

Annual Report on

# Concurrent Enrollment

2017-2018 Academic Year



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Higher Education



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

This report was prepared by the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) pursuant to C.R.S. §22-35-112.

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Department of Education



When it comes to preparing all students for a fast-changing world, the state of Colorado must continue to blur the lines among K-12 education, higher education and industry. That's why we're proud of our dual enrollment programs, which allow students to earn college-level credit while in high school. Concurrent Enrollment (CE) and dual enrollment not only save students time and money, but also remedy the deep-rooted inequities across our state. And their popularity is soaring.

Nearly 46,000 students participated in dual enrollment programs throughout the state this year, up 10 percentage points from the previous year. This represents more than a third of all juniors and seniors who attend public high school in Colorado.

The state-facilitated Concurrent Enrollment program offers extra benefits. Established in 2009, CE connects local education providers, typically high schools, and higher education institutions to deliver college-level coursework in 97 percent of districts statewide. Most CE credits are guaranteed to transfer to every public college, university, and technical school in the state, ensuring more students save money and time on their journey to postsecondary completion.

Anecdotally, many students tell us that concurrent enrollment gives them the confidence to tackle college-level work, and the data agrees. A recent study by CDHE funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences showed that 77 percent of Colorado CE students went on to college compared to 52 percent of students who did not participate. And 82 percent of CE students continued in their postsecondary education—known as persistence—compared to 77 percent of non-CE students.

Even better, more students of color are taking advantage of CE. Compared to the previous year, participation in CE increased 16 percentage points among African American and black students, 17 points among Hispanic students and 18 points among Native American and American Indian students—populations that are the least likely to enroll in, persist through, and ultimately earn a credential from our state's postsecondary institutions. Engaging our historically disenfranchised students, and activating their potential through successful completion, gives us the best shot to secure a vibrant, strong economy long term.

Dual and Concurrent Enrollment programs work, which is why we hope to scale them even further through smart policy tweaks and investments this year and in years to come. They are among our most powerful strategies that will help our state reach 66 percent attainment by 2025.

The following report dives into these findings and policy priorities in more detail. We are eager to convene conversations with schools, institutions and community partners to continue to drive program participation.

Sincerely,



Governor Jared Polis, Dr. Angie Paccione, Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, and Dr. Katy Anthes, Colorado Commissioner on Higher Education



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# Introduction

Expanding pathways from high school to higher education is essential for Colorado to reach its goals of increasing college completion rates, erasing attainment gaps and increasing high school student engagement. As part of its 2017 Master Plan, [\*Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development\*](#), the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) set the goal of 66 percent of Coloradans attaining postsecondary credentials. Additionally, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has aligned goals that 66 percent of students will earn a postsecondary credential after high school and that 50 percent of all students will earn college credit while in high school. To reach these goals, the state has embraced several strategies that contribute to continued student success.

Colorado, like other states across the country, utilizes dual enrollment as a strategy to cultivate seamless P-20 pathways and increase credential completion. Dual enrollment programs provide high school students with the opportunity to enroll in college-level courses, simultaneously earning both high school and college credit, often at greatly reduced costs. Specifically, Local Education Providers (LEPs) participating in the state's Concurrent Enrollment program typically cover the student's tuition expenses up to the resident community college tuition rate. These programs help students develop the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to be postsecondary education- and workforce-ready. Research indicates that dual enrollment students are more likely to enroll and persist in college and are less likely to need remedial education once in college.<sup>1</sup>

The Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the CDE have prepared this report pursuant to statute (C.R.S. §22-35-112). The data, collected through the CDHE Student Unit Record Data System (SURDS) unless noted otherwise, provide a descriptive summary of students in Colorado's public education system who participated in dual enrollment programs in the 2017-2018 Academic Year.

## Definitions and Data

The term ***dual enrollment*** is used in this report to refer to the broad array of programs available to high school students that allow them to take college-level courses for credit.

