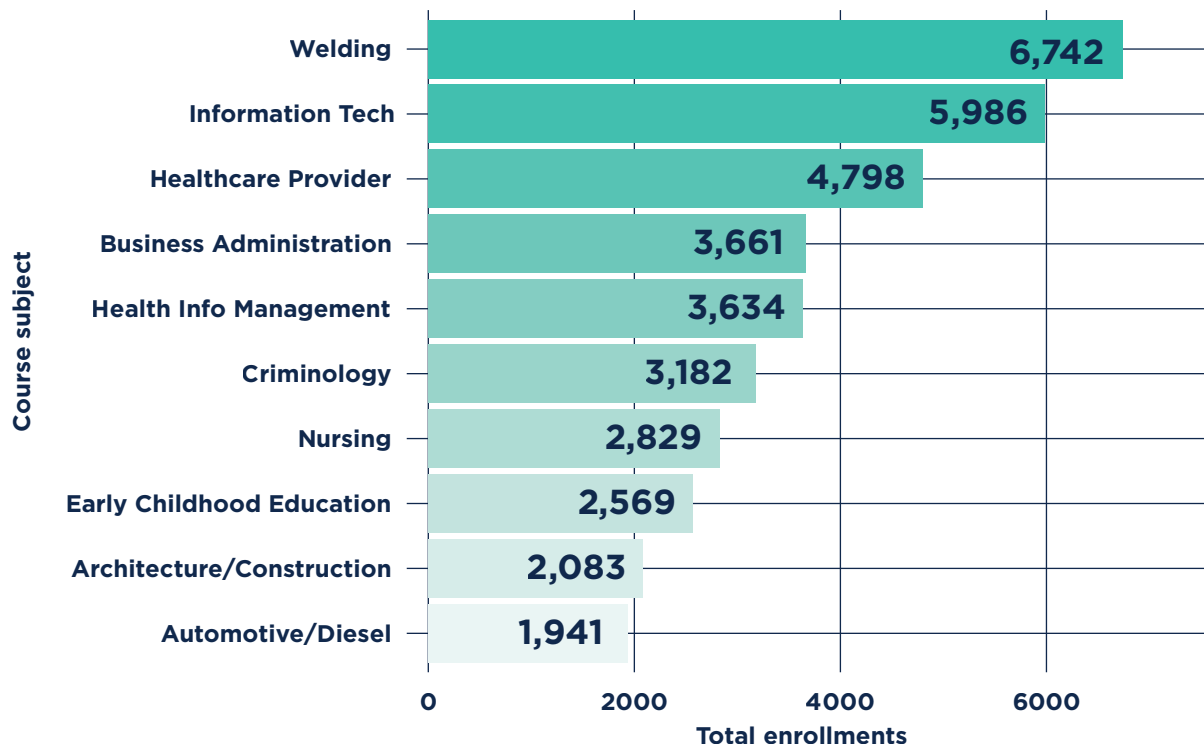


Figure 20: Total course enrollments in the top ten career and technical education subjects between 2014 and 2022.

RACE/ETHNICITY

What are the demographic characteristics of dual enrollment students in Nebraska?

Among the 2022 cohort, differences exist when it comes to dual enrollment credit earners by race/ethnicity (figure 21). White students earn dual enrollment credit at the highest rates with 36 percent. Multiracial students follow with 34 percent. At 19 percent, Hispanic students earn dual enrollment credit at above half the rate of White students and Black students earn less at around 11 percent. Asian students earn dual enrollment credit at above 28 percent which is behind the rates for White and Multiracial students. American Indian and Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian students earn dual enrollment credit at the lowest rates at around 6 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

Note that the observed racial differences in dual enrollment may be caused by multiple, non-exclusive reasons. These reasons could include lack of access or support for students to participate in dual enrollment. It could also be related to rules surrounding eligibility to take dual enrollment coursework, which typically require a minimum 3.0 high school GPA (see technical documentation). This could reduce the rates of dual enrollment participation as students may not meet requirements. Some differences may also exist due to data limitations. For instance, it is possible that rates of dual enrollment participation are underestimated for American Indian students since they may be disproportionately likely to attend high schools that are served by tribal colleges which are not currently included in the NSWERS Data System.

DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDIT EARNERS BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2022)

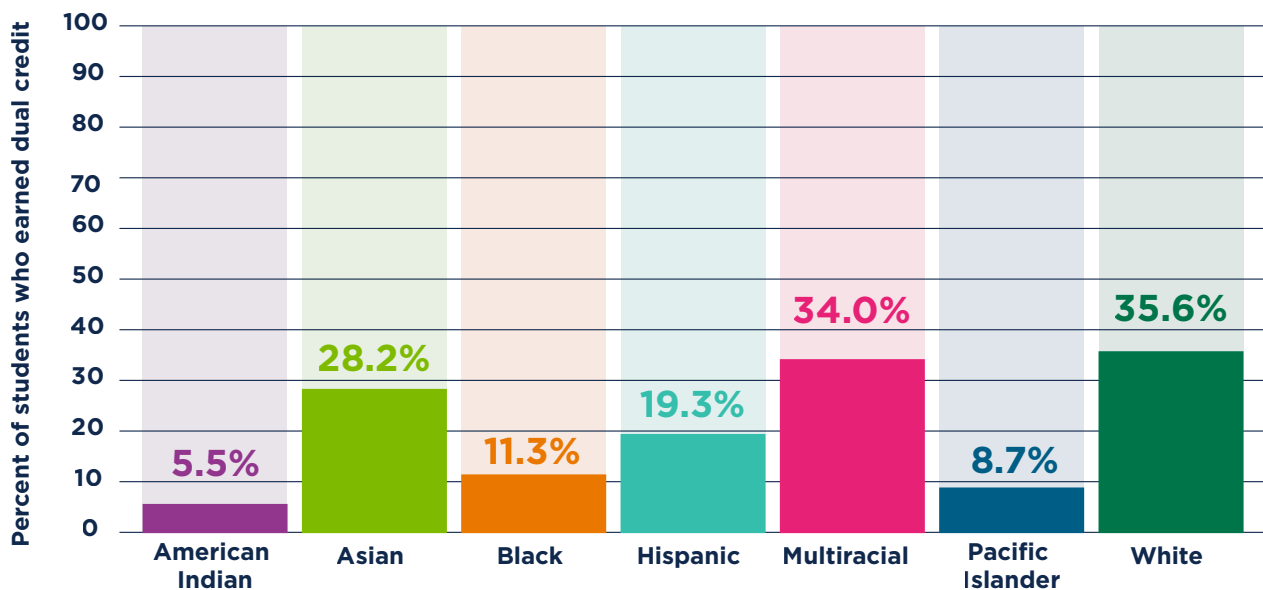


Figure 21: Dual enrollment participation rates by student race/ethnicity in the 2022 cohort.

GENDER

What are the demographic characteristics of dual enrollment students in Nebraska?

Since 2016, more females than males have taken dual enrollment courses in Nebraska (figure 23). Among the 2022 cohort, 56 percent (figure 22) of dual enrollment students were female versus 44 percent male students. This may be related to greater interest or motivation to attend college by female students compared to male students, as evidenced by the gender gap in college attendance between men and women.

DUAL ENROLLEES BY GENDER (2022 COHORT)

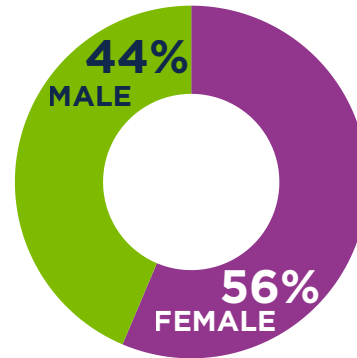


Figure 22: Percent of dual enrollees by gender.

DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

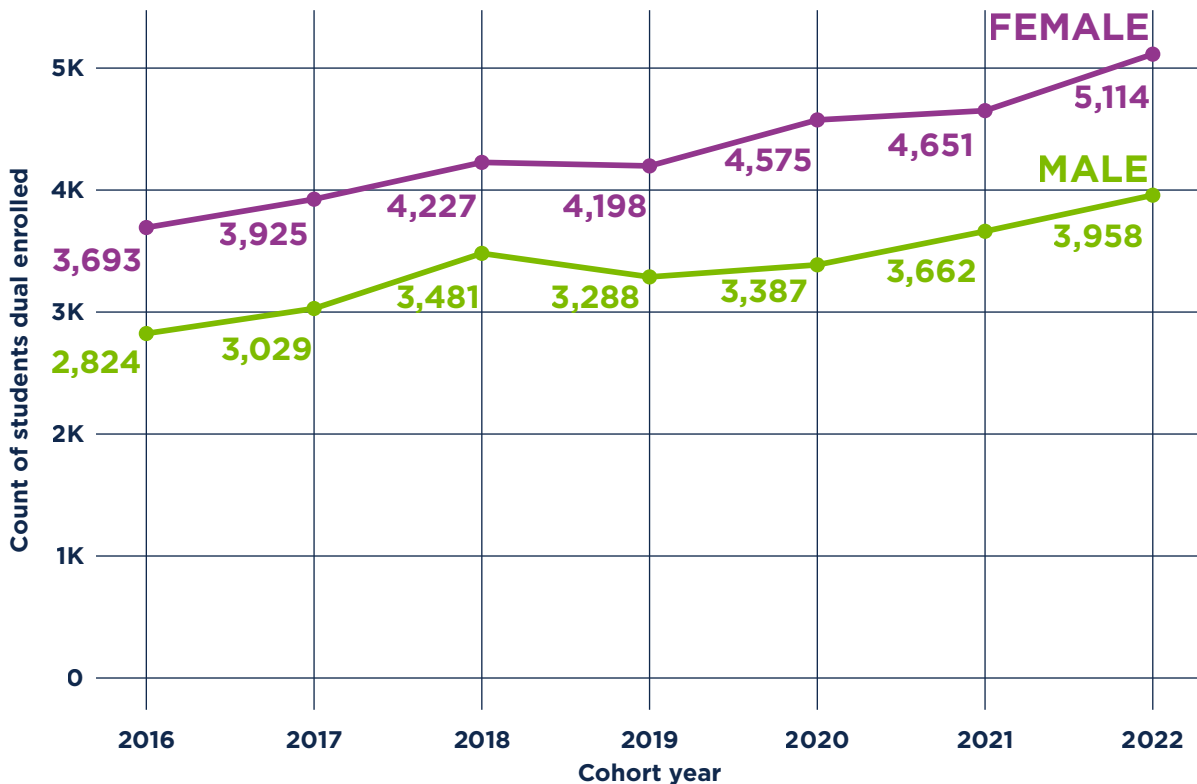


Figure 23: Counts of dual enrollment participation by gender over time.

education outcomes

Source: Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System analysis of data from NSWERS Data System, 2012-2024. These data include records for Nebraska public high schools as well as public and private postsecondary institutions in the United States covered by the National Student Clearinghouse. Historical data was not provided by Central Community College and is therefore not included in this analysis.

*These provisional results are based on certified NSWERS data as of March 13, 2025.
The provisional results in this report may change because of data resubmissions by NSWERS Partners and/or Affiliates. While NSWERS strives for accuracy and reliability, official estimates should be obtained directly from the respective partners. For updated results, please contact support@nswers.org.*

This section presents data on the effects of eleventh and twelfth grade dual enrollment participation on four core educational outcomes: high school graduation, college going, postsecondary persistence, and postsecondary graduation.

There are three types of estimates used:

1. **Observed Rates:** This shows how well dual enrollment students and non-dual enrollment students do in school. It helps us understand how big the difference is between the two groups.
2. **Observed Effects (Unadjusted):** This shows the difference in success between dual enrollment participants and non-participants, but it is unadjusted for other factors that might affect their success. Some of the difference could be due to things other than dual enrollment.
3. **Causal Effects (Adjusted):** This shows the difference in successful attainment of an outcome that dual enrollment participants would experience compared to if they had not participated in dual enrollment. These numbers are adjusted to account for other differences between the two groups, making it the most useful for understanding the real impact of dual enrollment on participants.

Estimates are presented separately for each cohort year to investigate if the effects of dual enrollment participation change over time or are impacted by educational disruptions like COVID-19. The expected high school graduation cohort year is used for all effect estimates. The reason this high school cohort year is used rather than a cohort year specific to the outcome, for instance, year of initial college enrollment for postsecondary persistence, is that the high school cohort year is more relevant to understanding cohort differences in the effect of dual enrollment. It is more reasonable to consider potential differences in the effect of dual enrollment based on the period in which the students took dual enrollment rather than the period in which they entered college, since the former is better aligned with potential differences in the effects of dual enrollment participation.

Refer to the online technical appendix found at insights.nswers.org/special-report/2025-dual-enrollment for additional details on outcomes and statistical methods used in this section.

high school graduation



Data notes: Only students who earned regular diplomas, not alternative diplomas or GEDs, are defined as graduates in this report. These rates are based on the expected high school graduation cohort; Nebraska public high school students with the same expected high school graduation date who did not transfer out of the Nebraska public school system during high school.



