

## The Costs of Virginia's Dual Enrollment Program

Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee  
Joint Meeting of Education Subcommittees

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## Study mandate

- JLARC was directed to determine the costs of providing dual enrollment
  - Included in study resolution to review higher education student financial aid\*
- Study included courses provided by community colleges taught on the high school campus. Did not review:
  - Career and technical education (CTE) courses;
  - Courses provided on the community college campus; or
  - Courses provided by four-year institutions or Richard Bland College.

JLARC study resolution authorized January 10, 2022. \*Financial aid report released separately in November 2022.

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## Primary research activities

- Collected and analyzed data from community colleges and school divisions on
  - Dual enrollment expenses
  - Revenues used to pay dual enrollment expenses
  - Student tuition and fee charges for dual enrollment courses
- Structured interviews with
  - Staff at VCCS, VDOE, and SCHEV
  - Sample of community college presidents and staff
  - Sample of school division superintendents and staff
  - Other states and national dual enrollment experts

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## In brief

Dual enrollment expenses consist primarily of personnel costs and are nearly five times greater for school divisions than community colleges.

All community colleges and the vast majority of school divisions have sufficient state and local funding to cover their dual enrollment expenses.

High school students in the majority of school divisions do not pay for dual enrollment courses.

Community colleges and school divisions should no longer charge dual enrollment tuition or fees for courses provided on the high school campus.

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## In this presentation

Dual enrollment expenses and revenue

Potential changes to state's dual enrollment funding model

Dual enrollment teacher credentialing

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# High school students earn college credit through dual enrollment programs

- Dual enrollment helps high school students earn college credit and can reduce their higher education costs
- ~42,000 students took one or more dual enrollment courses in 2021–22, a 54% increase from 2012–13
- Most dual enrollment courses are taught on the high school campus by high school teachers
  - Most courses are three credit hours
- Dual enrollment students represented 17% of community college enrollment in 2021–22\*

\*Based on full-time equivalent community college enrollment.

# Total dual enrollment expenses are split among colleges, divisions, and students

## Community colleges



Incur expenses to provide dual enrollment, such as dual enrollment coordinators.



Determine whether to charge **school divisions** tuition and fees.

## School divisions



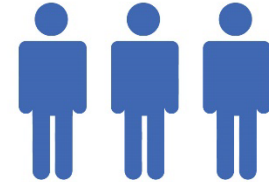
Incur expenses to provide dual enrollment, including:

- Tuition and fees
- Teachers salaries



Determine whether to charge **students** tuition and fees.

## Students



May incur expenses to take dual enrollment courses, including:

- Tuition and fees
- Textbooks or other course supplies

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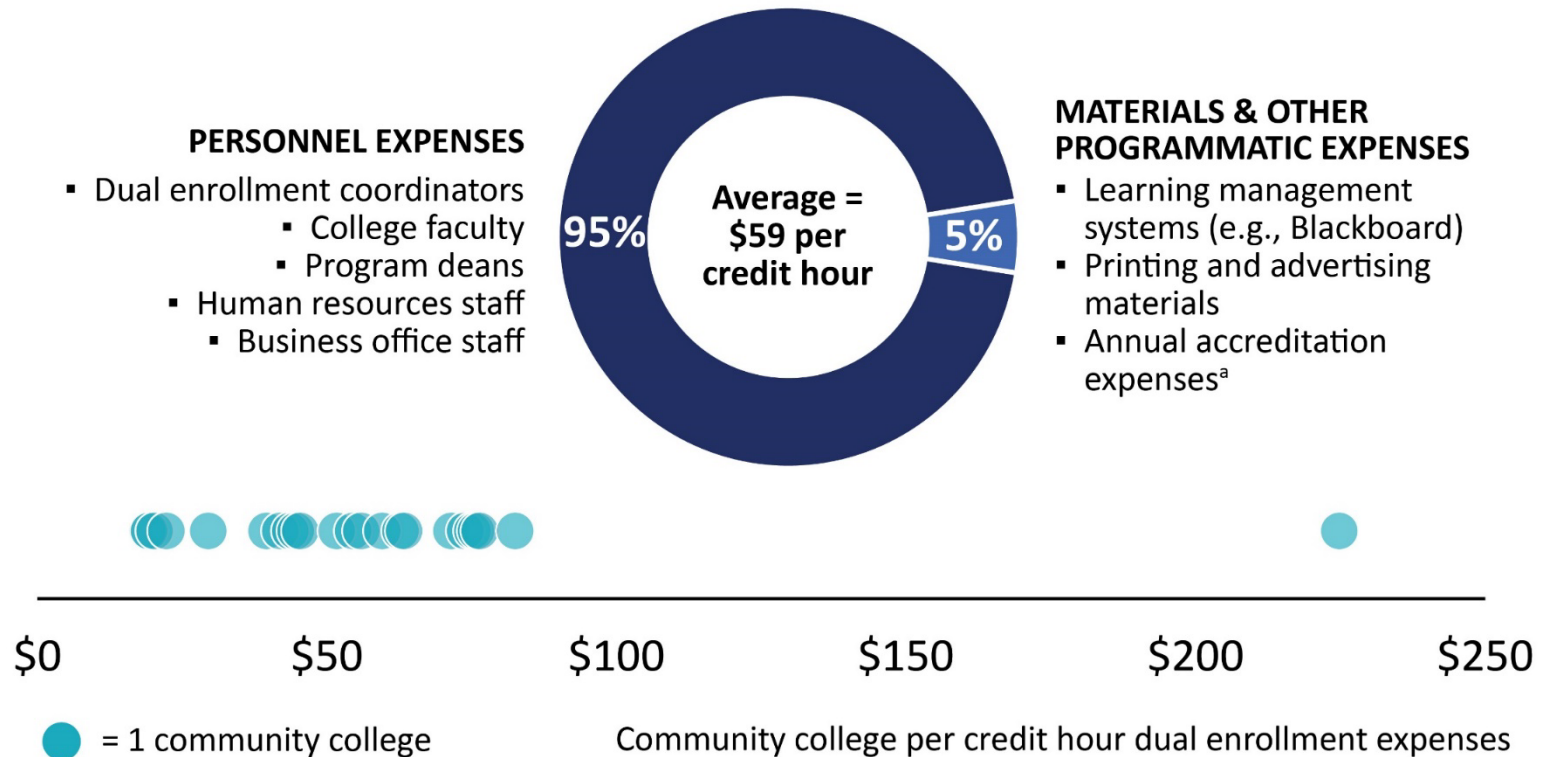
## Findings

Community colleges' dual enrollment costs average \$59 per credit hour.

Community colleges have substantially more state funds than needed to cover their dual enrollment expenses, but most still charge tuition and fees to school divisions.



# Community colleges' costs are ~\$59 per credit hour, driven by personnel expenses



Note: <sup>a</sup> Expenses associated with maintaining optional accreditation by the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