***Concurrent Enrollment*** (capitalized in all usages) refers only to the statewide programs created by House Bill 09-1319 and detailed in the Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act (C.R.S. §22-35-101 et seq.). The Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act defines Concurrent Enrollment as the "simultaneous enrollment of a qualified student in a local education provider and in one or more postsecondary courses, including academic or career and technical education courses, which may include course work related to apprenticeship programs or internship programs, at an institution of higher education" (C.R.S. §22-35-103). Completed courses that fall under the Concurrent Enrollment definition are guaranteed to qualify as basic skills credit or apply to a certificate or degree program at a Colorado public postsecondary institution of

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<sup>1</sup> See "Outcomes of Dual Enrollment Programs" on page 24.

higher education. Early College High Schools and Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) are included in this report.

The ***Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment Program (ASCENT)*** is a dual enrollment program that differs substantially in its parameters and funding. Students who have completed at least 12 credit hours of postsecondary coursework prior to completion of their 12th grade year and are remediation-free in their selected program of study may be eligible for ASCENT (C.R.S. § 22-35-108). They remain students at their LEP for one year following their 12th grade year (creating a 5th year of high school), and the LEP receives ASCENT-specific, per-pupil state funding that it uses to pay the student's college tuition at the resident community college rate. Students receive their high school diplomas at the end of their ASCENT year.

Programs identified in this report as ***other high school dual enrollment programs*** are administered directly by postsecondary institutions and do not fall under the statutory definition of Concurrent Enrollment. Students can receive college-level credit through these other programs, but they and their families may be required to pay for courses.

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### This report summarizes:

1. The number of LEPs and institutions of higher education that have entered into cooperative agreements;
  2. The number of public-school students participating in Concurrent Enrollment, ASCENT and other dual enrollment programs;
  3. Demographic information on students who participated in Concurrent Enrollment; and
  4. The total number and percentage of students who passed Concurrent Enrollment courses during Academic Year (AY) 2017-2018.
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# Highlights

STATEWIDE

## 45,787 students

participated in dual enrollment programs of any type in the 2017-2018 Academic Year.



This represents nearly **35 percent** of all 11th and 12th graders in public high schools in Colorado.

Concurrent Enrollment continues to see sustained increases in participation,

up nearly



## 10

PERCENT

statewide with 30,979 students participating in 2017-2018.

In 2017-2018, high school students attempted

## 264,304

Concurrent Enrollment CREDIT HOURS

The average number of credit hours attempted per student was 8.5 with an average of 8 hours passed

From 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 participation in Concurrent Enrollment increased

**11** PERCENT  
*Asian students*

**16** PERCENT  
*African American students*

**23** PERCENT  
*Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students*

**17** PERCENT  
*Hispanic students*

**18** PERCENT  
*Native American students*

**7** PERCENT  
*White students*



Nearly

## 40

PERCENT

of students who participated in ASCENT in 2017-2018 were Hispanic, a minority group that is historically underrepresented in postsecondary education.

Participation in ASCENT increased by more than 20 percent from the previous year with

## 557 STUDENTS

participating statewide in 2017-2018.



In 2017-2018

## 2,758

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

earned some type of postsecondary credential after participating in Concurrent Enrollment or ASCENT programs



## Summary of Dual Enrollment Programs

During the 2017-2018 Academic Year, 45,787 high school students (representing nearly 35 percent of all 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders) participated in Concurrent Enrollment, ASCENT or other dual enrollment programs. This number was an increase of nearly 4,000 students from 2016-2017, or a nearly 10 percent jump in dual enrollment participation overall.

The highest area of participation growth in 2017-2018 was in Concurrent Enrollment programs at two-and four-year institutions, which saw a combined increase of 9.5 percent. Four-year institutions saw the biggest percentage increase in Concurrent Enrollment participation with a 10.2 percent increase. Area Technical Colleges (ATCs) provided 917 students with Concurrent Enrollment opportunities in 2017-2018, which represents a slight decrease compared to the previous year.

Table 1 (*page 7*) provides a summary of the different dual enrollment programs in the state during the past three academic years. The largest number of students (nearly 70 percent) participated in Concurrent Enrollment programs.

### High School Dual Enrollment Summary, by Program, 2017-2018

69.7%

1.2%

29.1%

Concurrent Enrollment

ASCENT

Other High School Dual Enrollment Programs



As stated earlier, the other high school dual enrollment programs category includes all other college-level courses taken by high school students that are outside of the Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act. Some of these courses are taken through a program with a formalized agreement between institutions of higher education and school districts and some are courses that high school students have enrolled in individually.