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Do Nebraska public high school students graduate within four years of starting high school?

Almost all dual enrollment participants graduated high school on time, at 99 percent. Among non-participants, the rate of high school graduation was initially in the upper 80 percent range among the 2016 cohort but has steadily decreased over time to just 80 percent in the 2022 cohort (table 9 and figure 24).

The observed difference in the rate of high school graduation was 12 percentage points in favor of dual enrollment participants among the 2016 cohort and has increased to 19 percentage points among the 2022 cohort (table 10 observed effects). However, the causal effect estimates indicate that dual enrollment participation causes around a 2 to 4 percentage point increase in on-time graduation, suggesting that much of the observed difference in the outcome was due to pre-existing differences between participants and non-participants (figure 25 and table 10 causal effects). This means that in the absence of dual enrollment, the group of students who would have participated would have a 2 to 4 percentage point lower rate of on-time graduation. This would translate to between around 130 to 320 fewer on-time high school graduates per year depending on the cohort.

Table 9: Observed rates of on-time high school graduation by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	98.6%(5,549/5,627)	86.5%(9,983/11,543)
2017	98.4%(5,912/6,007)	85.9%(9,912/11,534)
2018	98.3%(6,583/6,700)	85.9%(9,828/11,441)
2019	98.4%(6,432/6,539)	84.4%(10,032/11,884)
2020	98.7%(6,880/6,968)	82%(9,626/11,745)
2021	98.7%(7,080/7,175)	81.3%(9,591/11,801)
2022	98.8%(7,673/7,764)	80.2%(9,458/11,799)

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION

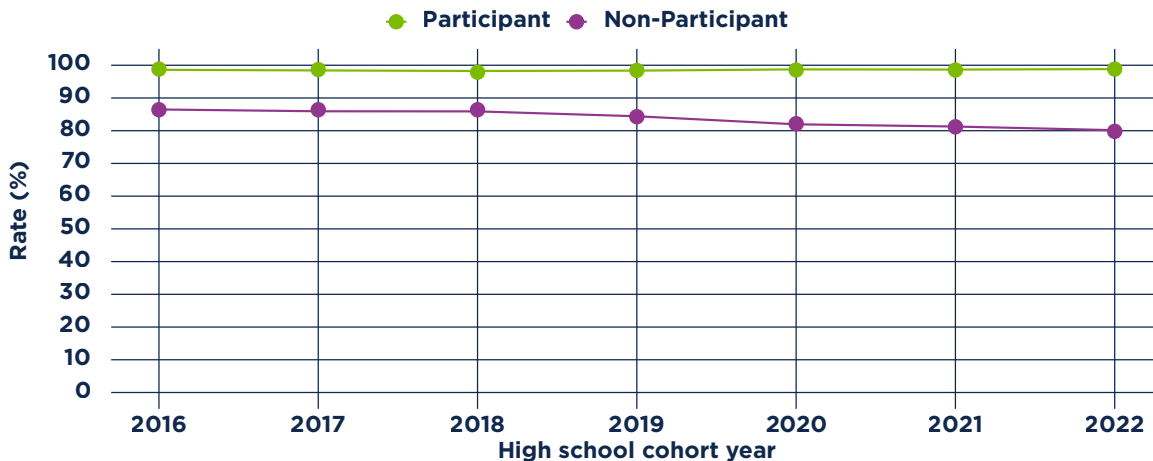


Figure 24: Observed rates of on-time high school graduation over time by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Do Nebraska public high school students graduate within four years of starting high school?

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

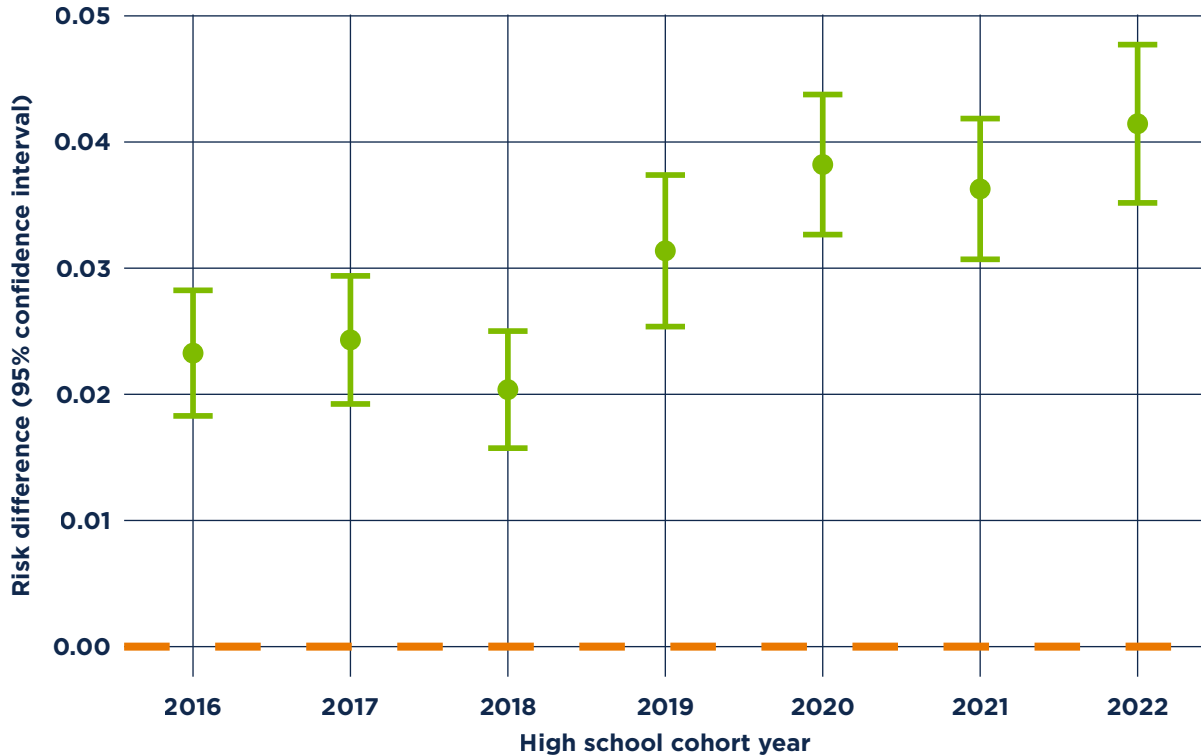


Figure 25: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on high school graduation over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.

Table 10: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of on-time high school graduation among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.12 (0.10, 0.14)	0.02 (0.02, 0.03)
2017	0.12 (0.11, 0.14)	0.02 (0.02, 0.03)
2018	0.12 (0.10, 0.14)	0.02 (0.02, 0.03)
2019	0.14 (0.12, 0.16)	0.03 (0.03, 0.04)
2020	0.17 (0.14, 0.20)	0.04 (0.03, 0.04)
2021	0.17 (0.14, 0.21)	0.04 (0.03, 0.04)
2022	0.19 (0.16, 0.22)	0.04 (0.04, 0.05)



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Do Nebraska public high school students graduate within four years of starting high school?

The observed decrease in on-time graduation among non-participants may be due to changes in who does not participate.

This pattern may be explained by two observations:

1. the proportion of participants has increased over time;
2. dual enrollment participation is positively associated with academic achievement.

These two observations can combine to reduce the overall academic ability, and likewise the likelihood of on-time high school graduation of non-participants (figure 16). Based on the timing of the shift, another possible explanation for the observed change is COVID-19 related-educational disruptions (Dorn et al. 2021).

The effect of dual enrollment for improving rates of on-time high school graduation among the students who chose to participate is positive, but relatively modest. Overall, while dual enrollment participation does improve on-time high school graduation rates, most of the observed differences are likely driven by other differences between participants and non-participants, such as high school GPA and other risk factors for dropping out of high school.

college going



Data Notes: College going is defined as enrolling in college within 16 months of high school graduation. The college going analyses are restricted to students who graduated high school on time. Some students enroll in both two-year and four-year colleges within 16 months of high school. In these cases the college enrollment type is coded as “Two/Four-year.”



Do high school graduates enroll in college within 16 months of their high school graduation?

Dual enrollment participants are around 6 to 10 percentage points more likely to go to college than if they had not participated in dual enrollment (table 11 causal effects and figure 26). This means that dual enrollment participation causes around 350 to 680 additional high school graduates to go to college annually depending on the cohort year. The causal effect of dual enrollment participation on college going has increased over time. While the causal effect estimates are considerably smaller than the observed effects which range between 20 to 27 percentage points (table 11 observed effects), the effect size is still large in the context of educational interventions.

Table 11: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of college going among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.21 (0.19, 0.22)	0.06 (0.05, 0.08)
2017	0.20 (0.18, 0.21)	0.06 (0.05, 0.07)
2018	0.21 (0.19, 0.22)	0.06 (0.05, 0.08)
2019	0.22 (0.20, 0.23)	0.09 (0.07, 0.10)
2020	0.25 (0.24, 0.27)	0.10 (0.08, 0.11)
2021	0.27 (0.25, 0.29)	0.10 (0.08, 0.11)

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON COLLEGE GOING

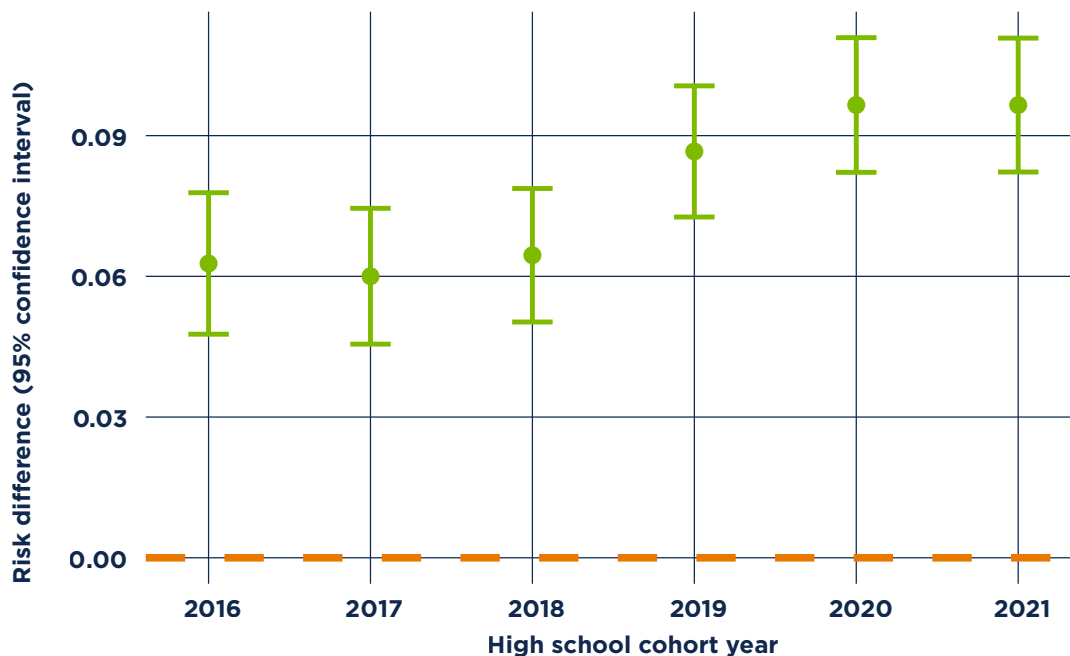


Figure 26: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on college going over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



COLLEGE GOING

Do high school graduates enroll in college within 16 months of their high school graduation?

Furthermore, dual enrollment participants were observed to enroll at four-year institutions at higher rates than non-participants (table 13 and figure 28, next page). This may occur because dual enrollment students seek to earn four-year degrees rather than two-year degrees. Previous research on Nebraska students who enrolled in college found that dual enrollment causes a 5 to 6 percentage point increase in enrollment at four-year institutions over two-year institutions (Lee et al. 2022). Dual enrollment participants were nearly twice as likely as non-participants to have enrolled in both a two-year and four-year institution

within 16 months after high school graduation, but each group was similarly likely to enroll only at a two-year institution.