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## All community colleges have enough state general funds to cover dual enrollment expenses

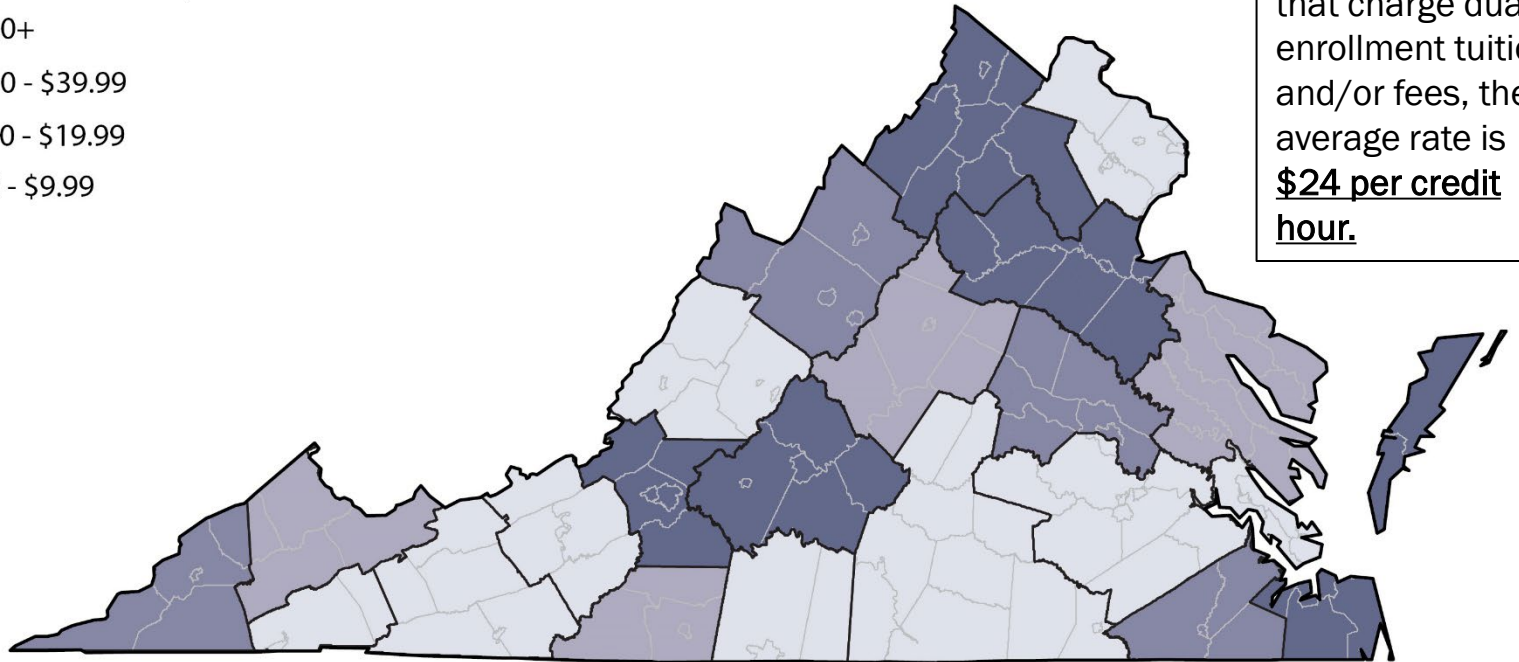
- Colleges receive state general funds for dual enrollment based on their number of full-time equivalent (FTE) dual enrollment students
- Each college received an average of \$2.2 million in state general funds for dual enrollment FTEs in 2021–22
  - Paid average of \$542K for dual enrollment expenses
  - 73% of general fund revenue left over, on average