**Table 1: High School Dual Enrollment Summary, Prior Academic Year Comparisons**

Program Type	Unduplicated student count, 2015-2016	Unduplicated student count, 2016-2017	Unduplicated student count, 2017-2018	Percentage change from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018
Concurrent Enrollment two- & four-year institutions*	25,534	28,290	30,979	+9.5%
<i>Two-year institutions</i>	22,582	25,127	27,596	+9.8%
<i>Four-year institutions</i>	3,599	3,782	4,169	+10.2%
Area Technical Colleges (ATCs)**	946	927	917	-1.1%
ASCENT Program***	485	463	557	+20.3%
Other High School Dual Enrollment Programs	11,554	12,177	13,334	+9.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,519</b>	<b>41,857</b>	<b>45,787</b>	<b>+9.4%</b>

\*Concurrent Enrollment program numbers include students at Early College High Schools and P-TECH.

\*\*All counts for ATCs fall within the statutory definition of Concurrent Enrollment. AY 2016-2017 is the first year that data for all ATCs have been available in SURDS, which represents a more accurate count than previous years.

\*\*\* ASCENT counts are from CDE's October Count data.





Table 2 displays participation in dual enrollment programs by higher education institutions. The two-year institutions that served the greatest number of high school students in 2017-2018 were Front Range Community College (5,741), followed by Arapahoe Community College (5,475). Of the ATCs, Pickens Technical College served the greatest number of high school students (550). Of the four-year institutions offering dual enrollment programs, the University of Colorado Denver served the greatest number of students (6,918), primarily through its institutionally developed dual enrollment program.

**Table 2: Dual Enrollment Participation by Higher Education Institution, 2017-2018**

Public Institution of Higher Education	Concurrent Enrollment	ASCENT	Other HS Dual Enrollment Programs	Total All Programs	Percentage change from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 for All Programs
<b>Two-Year Institutions</b>					
Aims Community College	2,105	16	501	2,622	22.3%
Arapahoe Community College	5,255	15	205	5,475	7.8%
Colorado Northwestern Community College	534	0	18	552	11.3%
Community College of Aurora	4,643	101	56	4,800	30.6%
Community College of Denver	1,619	74	66	1,759	-17.9%
Front Range Community College	5,260	106	375	5,741	14.2%
Lamar Community College	329	8	14	351	-6.4%
Morgan Community College	670	1	96	767	-12.7%
Northeastern Junior College	344	1	43	388	-7.2%
Otero Junior College	469	0	17	486	-15.0%
Pikes Peak Community College	2,437	85	123	2,645	5.5%
Pueblo Community College	1,710	31	309	2,050	14.7%
Red Rocks Community College	2,012	34	166	2,212	3.2%
Trinidad State Junior College	791	0	24	815	3.7%
<b>Two-Year Institutions Total</b>	<b>27,596</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>2,009</b>	<b>30,076</b>	<b>10.1%</b>

Public Institution of Higher Education	Concurrent Enrollment	ASCENT	Other HS Dual Enrollment Programs	Total All Programs	Percentage change for All Programs
<b>Area Technical Colleges (ATCs)</b>					
Technical College of the Rockies	40	0	0	40	-28.6%
Emily Griffith Technical College	327	0	0	327	-4.4%
Pickens Technical College	550	0	0	550	4.0%
<b>ATC Total</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>

Public Institution of Higher Education	Concurrent Enrollment	ASCENT	Other HS Dual Enrollment Programs	Total All Programs	Percentage change for All Programs
<b>Four-Year Institutions</b>					
Adams State University	154	7	230	391	-11.1%
Colorado Mesa University	965	16	91	1,072	11.0%
Colorado Mountain College	1,348	0	723	2,071	26.6%
Colorado School of Mines	0	0	5	5	0.0%
Colorado State University	16	0	0	16	166.7%
Colorado State University - Pueblo	805	5	679	1,489	9.6%
CSU-Global Campus	0	0	25	25	92.3%
Fort Lewis College	81	0	9	90	47.5%
Metropolitan State University of Denver	416	47	6	469	55.8%
University of Colorado Boulder	37	0	30	67	21.8%
University of Colorado Colorado Springs	48	0	2,236	2,284	-4.5%
University of Colorado Denver	40	0	6,878	6,918	10.0%
University of Northern Colorado	17	0	766	783	3.8%
Western State Colorado University	318	0	1	319	-24.8%
<b>Four-Year Institutions Total</b>	<b>4,169</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>11,362</b>	<b>15,606</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>31,896</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>13,334</b>	<b>45,787</b>	<b>9.4%</b>