Table 12: Observed rates of college going by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	86.5%(4,785/5,534)	65.7%(6,492/9,884)
2017	85.8%(5,059/5,894)	66.3%(6,482/9,783)
2018	86.1%(5,645/6,558)	65.4%(6,355/9,718)
2019	86.9%(5,581/6,419)	65.2%(6,459/9,907)
2020	86.8%(5,961/6,871)	61.4%(5,848/9,521)
2021	87.5%(6,188/7,071)	60.4%(5,711/9,451)

COLLEGE GOING BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION

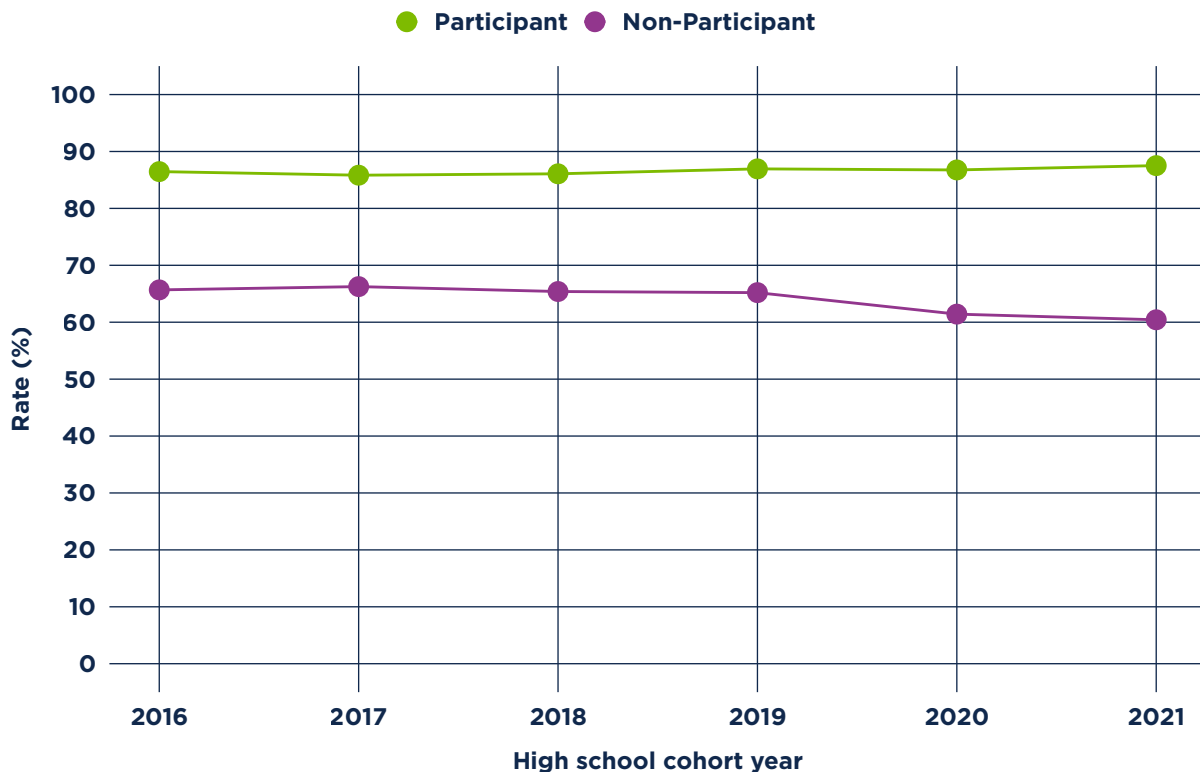


Figure 27: Observed rates of college going over time by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



COLLEGE GOING

Do high school graduates enroll in college within 16 months of their high school graduation?

Table 13: Observed rates of college going by dual enrollment participation and college

Cohort Year	Dual enrollment	N Students	Non-college going	Two-year	Two/Four-year	Four-year
2016	Non-Participant	9882	0.34	0.27	0.05	0.33
2016	Participant	5534	0.14	0.24	0.09	0.53
2017	Non-Participant	9782	0.34	0.27	0.06	0.34
2017	Participant	5894	0.14	0.24	0.09	0.53
2018	Non-Participant	9718	0.35	0.27	0.05	0.33
2018	Participant	6558	0.14	0.25	0.09	0.52
2019	Non-Participant	9907	0.35	0.27	0.05	0.34
2019	Participant	6419	0.13	0.27	0.08	0.52
2020	Non-Participant	9520	0.39	0.23	0.05	0.33
2020	Participant	6871	0.13	0.25	0.09	0.53
2021	Non-Participant	9451	0.40	0.23	0.05	0.32
2021	Participant	7070	0.13	0.24	0.11	0.53

COLLEGE GOING BY DUAL ENROLLMENT AND PARTICIPATION INSTITUTION TYPE

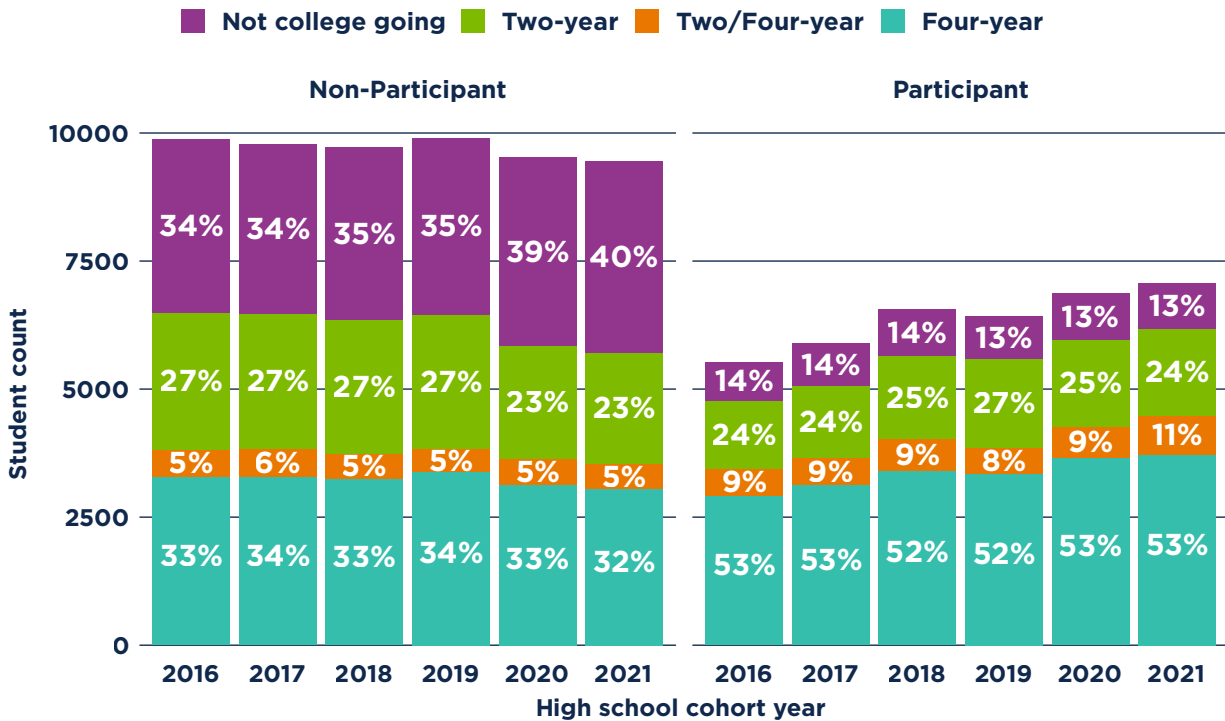


Figure 28: Observed rates of college going over time by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation and type of institution.

post- secondary persistence



Data notes: Out of state two-year college students are not included in this report since it is relatively uncommon. Persistence can also include earning a certificate or degree prior to the Fall term where persistence is assessed. Students do not need to re-enroll in their original postsecondary institution to be recorded as persisting in college. Enrollment in any postsecondary institution may fulfill the definition of persistence.



POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE: NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR

Do Nebraska two-year college students re-enroll for the fall term one year following their college start date?

College students who attended Nebraska two-year colleges and participated in dual enrollment are 7 to 10 percentage points more likely to persist in college than if they had not participated (table 14 causal effects and figure 29). This means that dual enrollment participation causes 120 to 160 additional persisters annually depending on the cohort year. While the causal effect estimates are considerably smaller than the observed effects which range between 15 to 18 percentage points, the effect size is still large in the context of educational interventions (table 14 observed effects).

Table 14: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of persistence among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.18 (0.15, 0.21)	0.10 (0.06, 0.14)
2017	0.17 (0.14, 0.20)	0.09 (0.05, 0.13)
2018	0.16 (0.13, 0.19)	0.08 (0.04, 0.12)
2019	0.15 (0.12, 0.18)	0.07 (0.03, 0.10)
2020	0.18 (0.14, 0.21)	0.09 (0.05, 0.13)
2021	0.17 (0.14, 0.20)	0.09 (0.04, 0.13)

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE

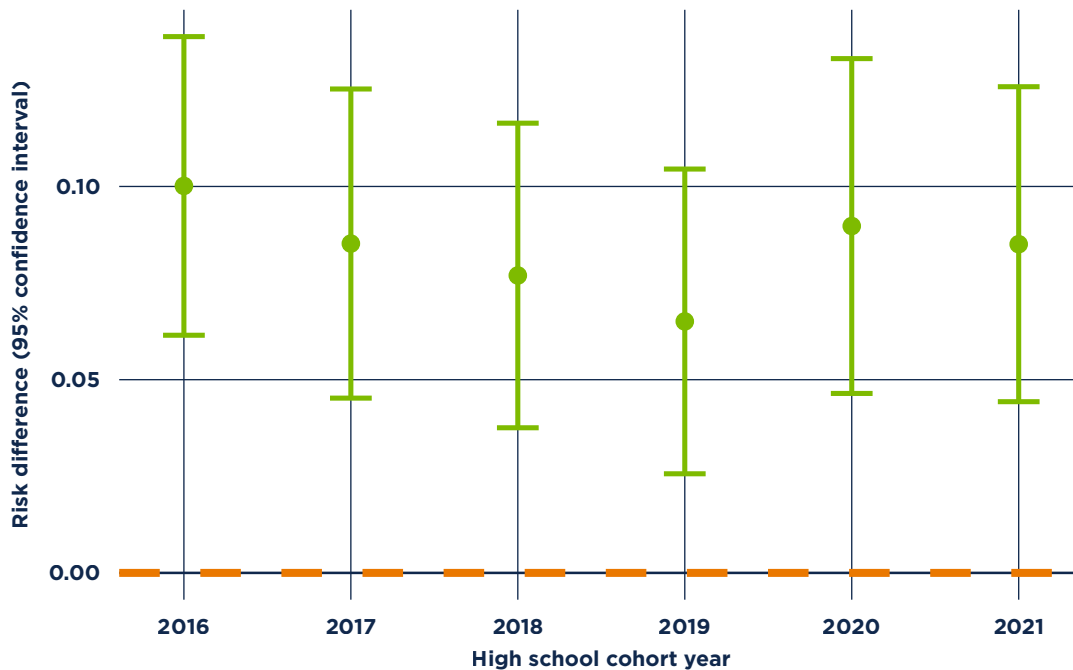


Figure 29: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on Nebraska two-year postsecondary persistence over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE: NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR

Do Nebraska two-year college students re-enroll for the fall term one year following their college start date?

Table 15: Nebraska two-year: Observed rates of postsecondary persistence by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	68.8% (968/1,406)	50.5% (1,248/2,469)
2017	67.9% (1,009/1,486)	50.9% (1,240/2,434)
2018	67.6% (1,151/1,703)	51.5% (1,265/2,457)
2019	66.2% (1,180/1,782)	51.2% (1,244/2,432)
2020	68.5% (1,200/1,753)	50.7% (1,037/2,045)
2021	68.8% (1,221/1,775)	51.6% (1,059/2,051)

NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION

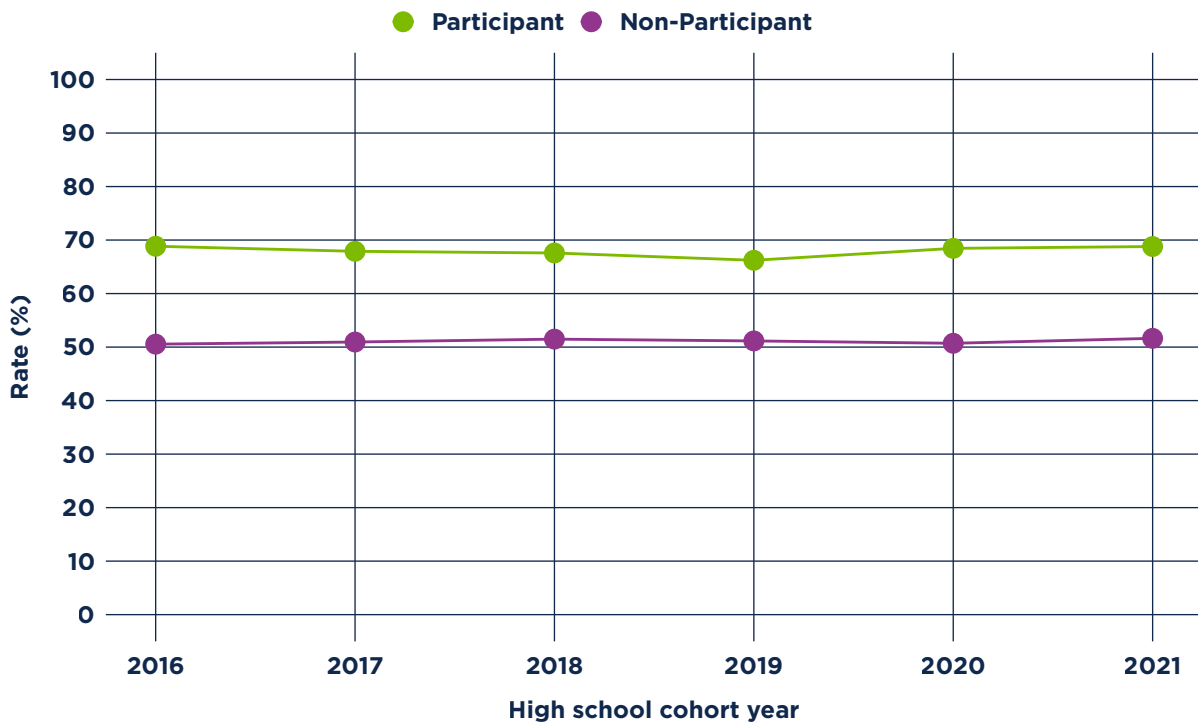


Figure 30: Observed rates of postsecondary persistence over time among Nebraska two-year college students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE: NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR

Do Nebraska four-year college students re-enroll for the fall term one year following their college start date?