Note: For additional information about specific colleges' funding levels, see Figure 3-3 on page 19 of the report.

# While expenses are covered, most community colleges charge school divisions dual enrollment tuition and fees

Tuition and fee rate per credit hour

- \$40+
- \$20 - \$39.99
- \$10 - \$19.99
- \$0 - \$9.99



Across colleges that charge dual enrollment tuition and/or fees, the average rate is **\$24 per credit hour.**

Note: Figure shows tuition and fee rates charged by colleges to school divisions for dual enrollment courses provided on the high school campus taught by a credentialed high school teacher.

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## Colleges rely on dual enrollment revenue to fund other aspects of their operations, including CTE

- On average, colleges had \$1.7M in revenue remaining after dual enrollment expenses were covered\*
- Several colleges report using dual enrollment revenue to subsidize CTE courses (e.g., nursing, welding)
- CTE courses expensive to offer because of small class sizes, specialized faculty, and equipment
  - *Example – Nursing cost per FTE student = \$15K*  
*Welding cost per FTE student = \$7K*  
*Dual enrollment cost per FTE student = \$1K*

CTE = career and technical education. \*Includes general funds as well as dual enrollment tuition and fee revenue.

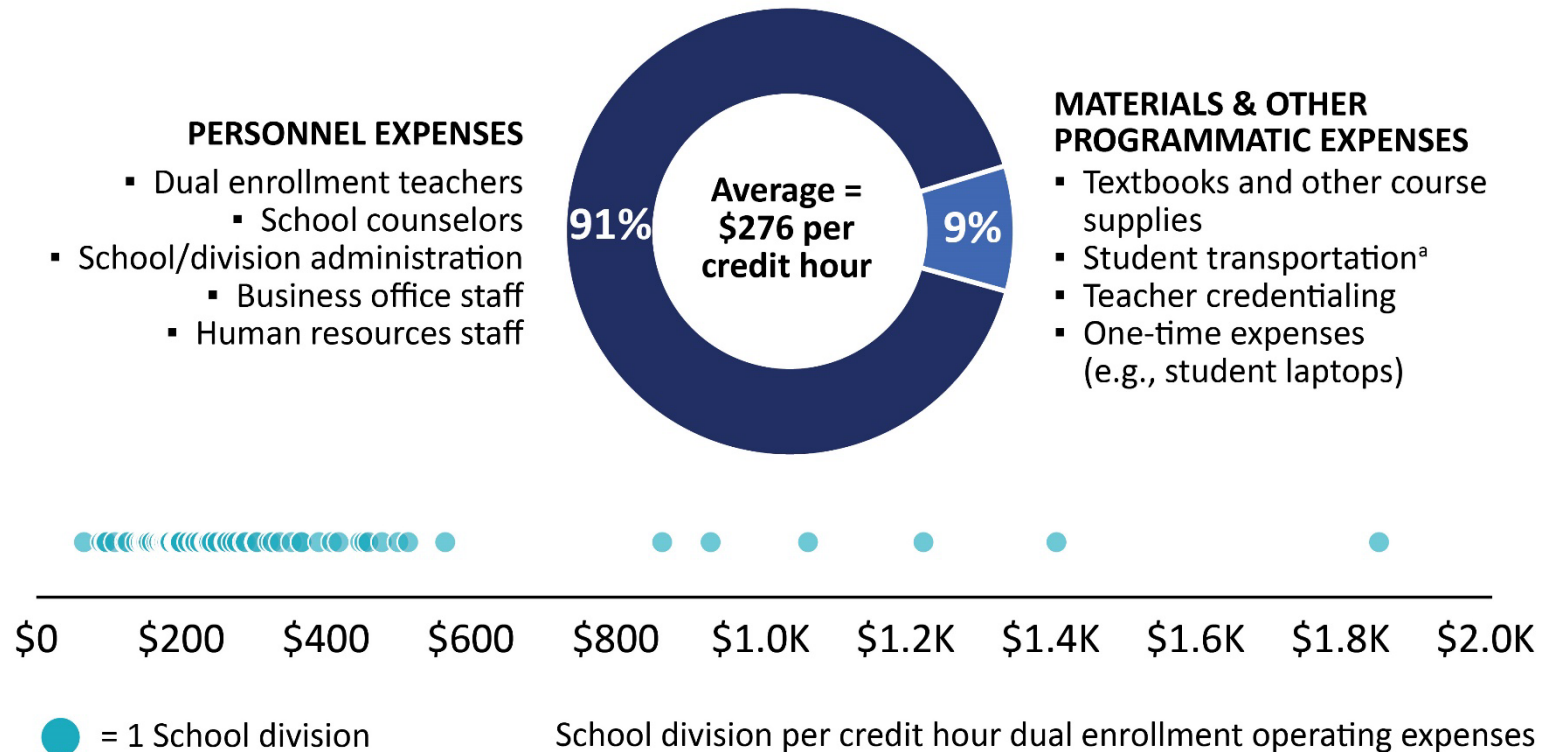
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## Findings

School divisions' dual enrollment costs average \$276 per credit hour.

Vast majority of school divisions are estimated to have enough state and local funding to cover their dual enrollment expenses.

# School divisions' costs are ~\$276 per credit hour, nearly five times as much as community colleges



Note: Does not include any dual enrollment tuition or fees paid by the division to the community college <sup>a</sup> Expenses associated with transporting students to the location where dual enrollment courses are taught, such as the local career center.

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## Vast majority of divisions have enough state and local funding to cover dual enrollment expenses

- School divisions receive state funding based on average daily membership (ADM), a portion of which is used for dual enrollment expenses
  - Dual enrollment students are counted in ADM the same as other students
- Of the 69 divisions for which information was available, 65 had enough state and local funding to cover their dual enrollment expenses
  - Divisions with insufficient funding had an average deficit of \$2.5M

Note: For additional information about school divisions' funding levels, see Figure 3-6 on page 23 of the report. Information available for 69 school divisions provides basis for estimate that vast majority of divisions statewide have enough funding.