Note: All counts at each level are unduplicated. Totals in each section may not equal grand total. All institutional data in Table 2, including ASCENT data, are unduplicated counts from CDHE's SURDS. Grand total ASCENT counts are from CDE's October Count data. Also, as Colorado Mesa University (CMU) includes a two-year college, Western Colorado Community College (WCCC), as part of its system, some of the Concurrent Enrollment students counted here may be enrolled in WCCC, and not CMU's four-year program.

# Concurrent Enrollment Participation

*The remainder of this report summarizes Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT programs as described in House Bill 09-1319; data from other dual enrollment programs are not included.*

## Partnership Summary

A Local Education Provider (LEP) that seeks to allow students to participate in Concurrent Enrollment must enter into a cooperative agreement with an institution of higher education using the Concurrent Enrollment model per C.R.S. §22-35-104.

In AY 2017-2018, 25 public institutions of higher education had an estimated 511 cooperative agreements in place with LEPs. This total may include duplicates, as one LEP can have cooperative agreements with multiple institutions of higher education. Additionally, per C.R.S. §22-35-104, institutions are required to submit agreements to the CDHE and those agreements may not yet have been received.

## Participation Growth

The Concurrent Enrollment program continues to see sustained increases in participation. During the 2017-2018 Academic Year, 2,679 more students participated in the program than in the previous year. As reported last year, the increase from 2015-2016 to 2016-2017 was 2,737 students. Data for Academic Year 2017-2018 show that the rate of growth in the state's Concurrent Enrollment program has stabilized at approximately 10 percent per year. Currently, 97 percent of LEPs and 85 percent of high schools in Colorado participate in Concurrent Enrollment (a slight increase in the number of districts and a slight decrease in the number of high schools).

Table 3 displays the unduplicated student count for Concurrent Enrollment participation by institutions of higher education for the last two years. Community College of Aurora had the largest increase of students enrolled (+1,127), with a total of 4,643 students participating. Colorado Mountain College had the largest participation increase of four-year institutions, with 176 more students participating in 2017-2018 than in the previous school year. A total of 29 public institutions of higher education served Concurrent Enrollment students in 2017-2018.

**Table 3: Concurrent Enrollment Programs, Prior Academic Year Comparison**

Public Institution of Higher Education	Number of students, 2016-2017	Number of students, 2017-2018	Change in number of students	Percentage change
<b>Two-Year Institutions</b>				
Aims Community College	1,706	2,105	399	23.4%
Arapahoe Community College	4,886	5,255	369	7.6%
Colorado Northwestern Community College	460	534	74	16.1%
Community College of Aurora	3,516	4,643	1,127	32.1%
Community College of Denver	2,018	1,619	-399	-19.8%
Front Range Community College	4,689	5,260	571	12.2%
Lamar Community College	321	329	8	2.5%
Morgan Community College	751	670	-81	-10.8%
Northeastern Junior College	385	344	-41	-10.6%
Otero Junior College	477	469	-8	-1.7%
Pikes Peak Community College	2,308	2,437	129	5.6%
Pueblo Community College	1,617	1,710	93	5.8%
Red Rocks Community College	1,925	2,012	87	4.5%
Trinidad State Junior College	771	791	20	2.6%
<b>Area Technical Colleges (ATCs)*</b>				
Technical College of the Rockies	56	40	-16	-28.6%
Emily Griffith Technical College	342	327	-15	-4.4%
Pickens Technical College	529	550	21	4.0%
<b>Four-Year Institutions</b>				
Adams State University	91	154	63	69.2%
Colorado Mesa University**	932	965	33	3.5%
Colorado Mountain College	1,172	1,348	176	15.0%
Colorado State University	6	16	10	166.7%
Colorado State University - Pueblo	786	805	19	2.4%
Fort Lewis College	53	81	28	52.8%
Metropolitan State University of Denver	270	416	146	54.1%
University of Colorado Boulder	34	37	3	8.8%
University of Colorado Colorado Springs	38	48	10	26.3%
University of Colorado Denver	21	40	19	90.5%
University of Northern Colorado	30	17	-13	-43.3%
Western State Colorado University	423	318	-105	-24.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,217</b>	<b>31,896</b>	<b>+2,679</b>	<b>9.2%</b>