College students who attended Nebraska four-year colleges and participated in dual enrollment are 1 to 5 percentage points more likely to persist in college than if they had not participated (table 16 causal effects). This means that dual enrollment participation causes 40 to 150 additional persisters annually depending on the cohort year. While the causal effect estimates are smaller than the observed effects which range between 8 to 10 percentage points (table 16 observed effects), the effect size is generally of modest effect size in the context of educational interventions. The only causal effect estimate that did not demonstrate a statistically significant positive effect on dual enrollment was for the 2019

cohort. These students would have entered college in 2020 and in this year Nebraska four-year colleges had higher rates of persistence than usual, resulting from COVID-19-related changes to academic standards. Since it was relatively easier to persist in this year, this may have eliminated any advantages dual enrollment participation had over non-participation. However, for later cohorts that entered college in years after the first COVID-19-impacted freshman class, the causal effect of dual enrollment participation is similar to years prior to COVID-19. This indicates that the instance of a null effect is likely due to COVID-19-related easing of academic standards.

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE

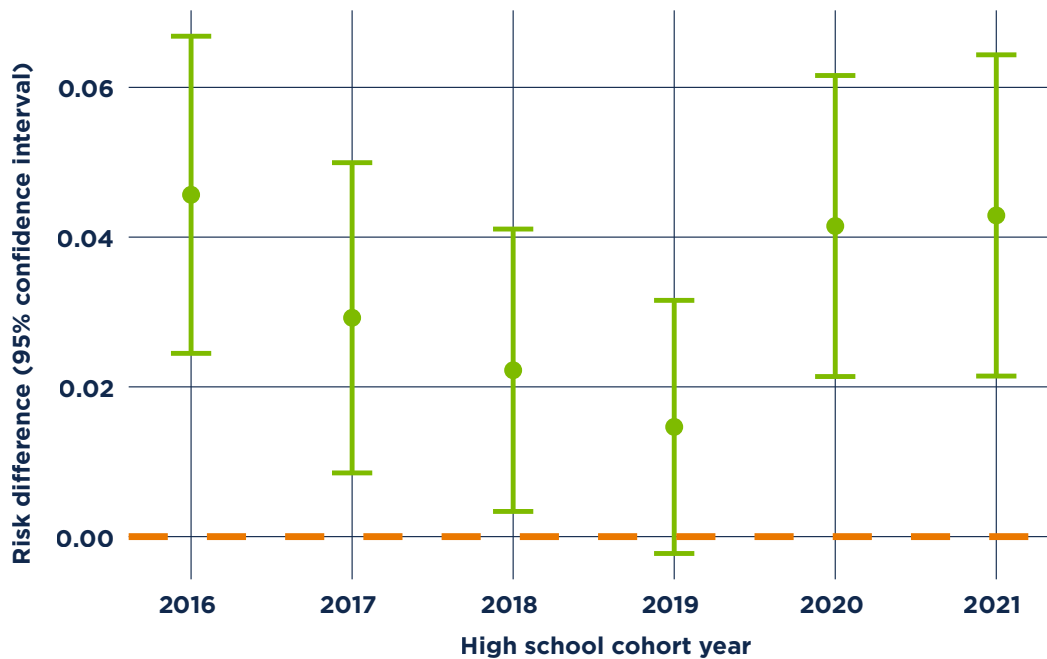


Figure 31: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on Nebraska four-year postsecondary persistence over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE: NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR

Do Nebraska four-year college students re-enroll for the fall term one year following their college start date?

Table 16: Nebraska four-year: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of persistence among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.10 (0.08, 0.12)	0.05 (0.02, 0.07)
2017	0.09 (0.07, 0.11)	0.03 (0.01, 0.05)
2018	0.08 (0.06, 0.10)	0.02 (0.00, 0.04)
2019	0.08 (0.06, 0.09)	0.01 (0.00, 0.03)
2020	0.10 (0.08, 0.12)	0.04 (0.02, 0.06)
2021	0.10 (0.08, 0.12)	0.04 (0.02, 0.06)

Table 17: Nebraska two-year: Observed rates of postsecondary persistence by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	90.6% (2,539/2,801)	80.9% (2,330/2,879)
2017	90.2% (2,645/2,931)	81.2% (2,392/2,946)
2018	90.2% (2,861/3,173)	82% (2,302/2,809)
2019	90.7% (2,812/3,099)	83.2% (2,296/2,761)
2020	89.2% (3,076/3,447)	79.1% (2,119/2,680)
2021	90.2% (3,134/3,474)	79.8% (2,056/2,576)

NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION

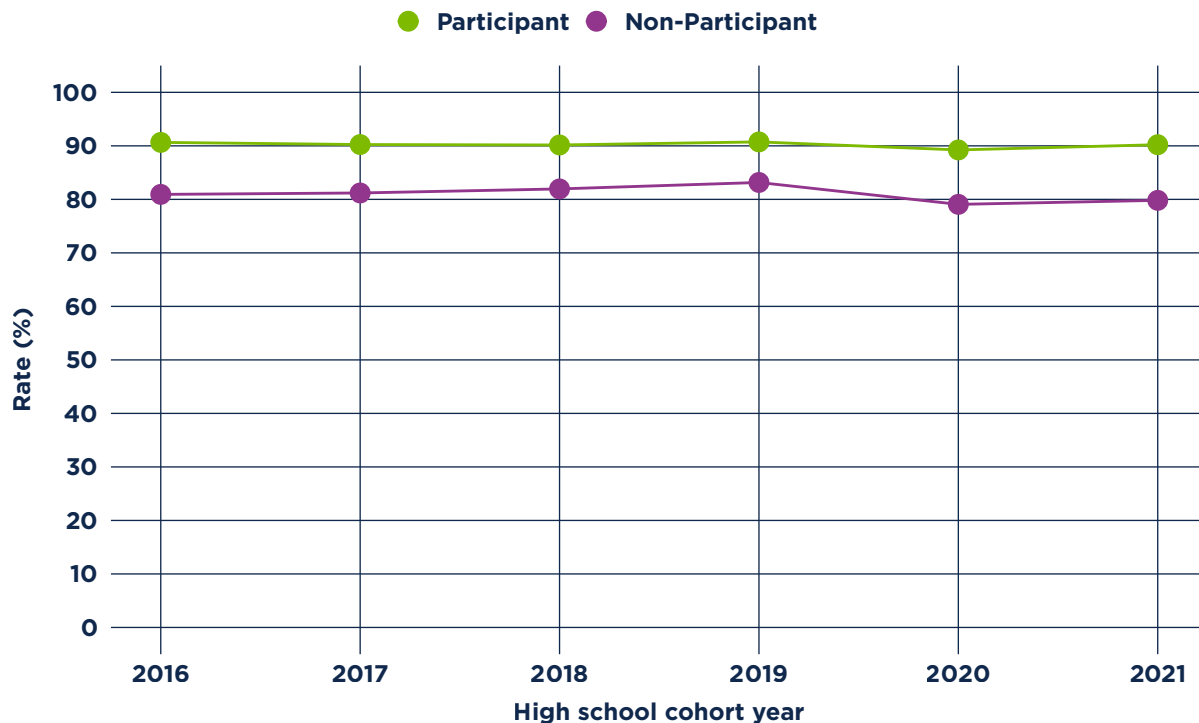


Figure 32: Observed rates of postsecondary persistence over time among Nebraska four-year college students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE: OUT-OF-STATE FOUR-YEAR

Do out-of-state four-year college students re-enroll for the fall term one year following their college start date?

College students who attended non-Nebraska four-year colleges and participated in dual enrollment are generally no more likely to persist in college than if they had not participated (table 18 causal effects and figure 33). There are several possible reasons for dual enrollment participation to a non statistically significant effect on persistence among out-of-state four-year college attendees. One, these students are typically better prepared for college than in-state four-year college students based on evidence from previous NSWERS research which found that Nebraska high school students with high ACT scores were more likely to go

to college out of state (Brodersen and Bieber 2024). This is also evident by the higher persistence and graduation rates of these out-of-state college students in this special report (compare table 19 to table 17.) Second, dual enrollment coursework from Nebraska colleges may be less likely to successfully transfer to out of state colleges, which may reduce the impact of dual enrollment for these students. Third, relatively few students go to college out of state, so this study may be underpowered to detect an effect of dual enrollment participation on postsecondary persistence at out-of-state institutions.

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON OUT OF STATE FOUR-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE

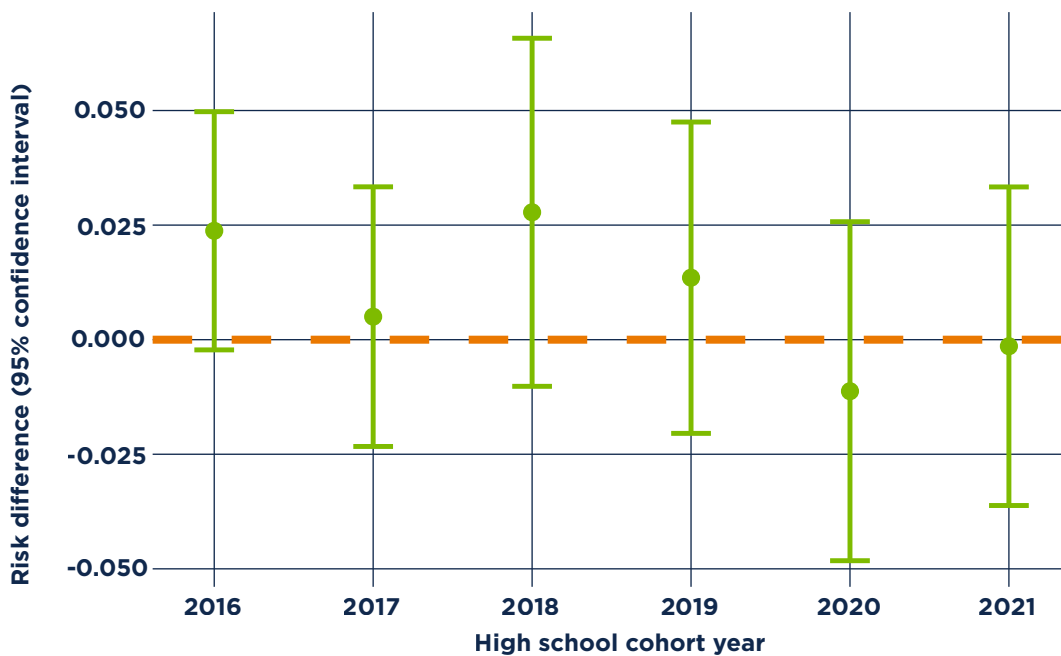


Figure 33: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on out of state four-year postsecondary persistence over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE: OUT-OF-STATE FOUR-YEAR

Do out-of-state four-year college students re-enroll for the fall term one year following their college start date?