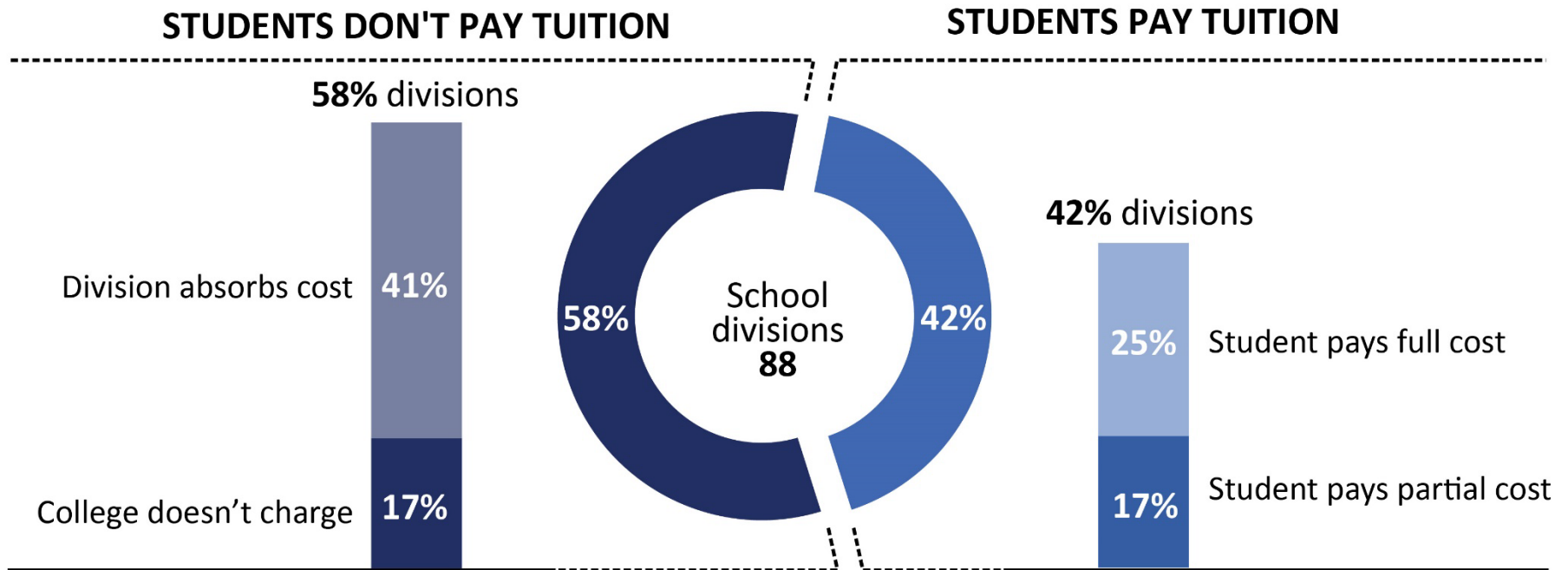
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## Finding

High school students in the majority of school divisions do not pay for dual enrollment courses.