Note: Counts throughout the report may differ based upon multiple enrollments and descriptive reporting.

\*Academic Year 2016-2017 is the first year that data for all ATCs have been available in SURDS which represents a more accurate count than previous years.

\*\*Colorado Mesa University includes a two-year college, Western Colorado Community College (WCCC). As a part of its system, some of the Concurrent Enrollment students counted here may be enrolled in the two-year program, not the four-year program.

## Participation by Districts and High Schools

A total of two Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and 173 school districts participated in Concurrent Enrollment in 2017-2018, which represents 97 percent of Local Education Providers in Colorado (up from 96 percent in 2016-2017). In 2017-2018, 34 districts had less than 5 percent Concurrent Enrollment participation among their 9th through 12th grade student population. This is a slight increase from last year when 31 districts had less than 5 percent of students participating in Concurrent Enrollment. See Figure 2 for a visual display of participating districts and participation rates. A complete list of Concurrent Enrollment headcounts and participation rates by school district is available [online](#). Additionally, 434 high schools had at least one student participating in Concurrent Enrollment, representing 85 percent of all Colorado high schools (down from 86 percent in 2016-2017).

Table 4a lists 10 rural school districts with the highest percentage of high school students participating in Concurrent Enrollment. Crowley County School District tops the list with 74 percent of its students taking Concurrent Enrollment courses. All school districts in Table 4a are classified by CDE as small rural districts.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 4a: Rural Districts Participating in Concurrent Enrollment by Percentage of High School Students, 2017-2018**

District	Number of Students in Concurrent Enrollment (Unduplicated Headcount)	Percentage of 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Graders in Concurrent Enrollment
Crowley County School District	90	74%
Edison School District 54JT	106	72%
Fowler R-4J	72	60%
McClave School District	34	51%
La Veta RE-2	33	50%
Canon City RE-1	528	49%
Meeker RE1	90	45%
Plateau RE-5	26	43%
South Conejos RE-10	24	43%
Karval RE-23	3	43%