Table 18: Out of state four-year: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of persistence among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.09 (0.05, 0.12)	0.02 (0.00, 0.05)
2017	0.05 (0.02, 0.08)	0.01 (-0.02, 0.03)
2018	0.04 (0.01, 0.07)	0.03 (-0.01, 0.07)
2019	0.03 (0.00, 0.07)	0.01 (-0.02, 0.05)
2020	0.03 (0.00, 0.07)	-0.01 (-0.05, 0.03)
2021	0.03 (0.00, 0.06)	0.00 (-0.04, 0.03)

Table 19: Out of state four-year: Observed rates of postsecondary persistence by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	95.5% (468/490)	86.8% (731/842)
2017	93.1% (526/565)	88.2% (701/795)
2018	91.6% (607/663)	87.3% (723/828)
2019	91.1% (544/597)	87.8% (842/959)
2020	89.6% (554/618)	86.2% (734/852)
2021	90.2% (710/787)	87.5% (717/819)

OUT OF STATE FOUR-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION

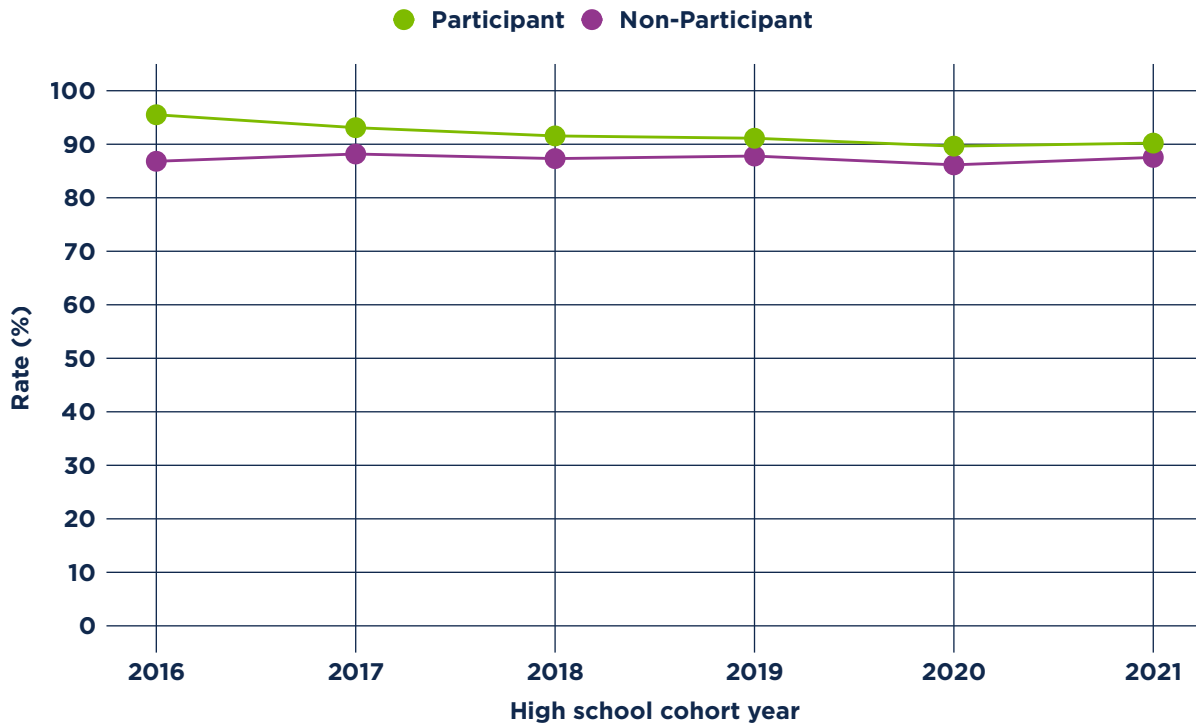


Figure 34: Observed rates of postsecondary persistence over time among out of state four-year college students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.

post- secondary graduation





POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION

Do students earn a postsecondary certificate or degree after high school graduation?

Two cohorts are used to provide insights into the questions:

1. How does dual enrollment participation impact graduation across all participants? The expected graduation year cohort includes all Nebraska public high school students who would be included in analyses of high school graduation. Since this cohort focuses on all Nebraska public high school students rather than just college attendees, these results incorporate the effects on dual enrollment on intermediary steps to postsecondary graduation which include high school graduation, college going, and college persistence. Analyses with this cohort can answer questions about how high school students who participated in dual enrollment benefited from dual enrollment in terms of award attainment.

2. How does dual enrollment participation impact participants who go to college? This college-going cohort only includes Nebraska public high school graduates who enrolled in college within 16 months of graduation. Analyses using this cohort can answer questions about how college goers who participated in dual enrollment benefited from dual enrollment in terms of award attainment.

Unlike the other outcomes, the section includes analyses of how the time to award attainment varies by the number of earned dual enrollment credits. While not causal, these analyses can provide evidence of an association between higher rates of credit earning and time to graduation which provides evidence for whether or not earning college credits during high school can help students graduate faster.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: EXPECTED GRADUATION YEAR COHORT

Do students earn a postsecondary certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Nebraska public high school students who participated in dual enrollment are 13 to 15 percentage points more likely to graduate college with a certificate or degree than if they had not participated (table 20 causal effects and figure 35). This means that dual enrollment participation causes 780 to 870 additional postsecondary award earners annually depending on the cohort year. While this impact is smaller than the observed difference in postsecondary award attainment between participants and non-participants which ranged from 35 to 37 percentage points (table 20 observed effects), it represents a large difference in overall rates of college completion. This effect incorporates the total benefits that dual enrollment has on college-going and persistence.

Table 20: Expected graduation year cohort: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of persistence among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.37 (0.35, 0.38)	0.15 (0.13, 0.17)
2017	0.35 (0.33, 0.37)	0.13 (0.11, 0.15)

Table 21: Expected graduation year cohort: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	61% (3,463/ 5,680)	24.3% (3,185/13,102)
2017	59.4% (3,610/ 6,080)	24.4% (3,211/13,141)

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON HIGH SCHOOL COHORT POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION

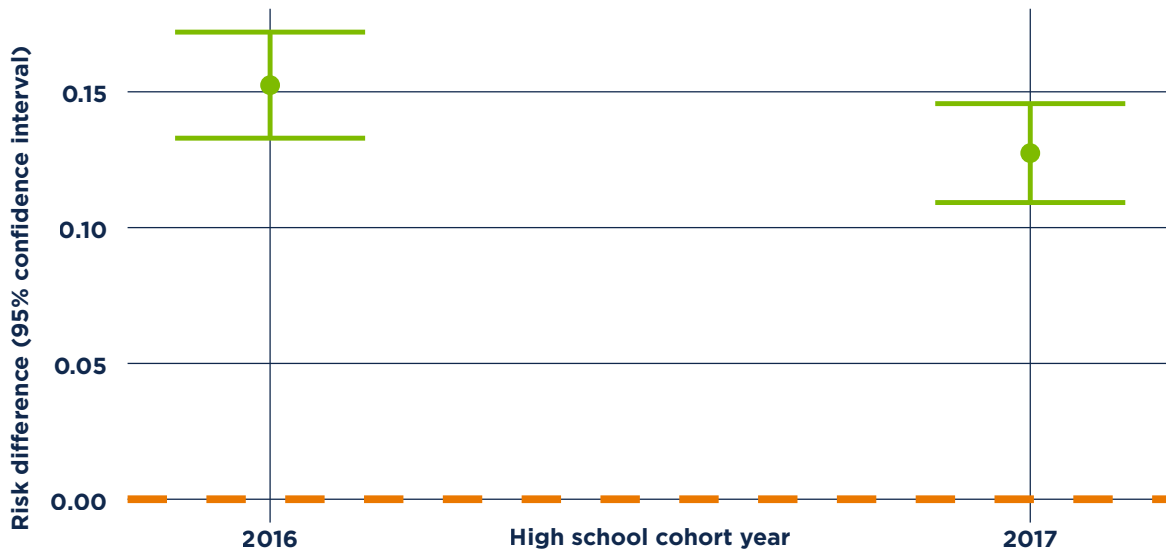


Figure 35: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on the high school cohorts' postsecondary graduation over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: EXPECTED GRADUATION YEAR COHORT

Do students earn a postsecondary certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Dual enrollment participants were observed to earn all types of awards at higher rates than non-participants. In particular, participants earned bachelor's degrees at much higher rates than non-participants (table 22 and figure 36). Despite dual enrollment

participants representing just over 30 percent of students, the total number of bachelor's degrees earned by participants exceeded the total bachelor's degrees earned by non-participants (table 22 and figure 36).

Table 22: Expected graduation year cohort: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by award type and dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Dual Enrollment	N Students	Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's
2016	Non-Participant	13,102	0.02	0.06	0.18
2016	Participant	5,680	0.04	0.14	0.49
2017	Non-Participant	13,141	0.02	0.06	0.18
2017	Participant	6,080	0.04	0.13	0.49

EXPECTED GRADUATION YEAR: POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION AND AWARD TYPE

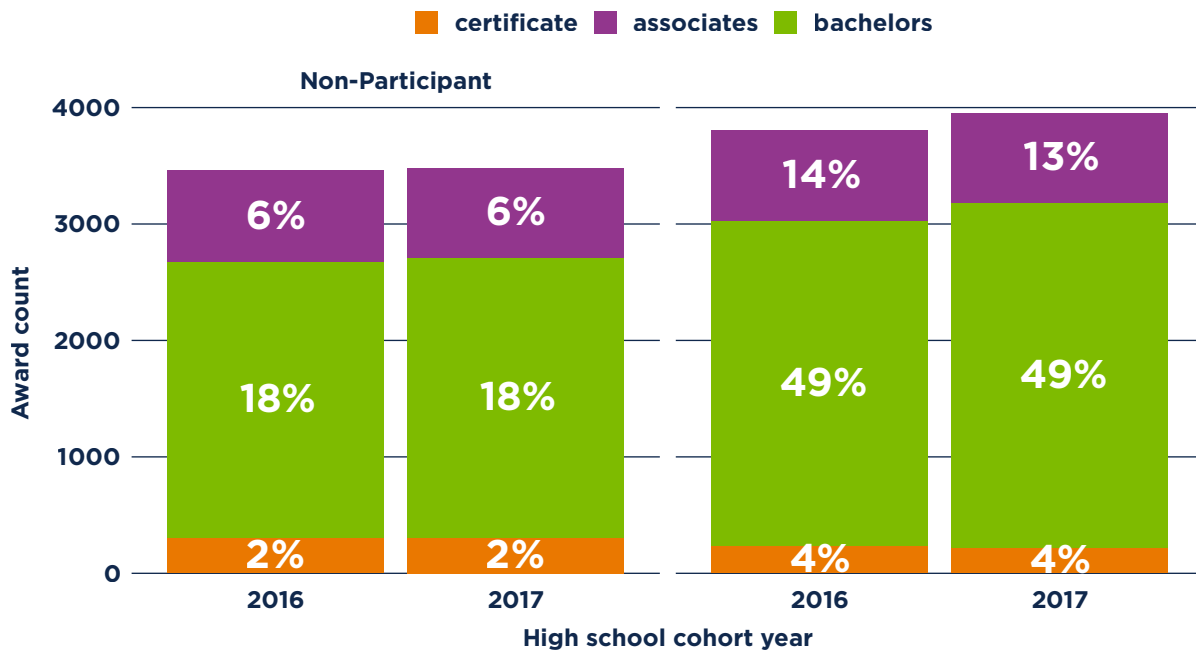


Figure 36: Observed rates of postsecondary award attainment by award type over time among Nebraska public high school students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: EXPECTED GRADUATION YEAR COHORT

Do students earn a postsecondary certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Dual enrollment is also associated with faster award attainment. Students who earned dual enrollment credit not only earn postsecondary awards at higher rates, they

earn awards sooner than students who earn no dual enrollment credits (table 23 and figure 37).

Table 23: 2016 - 2017 expected graduation year cohort: Cumulative probability of graduation over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits.

Years after high school graduation	0 cr	1-12 cr	>12 cr
2	1.6 (1.5, 1.8)	4.7 (4.3, 5.2)	6.8 (5.9, 7.7)
3	3.6 (3.4, 3.8)	9.9 (9.3, 10.5)	14.1 (12.9, 15.3)
4	11.8 (11.4, 12.2)	32.2 (31.2, 33.1)	50.5 (48.8, 52.2)
5	18.7 (18.2, 19.1)	47.3 (46.3, 48.4)	67.3 (65.7, 68.9)
6	21.3 (20.8, 21.8)	52.6 (51.6, 53.6)	72.5 (70.9, 74.0)

PROBABILITY OF AWARD ATTAINMENT OVER TIME FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL COHORT

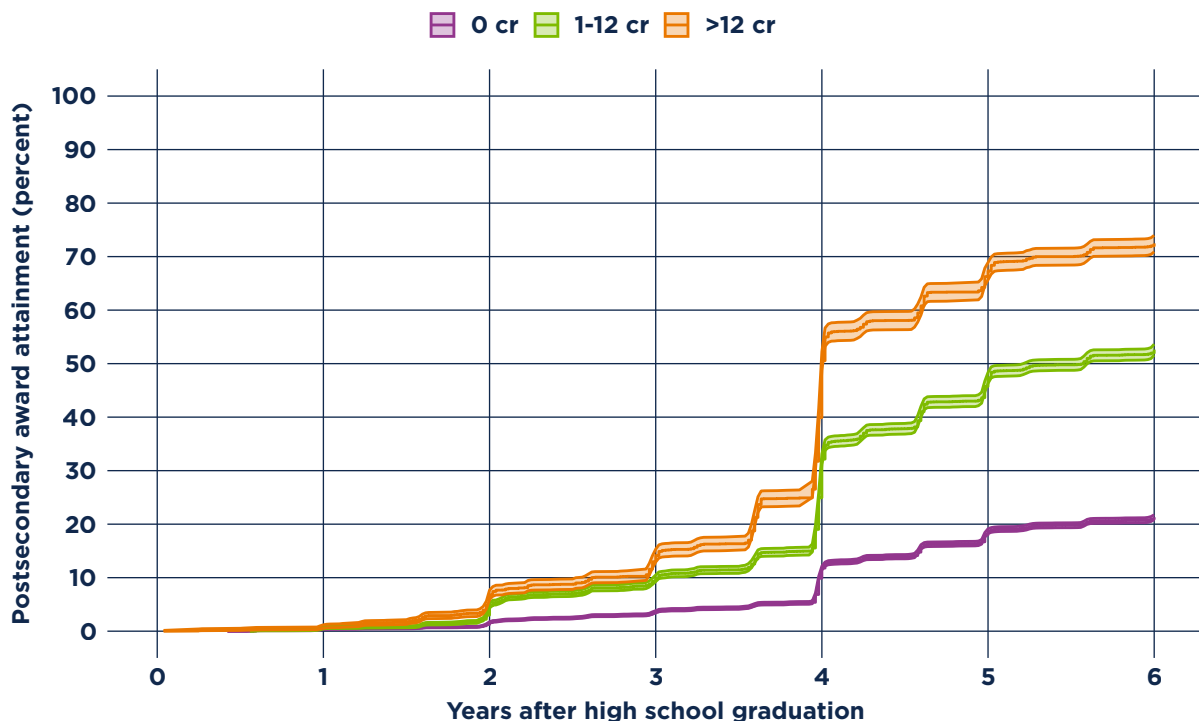


Figure 37: Cumulative probability of award attainment over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits for the high school cohort. Time is represented as the number of years following the student's high school graduation. Shaded bands represent 95% confidence intervals for the probability of award attainment.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at Nebraska two-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

College students who enrolled in Nebraska two-year institutions are 11 to 15 percentage points more likely to graduate college with an award than if they had not participated in dual enrollment (table 24 causal effects and figure 38). This means that dual enrollment participation causes 160 to 220 additional postsecondary award earners annually depending on the cohort year. This is a large effect, especially when considered relative to the observed rate of 28 to 29 percent award attainment by non-participants (table 25).