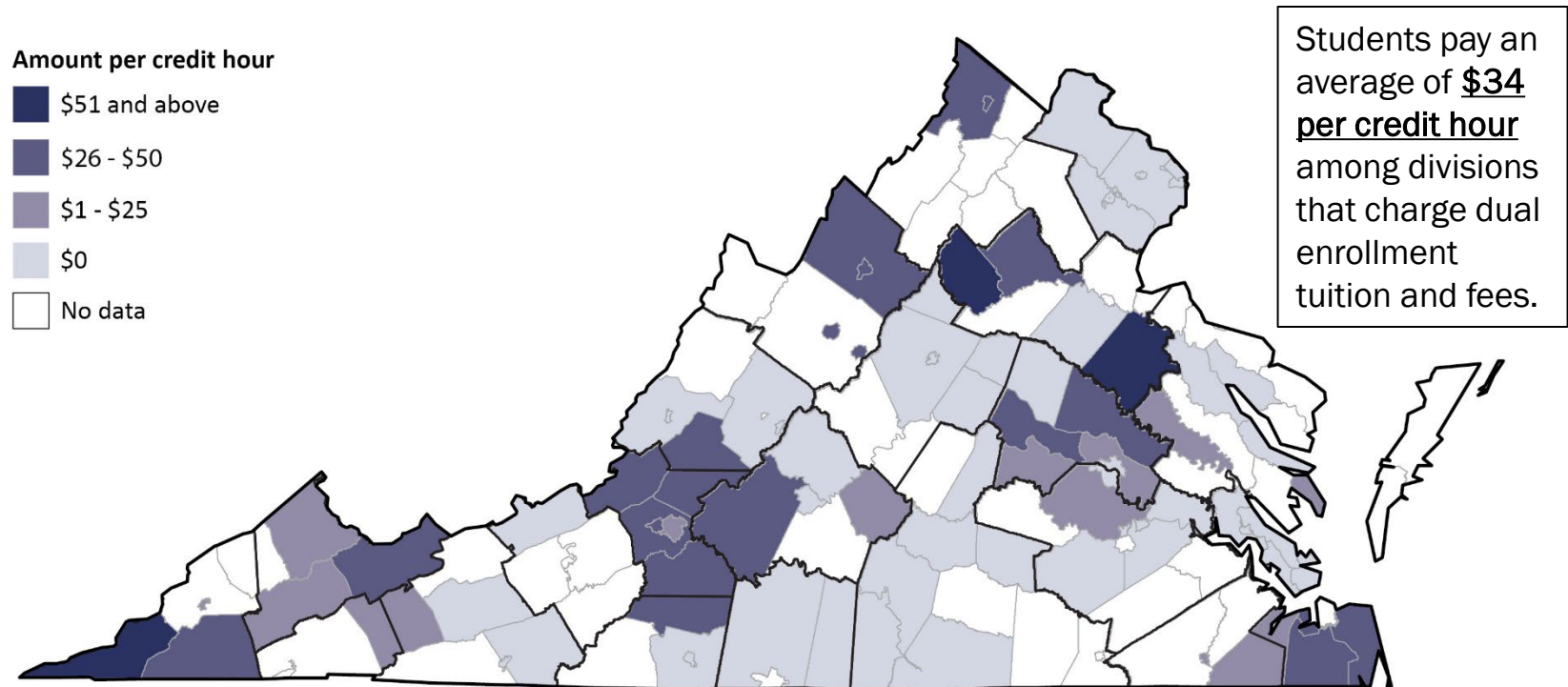


# Students in a majority of school divisions do not pay for dual enrollment courses



Note: Information on student tuition and fee charges was only available for 88 school divisions. Information for these divisions provides basis for estimate that students in majority of school divisions statewide do not pay for dual enrollment courses.

# Tuition and fee rates vary among divisions that charge students for dual enrollment courses



Note: Figure shows tuition and fee rates school divisions charge students for dual enrollment courses provided on the high school campus taught by a credentialed high school teacher. Most dual enrollment courses are three credit hours.

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## Eliminating tuition/fees would help students and school divisions but reduce college revenues

- Colleges and vast majority of divisions do not need tuition and fee revenue to cover dual enrollment expenses
- Eliminating tuition and fees would improve student access
  - Economically disadvantaged students have lowest participation rates in programs with high tuition and fees
- At least 51 school divisions would save average of ~\$81K per year in tuition and fees charged by colleges
- Community colleges would lose average of ~\$270K per year

Note: See Table 4-1 on page 31 of the report for more information on impact to community colleges if dual enrollment tuition and fees were no longer charged.

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## Recommendation

General Assembly may wish to consider prohibiting community colleges and school divisions from charging tuition and fees for dual enrollment courses provided on high school campuses.

## Policy options

General Assembly could provide additional \$6.2 million to replace colleges' dual enrollment tuition and fee revenue.

General Assembly could provide funds for grants to divisions that demonstrate need for financial assistance for their dual enrollment programs.

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## State general funds for dual enrollment should be based on actual dual enrollment expenses

- VCCS does not receive state funding appropriated specifically for dual enrollment
- VCCS's internal formula for distributing general funds to colleges treats dual enrollment students the same as traditional students
  - Colleges' per-student costs for dual enrollment students are less than for traditional students
- Distributing general funds to colleges based on actual dual enrollment expenses would clarify colleges' and state's dual enrollment costs

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## Recommendations

General Assembly may wish to consider

- including language in the Appropriation Act to specify amount appropriated for dual enrollment based on colleges' actual program expenses;
- directing VCCS to develop and implement a process to distribute general funds to colleges for dual enrollment based on each college's dual enrollment expenses; and
- directing community colleges to document and track amounts and sources of revenues and expenses related to their dual enrollment programs.

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## Dual enrollment revenue has subsidized colleges' other expenses

- Colleges receive about \$38M more in general funds than they need to operate their dual enrollment programs
  - Represents about 5% of colleges' total revenue, on average
  - 8% to 10% at five colleges\*
- Colleges report using funds to subsidize non-dual enrollment programs

\*Mountain Empire, New River, Laurel Ridge, Southside, and Rappahannock



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## Policy option

General Assembly could continue to use its current methodology for determining the amount to appropriate to VCCS for colleges' Educational and General Programs.

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# Credentialing requirements and additional workload deter teachers from teaching dual enrollment

- Most common concern cited by school divisions about ability to offer dual enrollment courses
  - Total number of credentialed teachers has declined statewide by 7% from 2018–19 to 2021–22
- Time and cost of becoming qualified deters high school teachers from pursuing credentials
  - Generally required to have a master's degree with minimum of 18 graduate-level credit hours in the subject being taught
- Teachers also generally do not receive compensation for additional workload associated with teaching dual enrollment courses

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# Policy options

## General Assembly could

- appropriate funding to provide annual bonuses to high school teachers statewide who teach dual enrollment courses; and/or
- appropriate funding to pay college faculty to teach dual enrollment courses at high schools that lack a sufficient number of credentialed teachers in their geographic area.

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## JLARC staff for this report

Tracey Smith, Associate Director

Lauren Axelle, Project Leader

Brittany Utz, Senior Legislative Analyst