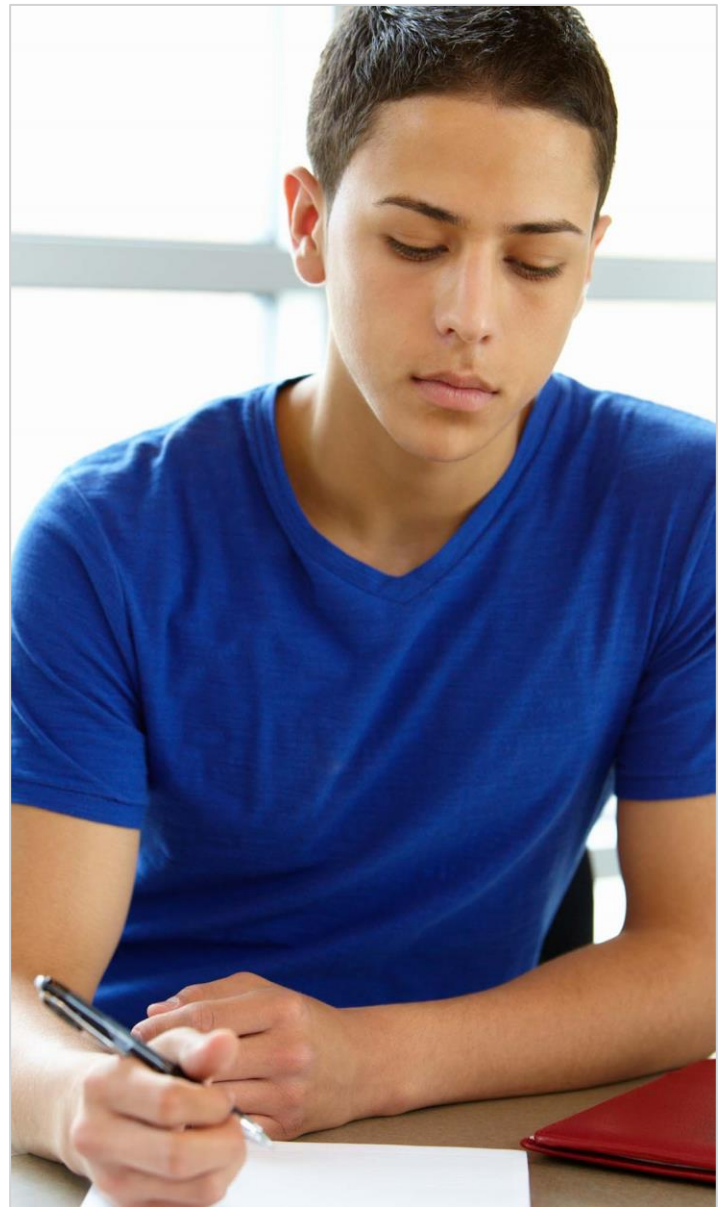
Note: Percentage of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students is based on CDE's October Count data.

<sup>2</sup> CDE's Information Management Services Unit uses the following definition of rural schools: "A Colorado school district is determined to be rural based on the size of the district, the distance from the nearest large urban/urbanized area and whether the district has a student enrollment of approximately 6,500 students or fewer. Small rural districts are those districts meeting these same criteria and having a student population of fewer than 1,000 students."

Tables 4b and 4c highlight the 10 schools and school districts with the highest number of students participating in Concurrent Enrollment. When looking at Concurrent Enrollment participation by student headcount, the state’s larger schools and districts have the highest participation numbers. Colorado Early College Fort Collins tops the high school list. Two of the high schools in Table 4b are new this year to the top 10 list: Cherry Creek High School and Rangeview High School. In Table 4c, Denver Public Schools had the largest Concurrent Enrollment participation by school district.

Recent research conducted by CDHE and CDE identified school districts in Colorado with low or no Concurrent Enrollment participation. Those districts were contacted to better understand the reasons for low participation. Those responses included:

- Data and terminology discrepancies between the various types of dual enrollment in Colorado;
- Teacher-preparation guidelines that impact the ability of rural communities to find teachers with the necessary credentials to teach college-level courses;
- Funding constraints, especially in rural areas, that limit the ability of districts to offer various options for students to earn college credit while in high school;
- Focus on other forms of postsecondary credit opportunities for high school students, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and College Level Examination Program (CLEP);
- Limitations on the availability of Concurrent Enrollment courses due to service-area restrictions with institutions of higher education; and,
- A lack of streamlined paperwork and processes when working with institutions of higher education that offer Concurrent Enrollment.<sup>3</sup>




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<sup>3</sup> Diaz, L. (2018). *Concurrent Enrollment Findings Among Rural Districts with Less than 5% Participation*.

**Table 4b: Schools Participating in Concurrent Enrollment by Student Headcount, 2017-2018**

District/Institute	School	Unduplicated Headcount
Colorado Charter School Institute	Colorado Early College Fort Collins	870
Cherry Creek Schools	Grandview High School	690
Douglas County School District	Rock Canyon High School	667
Cherry Creek Schools	Cherokee Trail High School	661
Poudre School District	Poudre High School	578
Colorado Charter School Institute	Colorado Springs Early Colleges	557
Aurora Public Schools (Adams-Arapahoe 28J)	Rangeview High School	538
Fremont RE-1	Canon City High School	528
Cherry Creek Schools	Cherry Creek High School	493
Jeffco Public Schools	Chatfield High School	459