Table 24: Nebraska two-year: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of persistence among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.25 (0.21, 0.29)	0.15 (0.11, 0.20)
2017	0.24 (0.21, 0.28)	0.11 (0.07, 0.15)

Table 25: Nebraska two-year: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	53.5% (752/1,406)	28.5% (704/2,469)
2017	52.4% (779/1,486)	28.1% (684/2,434)

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE

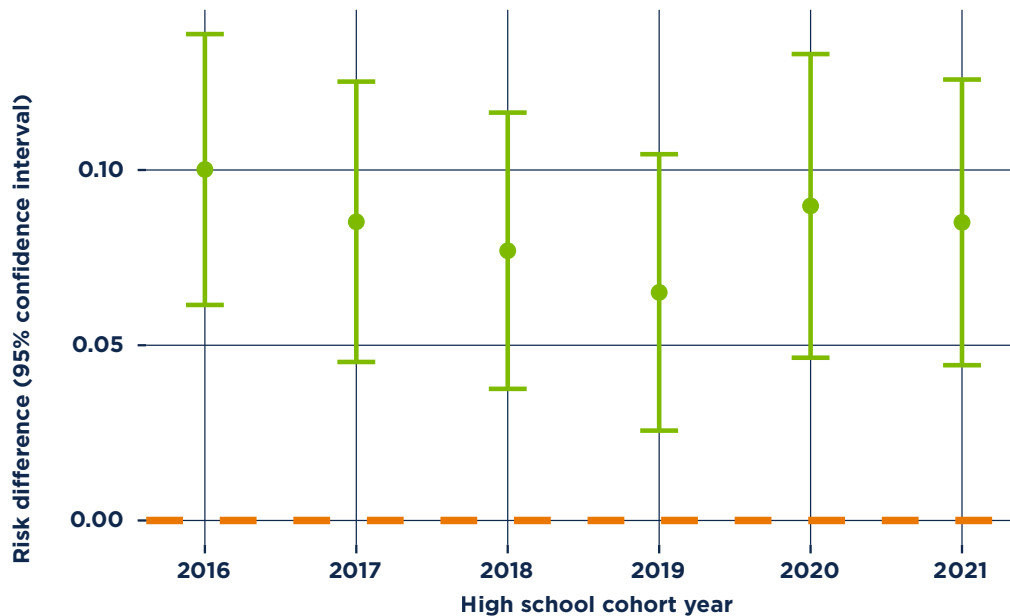


Figure 38: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on the Nebraska two-year college student postsecondary graduation over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at Nebraska two-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

In terms of types of awards this cohort attains, most award earners received an associate's degree, followed by bachelor's degrees, then certificates (table 26 and figure 39). Dual

enrollment participants earned associate's and bachelor's degrees at roughly twice the rate that non-participants earned the same degrees.

Table 26: Nebraska two-year: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by award type and dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Dual Enrollment	N Students	Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's
2016	Non-Participant	2469	0.07	0.21	0.07
2016	Participant	1406	0.10	0.38	0.20
2017	Non-Participant	2434	0.07	0.20	0.08
2017	Participant	1486	0.08	0.38	0.21

NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR: POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION AND AWARD TYPE

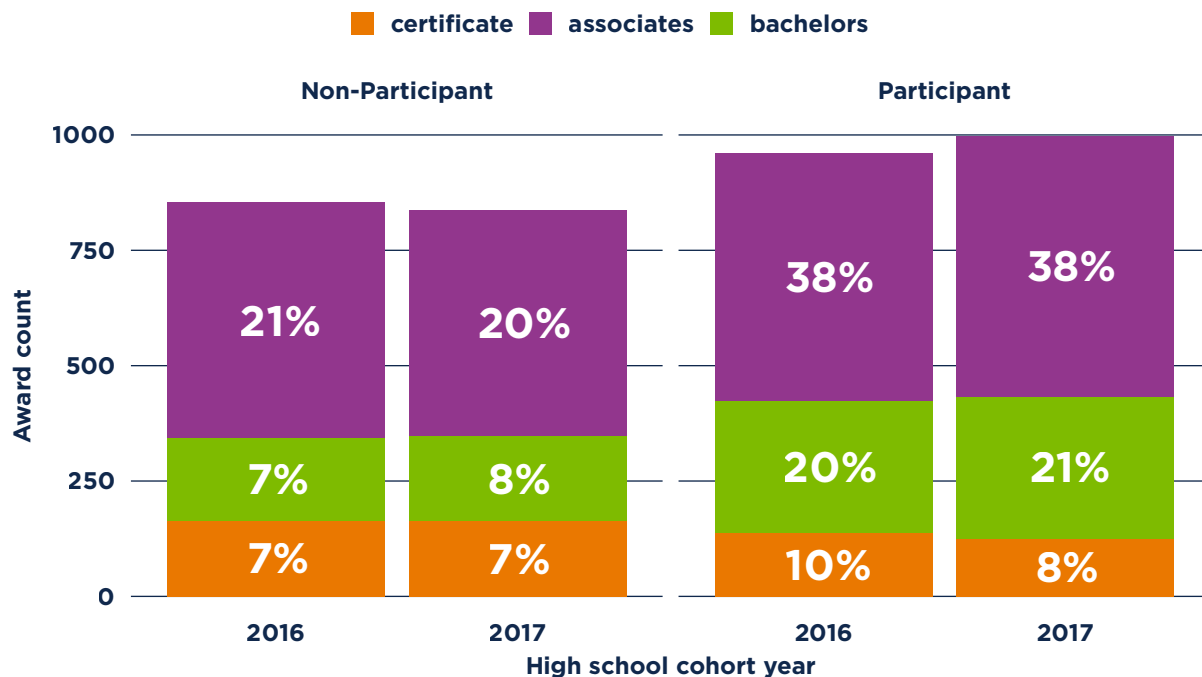


Figure 39: Observed rates of postsecondary award attainment by award type over time among Nebraska two-year college students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at Nebraska two-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Students who earned more dual enrollment credits were also observed to earn an award sooner (table 27 and figure 40). Students who earned 12 or more semester hours of college credit via dual enrollment were observed to earn more degrees within two years of high school graduation compared to non-credit earners. Students who earned

between 1-12 credits had rates of early award attainment that were slightly higher but not practically different compared to non-credit earners. However, both groups of credit earners had larger spikes of award earning at the two-year mark compared to non-earners and sustained a higher likelihood of award attainment over time.

Table 27: 2016 - 2017 Nebraska two-year cohort: Cumulative probability of graduation over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits

Years after high school graduation	0 cr	1-12 cr	>12 cr
2	6.1 (5.4, 6.7)	14.5 (13.1, 15.9)	27.2 (23.5, 30.6)
3	14.1 (13.2, 15.1)	29.0 (27.2, 30.8)	45.5 (41.4, 49.3)
4	19.7 (18.6, 20.8)	38.2 (36.3, 40.2)	56.7 (52.5, 60.5)
5	23.9 (22.7, 25.1)	43.2 (41.2, 45.2)	64.0 (59.9, 67.6)
6	26.8 (25.6, 28.0)	47.1 (45.0, 49.0)	68.0 (64.0, 71.5)

PROBABILITY OF AWARD ATTAINMENT OVER TIME AT NEBRASKA TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

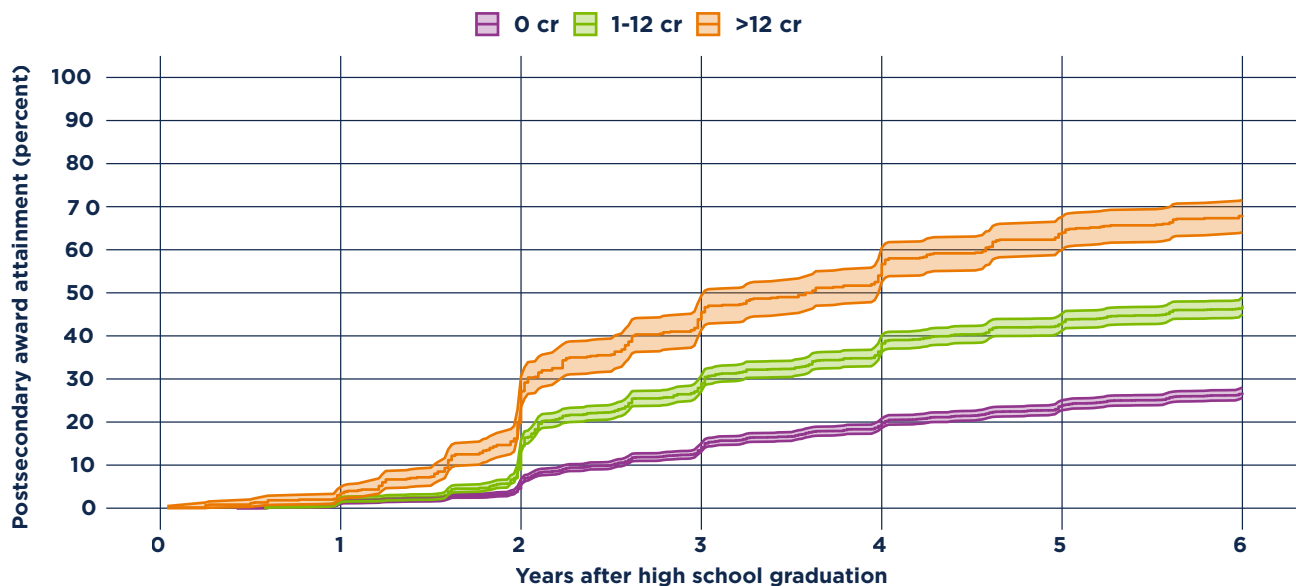


Figure 40: Cumulative probability of award attainment over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits for the Nebraska two-year cohort. Time is represented as the number of years following the student's high school graduation. Shaded bands represent 95% confidence intervals for the probability of award attainment.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at Nebraska four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

College students who enrolled in Nebraska four-year institutions are 6 to 7 percentage points more likely to graduate college with an award than if they had not participated in dual enrollment (table 28 causal effects and figure 41). This means that dual enrollment participation causes 180 to 200 additional postsecondary award earners annually depending on the cohort year. While this is a more modest effect than the impact of dual enrollment participation on two-year completion rates (table 24 causal effects), this is still a practically relevant effect.