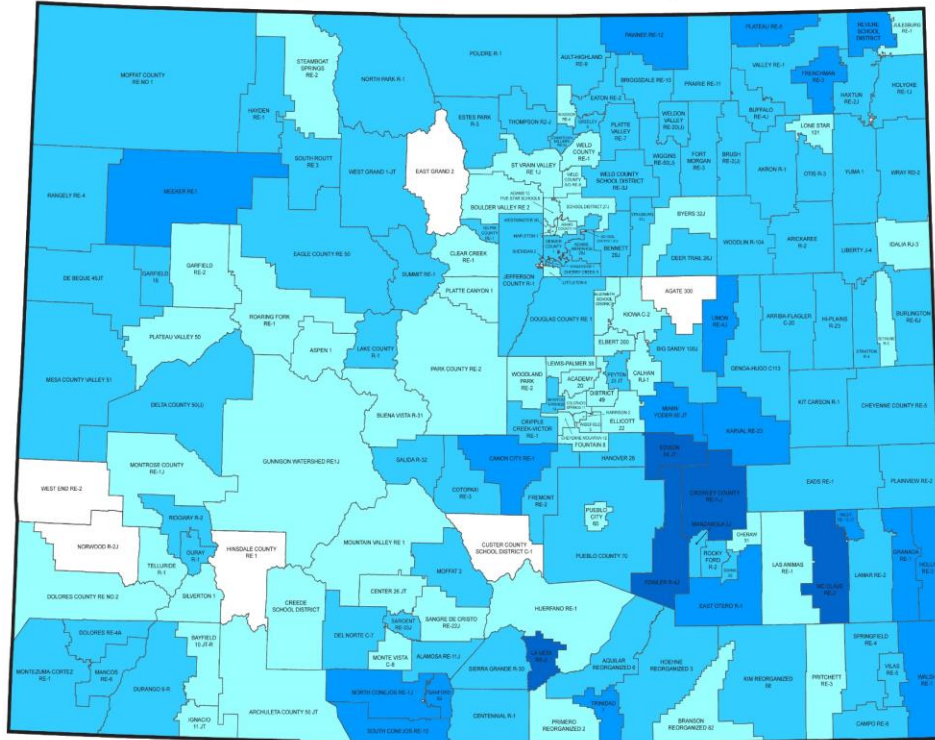
**Table 4c: Districts Participating in Concurrent Enrollment by Student Headcount, 2017-2018**

District	Number of Schools Within the District with Concurrent Enrollment Programs	Unduplicated Headcount
Denver Public Schools	42	2,932
Douglas County School District	12	2,869
Jeffco Public Schools	34	2,643
Cherry Creek Schools	8	2,599
Colorado Charter School Institute	13	2,192
Aurora Public Schools (Adams-Arapahoe 28J)	9	1,851
Poudre School District	8	1,249
Thompson R2-J	6	756
Mesa County Valley School District 51	8	742
St. Vrain Valley RE 1J	11	683

Figure 2: Map of School Districts Participating in Concurrent Enrollment with Percent Enrolled, 2017-2018

## Concurrent Enrollment 2017-2018

● >50% 
 ● 30-49% 
 ● 10-29% 
 ● <10% 
  Non-participating



CE Participation	
2017	35%
2016	32%
2015	28%
2014	25%
2013	22%
2012	19%

● Charter School Institute - 40.8%

● CO School for the Deaf & Blind - 2.1%

Produced by the Colorado Department of Education - February 2019  
Source: Colorado Department of Higher Education