Table 28: Nebraska four-year: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of graduation among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.17 (0.15, 0.20)	0.06 (0.04, 0.09)
2017	0.18 (0.15, 0.21)	0.07 (0.04, 0.09)

Table 29: Nebraska four-year: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	75.7% (2,120/2,801)	58.2% (1,677/2,879)
2017	75.9% (2,226/2,931)	58% (1,710/2,946)

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION

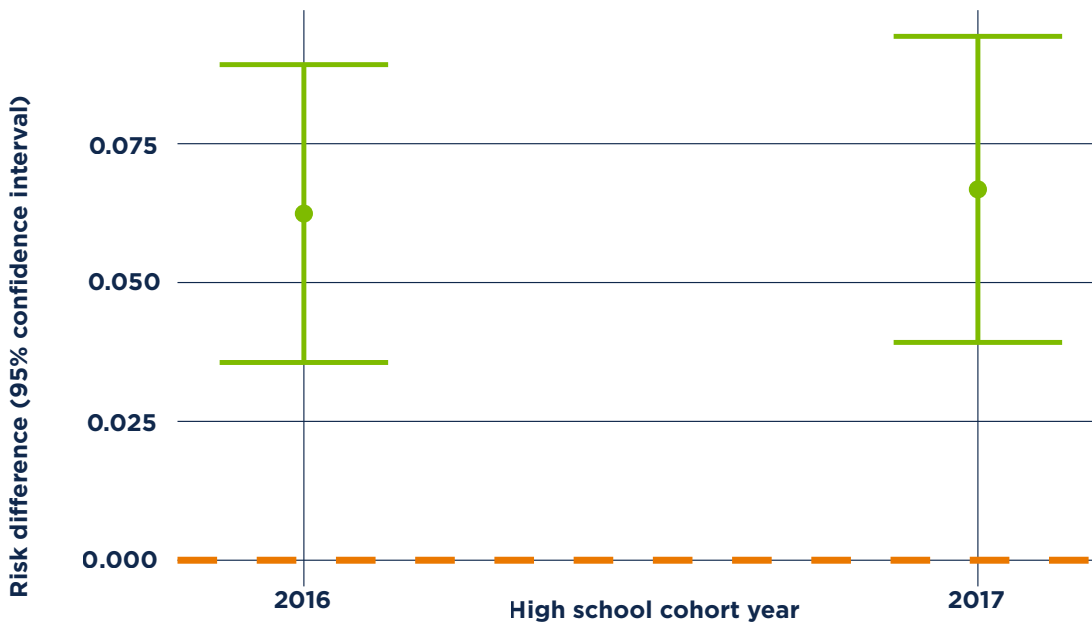


Figure 41: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on the Nebraska four-year college student postsecondary graduation over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at Nebraska four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

The majority of award earners in this cohort earned bachelor's degrees. A small percentage earned associate's degrees or certificates (table 30 and figure 42).

Table 30: Nebraska four-year: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by award type and dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Dual Enrollment	N Students	Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's
2016	Non-Participant	2879	0.01	0.04	0.54
2016	Participant	2801	0.02	0.05	0.71
2017	Non-Participant	2946	0.01	0.03	0.54
2017	Participant	2931	0.02	0.04	0.73

NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR: POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION AND AWARD TYPE

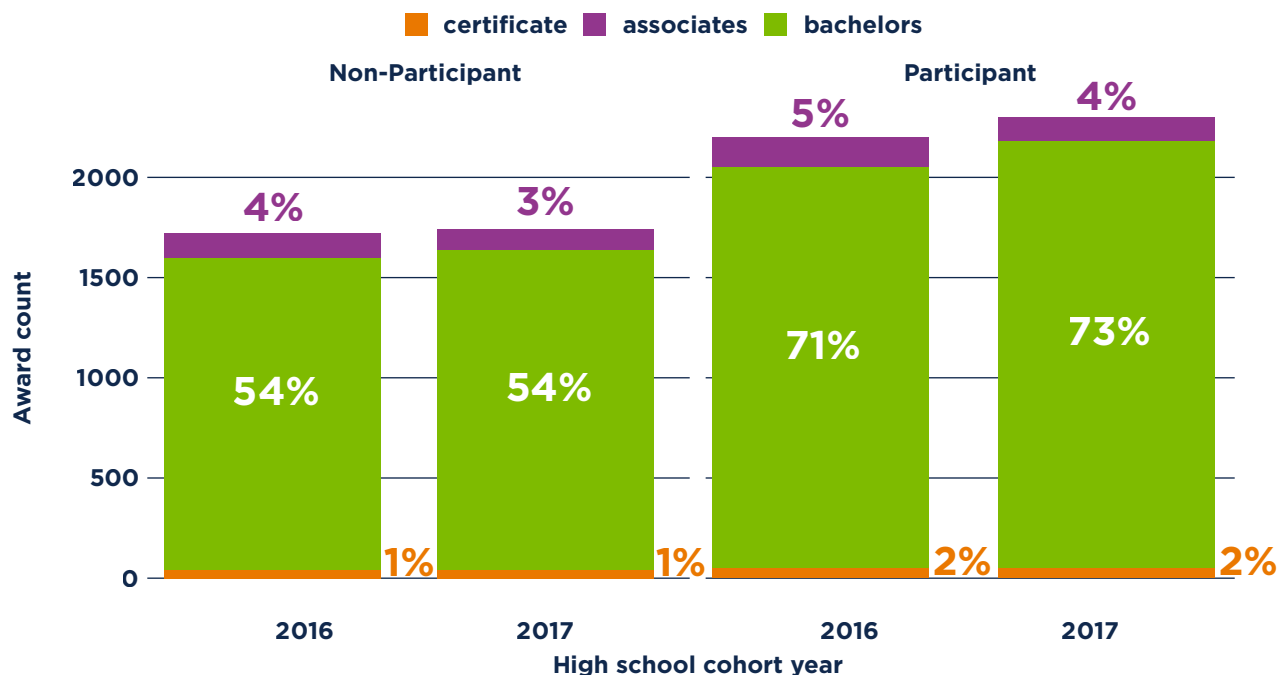


Figure 42: Observed rates of postsecondary award attainment by award type over time among Nebraska four-year college students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: NEBRASKA FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at Nebraska four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Students who earned more dual enrollment credits were also observed to earn an award sooner than students who earned fewer or no dual enrollment college credits (table 31 and figure 43). Students who earned 12 or

more semester hours of college credit via dual enrollment were observed to earn more degrees within four years of high school graduation compared to non-credit earners.

Table 31: 2016 - 2017 Nebraska four-year cohort: Cumulative probability of graduation over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits.

Years after high school graduation	0 cr	1-12 cr	>12 cr
2	0.3 (0.2, 0.5)	0.7 (0.5, 1.0)	1.4 (0.8, 1.9)
3	1.4 (1.1, 1.7)	2.9 (2.4, 3.4)	6.6 (5.5, 7.8)
4	26.9 (25.7, 28.0)	38.0 (36.5, 39.5)	55.2 (52.9, 57.5)
5	48.5 (47.2, 49.7)	62.5 (61.0, 63.9)	76.6 (74.6, 78.4)
6	55.8 (54.5, 57.0)	69.9 (68.5, 71.3)	82.2 (80.3, 83.8)

PROBABILITY OF AWARD ATTAINMENT OVER TIME AT OUT OF STATE FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

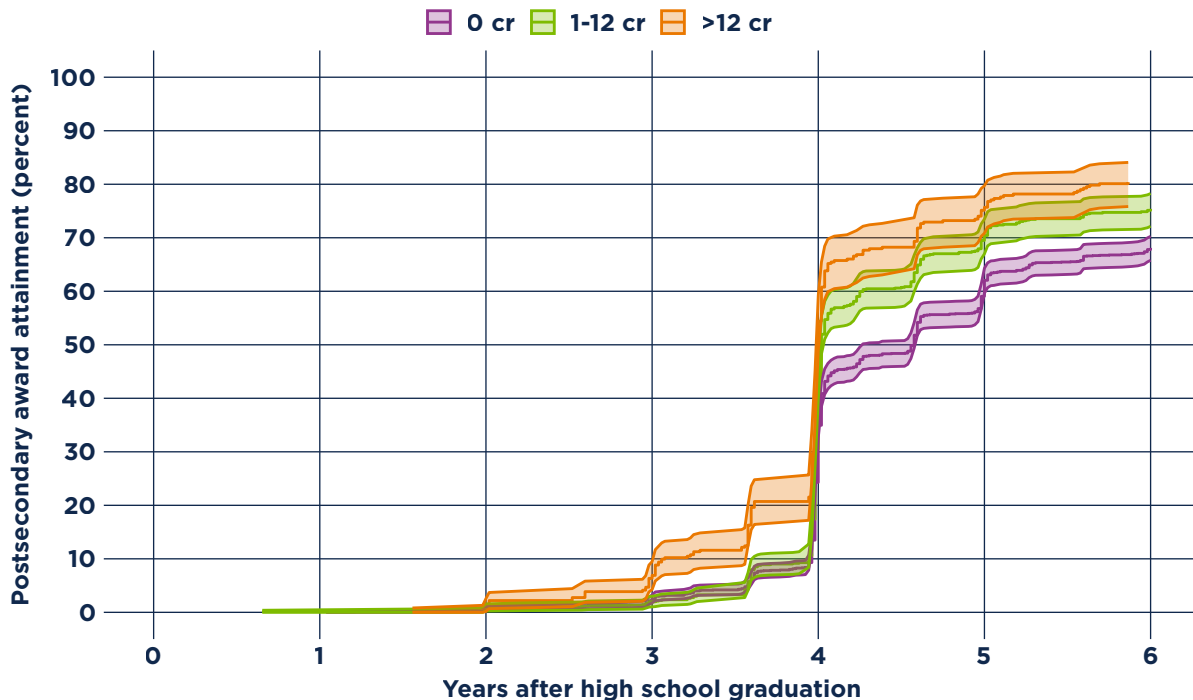


Figure 43: Cumulative probability of award attainment over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits for the Nebraska two-year cohort. Time is represented as the number of years following the student's high school graduation. Shaded bands represent 95% confidence intervals for the probability of award attainment.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: OUT-OF-STATE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at out-of-state four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

College students who enrolled in out-of-state four-year institutions were not more likely to graduate college with an award than if they had not participated in dual enrollment (table 32 causal effects and figure 44). While the estimates of effect were -3 percentage points and 1 percentage points for the two cohorts that were analyzed, both of these estimates were too statistically uncertain to claim that there is any causal effect of dual enrollment on Nebraska students who went to out-of-state four-year colleges.

This result is in contrast with the positive causal effects found for both in-state students at both two- and four-year institutions (tables 24 and 28). One reason this may occur is that dual enrollment credits may be less likely to transfer or fulfill degree requirements at out-of-state institutions compared to in-state institutions. At present, this reason can not be confirmed since the NSWERS Data System does not currently include transcript records for transfer credits at either in-state or out-of-state institutions. However, challenges with credit transfer have been previously raised as a limitation of dual enrollment and an area which needs improvement (Gewertz 2016; Fink and Jenkins 2023).

Table 32: Out of state four-year: Estimated effect of dual enrollment participation on probability of persistence among participants

Cohort Year	Observed Effect (95% CI)	Causal Effect (95% CI)
2016	0.12 (0.06, 0.17)	0.01 (-0.04, 0.06)
2017	0.05 (0.00, 0.10)	-0.03 (-0.08, 0.02)

CAUSAL EFFECT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION ON OUT OF STATE FOUR-YEAR POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION

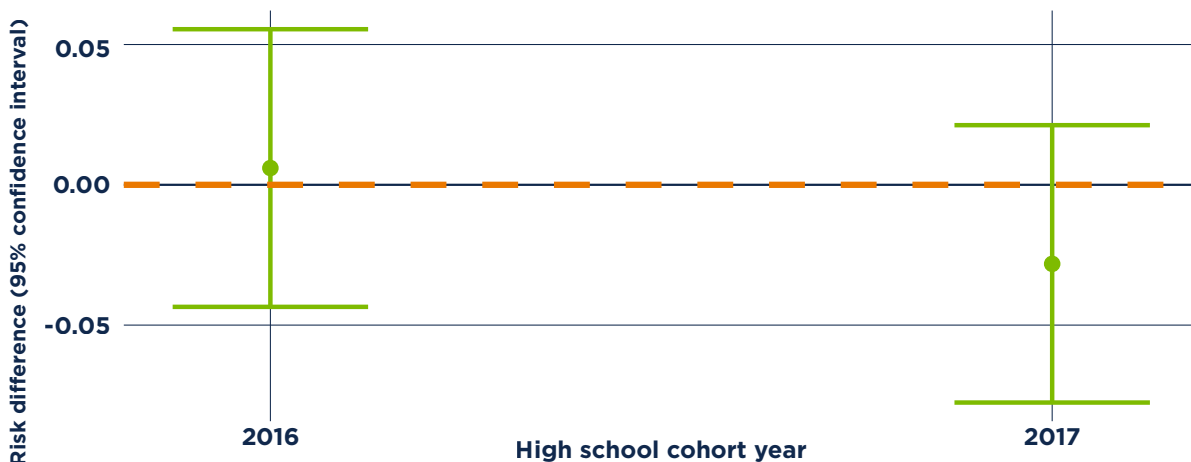


Figure 44: Causal effect of dual enrollment participation on the out of state four-year college student postsecondary graduation over time. The data represents the difference in probability of the outcome between participants and non-participants. Positive values mean that participants have a higher probability of the outcome. If the 95% confidence interval crosses 0 percent, this indicates that there is not statistical support that the causal effect of dual enrollment is different from 0.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: OUT-OF-STATE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at out-of-state four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Another possible mechanism is that Nebraska college students at out-of-state institutions have much higher average levels of college readiness than in-state college students, and that these pre-existing abilities better account for the observed differences in postsecondary graduation rates among these students than their dual enrollment participation. Evidence supporting this mechanism includes previous NSWERS research which found that Nebraska high school students with high ACT scores were more likely to go to college out of state (Brodersen and Bieber 2024). This is also evidenced by the higher persistence and graduation rates of these out-of-state college students in this special report compared to in state college students (tables 18 and 33).

Another potential reason there was a null finding for this group of students is that the sample size in this study is too small to detect a non-zero effect of dual enrollment participation on graduation (table 33).

Table 33: Out of state four-year: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Participant	Non-participant
2016	79.6% (390/490)	67.9% (572/842)
2017	77.2% (436/565)	72.1% (573/795)



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: OUT-OF-STATE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at out-of-state four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

Like students at Nebraska four-year colleges, the out-of-state cohort of students are also observed to predominantly earn bachelor's degrees over associate's degrees or certificates (table 34 and figure 45).

Table 34: Out of state four-year: Observed rates of postsecondary graduation by award type and dual enrollment participation

Cohort Year	Dual Enrollment	N Students	Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's
2016	Non-Participant	842	0.02	0.03	0.66
2016	Participant	490	0.03	0.02	0.78
2017	Non-Participant	795	0.02	0.05	0.69
2017	Participant	565	0.02	0.04	0.76

OUT OF STATE FOUR-YEAR: POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION BY DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION AND AWARD TYPE

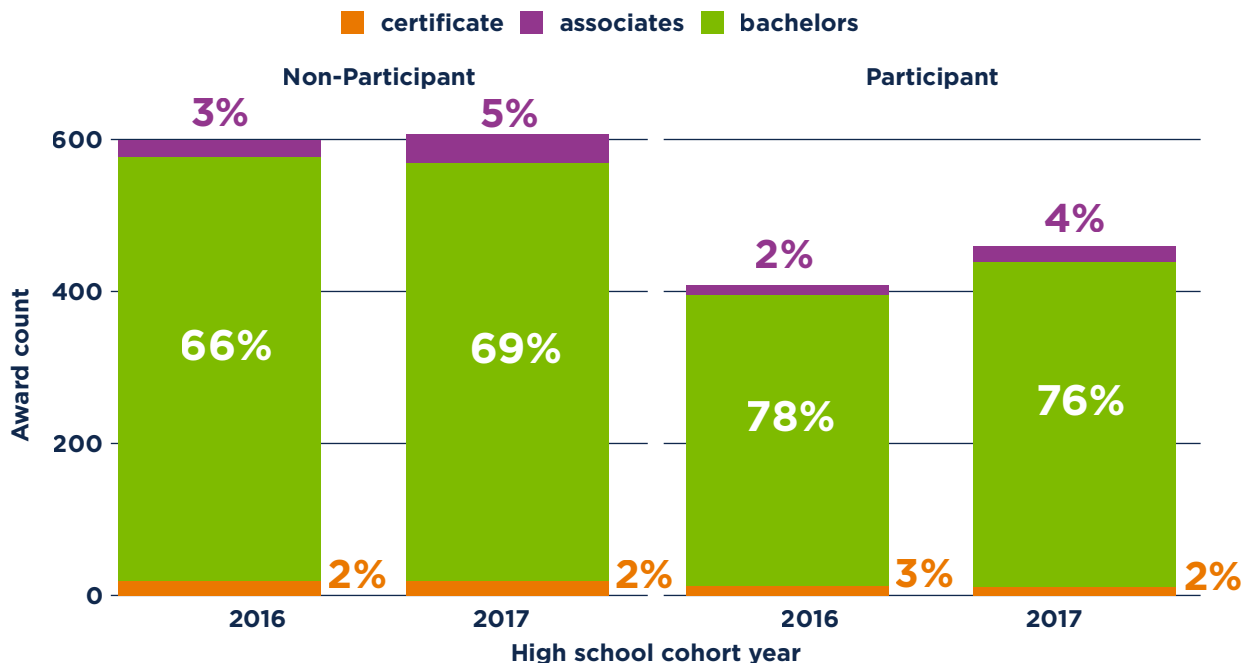


Figure 45: Observed rates of postsecondary award attainment by award type over time among out of state four-year college students by 11-12th grade dual enrollment participation.



POSTSECONDARY GRADUATION: OUT-OF-STATE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE GOING COHORT

Do college students at out-of-state four-year postsecondary institutions earn a certificate or degree within six years of high school graduation?

While there is some evidence that there is an association between earning more dual enrollment credits and faster rates of graduation, the effect is relatively weaker and less certain than at in-state four-year institutions (table 35 and figure 46).

Table 35: 2016 - 2017 Out of state four-year cohort: Cumulative probability of graduation over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits.

Years after high school graduation	0 cr	1-12 cr	>12 cr
2	0.7 (0.3, 1.0)	0.9 (0.2, 1.6)	1.4 (0.2, 2.6)
3	2.5 (1.8, 3.3)	NA	6.9 (4.3, 9.5)
4	35.0 (32.6, 37.2)	43.3 (39.7, 46.7)	54.4 (49.0, 59.3)
5	62.1 (59.6, 64.3)	70.4 (67.0, 73.5)	75.7 (70.8, 79.7)
6	68.1 (65.8, 70.3)	75.4 (72.1, 78.3)	NA

PROBABILITY OF AWARD ATTAINMENT OVER TIME AT OUT OF STATE FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

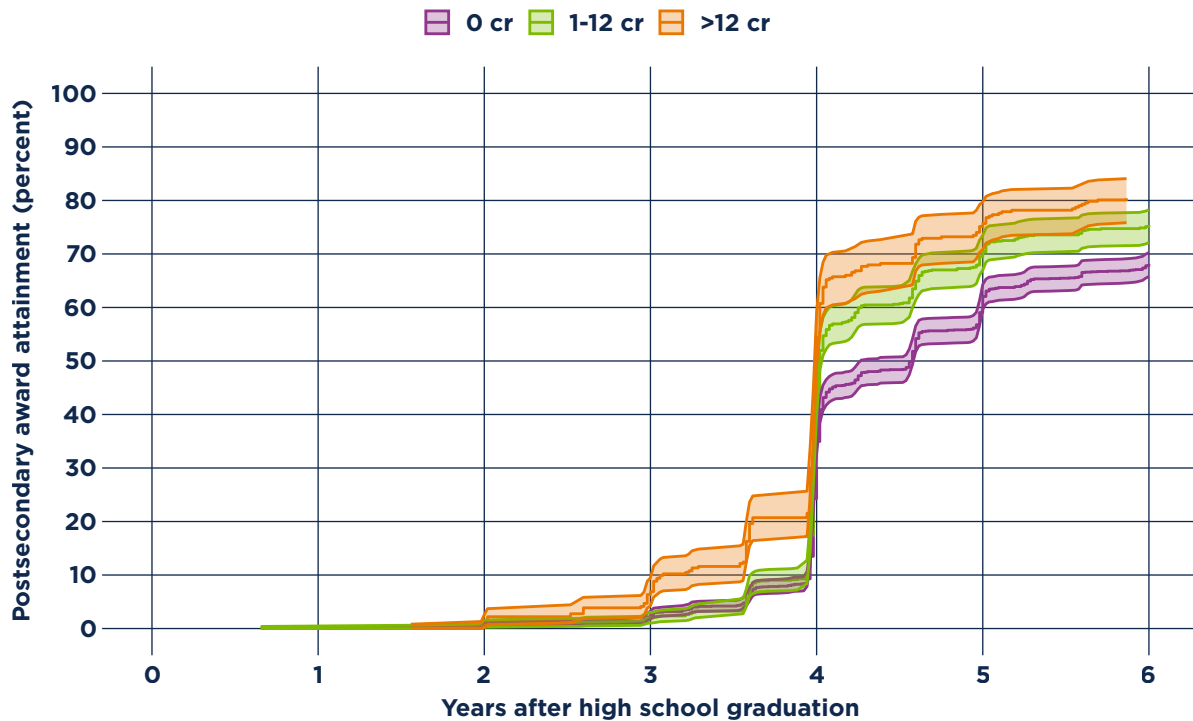


Figure 46: Cumulative probability of award attainment over time by number of earned dual enrollment credits for the Nebraska two-year cohort. Time is represented as the number of years following the student's high school graduation. Shaded bands represent 95% confidence intervals for the probability of award attainment.

impact of dual enrollment

*These provisional results are based on certified NSWERS data as of March 13, 2025.
The provisional results in this report may change because of data resubmissions by NSWERS
Partners and/or Affiliates. While NSWERS strives for accuracy and reliability, official estimates should be
obtained directly from the respective partners. For updated results, please contact support@nswers.org.*

CONCLUSION

This report presents evidence that dual enrollment participation has increased in Nebraska and that dual enrollment participation causes modest to large impacts on educational outcomes for participants. Dual enrollment participation causes the following educational benefits:

- Participants were 2 to 4 percentage points more likely to graduate high school on-time.
- Participants were 6 to 10 percentage points more likely to enroll in college within 16 months of high school graduation.
- Participants who went to college were more likely to persist in college by 7 to 10 percentage points at Nebraska two-year institutions, 1 to 5 percentage points at Nebraska four-year institutions, and generally not more or less likely to persist at out-of-state four-year institutions.
- Participants were, overall, 13 to 15 percentage points more likely to attain a postsecondary award within six years of high school graduation. However, among those who specifically attended out-of-state four-year institutions, there was no significant effect of dual enrollment on award attainment.

This is the first analysis of Nebraska dual enrollment that has examined the causal impacts of dual enrollment on postsecondary award attainment. For participants who go to out-of-state colleges, there is not statistically significant evidence that participation impacted their college persistence rates or their award attainment rates. This contrasts with the effect of dual enrollment participation on students who went to college in Nebraska, where participation generally caused modest improvements in college persistence and large (two-year) to modest (four-year) improvements in award attainment rates. This difference in the causal effect of dual enrollment on postsecondary outcomes may result from challenges with transferring dual enrollment credit to out-of-state institutions or because these students have a sufficiently high level of college readiness and do not additionally benefit from dual enrollment. Another possible explanation for this finding is that the sample size of Nebraska dual enrollment participants who attend out-of-state colleges is too small to detect impacts of dual enrollment on persistence or graduation.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Since dual enrollment participation is generally beneficial to participants, a natural question is whether dual enrollment should be made more accessible to increase the number of participating Nebraskans. Whether or not this should occur depends on the objectives of dual enrollment in Nebraska.

As a concrete example, high school juniors and seniors are typically only eligible to participate in dual enrollment if they have a grade point average (GPA) above 3.0 (see technical documentation). This can be a barrier to dual enrollment for students who have lower GPAs. Whether or not this restriction should remain depends on the objectives of dual enrollment. If the main purpose of dual enrollment is to provide opportunities for high-achieving students to earn college credit, it's likely that maintaining some kind of academic preparedness requirement is needed to achieve this goal, ensuring that only students who are likely to pass dual enrollment courses are eligible to participate. However, if the main purpose of dual enrollment is to provide a lower-stakes opportunity to take college-level courses, which could help high school students assess their level of interest and ability to succeed in college, then reducing academic requirements for dual enrollment participation could be an appropriate mechanism for increasing access.

Ideally, policy decisions regarding dual enrollment should also include economic analyses to determine if the benefits exceed the costs of providing dual enrollment. This report provides estimates on the benefits of dual enrollment, but does not provide cost information, which is not currently collected by the NSWERS Data System. The only publicly-available cost-benefit analysis of dual enrollment was conducted by Washington State Institute for Public Policy and finds that the benefits of dual enrollment outweigh the costs in the state of Washington (WSIPP 2024). The benefits are largely driven by increased labor market earnings by participants, resulting from increased educational attainment caused by dual enrollment participation. However, this cost-benefit analysis is not directly applicable to Nebraska, since the administration of dual enrollment in Nebraska is substantively different from Washington (Lee et al. 2022; WSIPP 2024). The implementation of dual enrollment programs differ, the effects of dual enrollment may differ, and the labor market returns of college education in Nebraska are likely different than in Washington.

This report communicates previously unknown findings about the impacts of dual enrollment on Nebraskan educational outcomes. This information is important for educational decision making in Nebraska. Research on the costs and benefits of dual enrollment could further enable data-informed decision making about dual enrollment in Nebraska.

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Create a data-informed decision culture that supports successful pathways of learning and earning for the people of Nebraska.

NSWERS MISSION

Integrate and organize Nebraska's education and workforce data to inform decision making.

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- Northeast Community College
- Southeast Community College
- Western Nebraska Community College

Nebraska Department of Education

- 244 Nebraska Public School Districts

Nebraska State College System

- Chadron State College
- Peru State College
- Wayne State College

University of Nebraska System

- Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture
- University of Nebraska at Kearney
- University of Nebraska—Lincoln
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
- University of Nebraska at Omaha

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Nebraska Department of Labor

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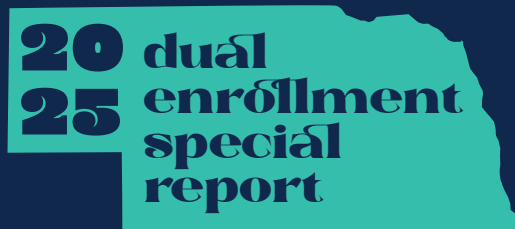
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