# Accelerating Students through Concurrent ENrollment (ASCENT)

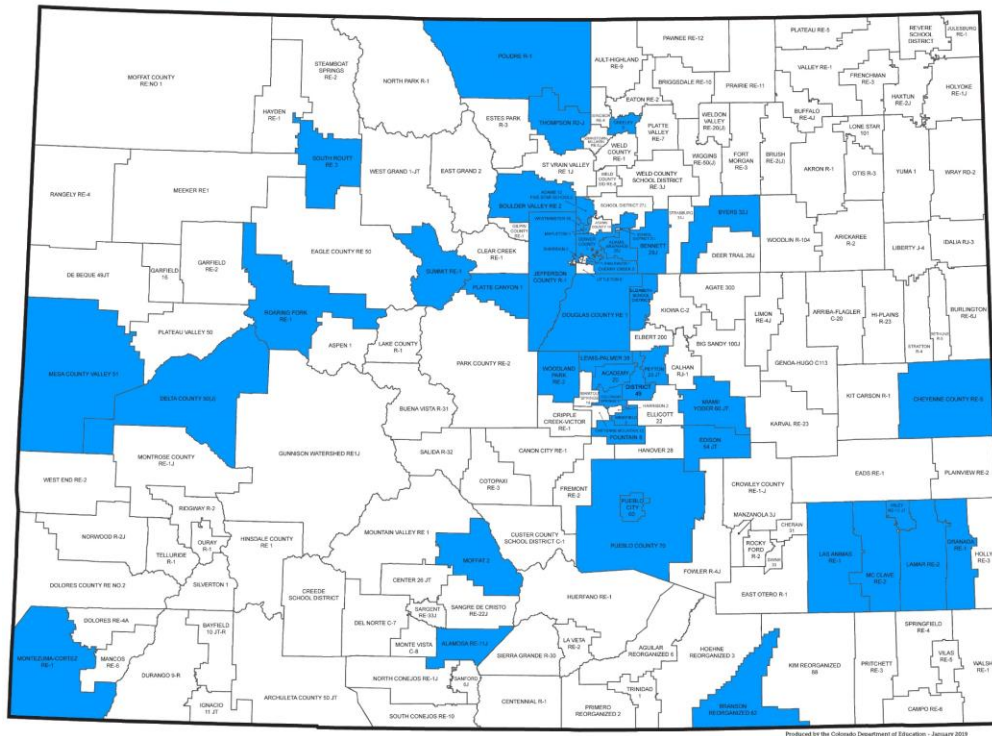
The ASCENT program provides an opportunity for students to continue to participate in Concurrent Enrollment in the year directly following their 12th grade year, or a fifth year of high school. In Academic Year 2017-2018, 42 LEPs participated in this program (an increase of nine from 2016-2017) with a total enrollment of 557 students. A list of the high schools and the unduplicated headcount of participating students can be found [online](#).

CDE October Count data were used in this section of the report to align with the amount of funding received by districts/LEPs for ASCENT participation. As students can participate part-time, the unduplicated headcount may be larger than the total FTE funded by the legislature. Additionally, recent changes allow for ASCENT students to be counted in a district’s “on-time, four-year” high school graduating cohort, which may encourage more districts to adopt ASCENT programs.

Figure 3: Map of School Districts Participating in ASCENT, 2017-2018

## ASCENT Program 2017-2018

Shaded districts have at least one participating student



Other Participants  
Charter School Institute

Produced by the Colorado Department of Education - January 2019

## ASCENT Demographics

Per C.R.S. §22-35-108, students eligible to participate in ASCENT must have completed 12 postsecondary credit hours prior to the completion of the 12th grade year and not need basic skills coursework in their selected pathway. ASCENT students must also be selected for participation by the school principal or the equivalent school administrator and accepted into a postsecondary degree program.

One of the objectives of the ASCENT program is to increase the percentage of students who participate in postsecondary education, especially among low-income and traditionally underserved populations. Tables 5a and 5b provide information on ASCENT participation by race/ethnicity and gender. Nearly 40 percent of students who participated in ASCENT in 2017-2018 were Hispanic, a minority group that is historically underrepresented in postsecondary education. Similar to Concurrent Enrollment participation, more females than males participated in ASCENT.

**Table 5a: ASCENT Participation by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-2018**

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of Students
Asian	< 5%
African American	< 5%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	< 5%
Hispanic	40%
Native American/Alaskan Native	< 5%
White	50%
More than one race/ethnicity	< 5%

**Table 5b: ASCENT Participation by Gender, 2017-2018**

Gender	Percentage of Students
Female	57%
Male	43%

Table 5c outlines ASCENT participation by students' eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL). Twenty-five percent of ASCENT students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, with the majority of these students qualifying for free lunch.

**Table 5c: ASCENT Participation by FRL Status, 2017-2018**

FRL Eligibility Status	Percentage of Students
Free Lunch	20%
Reduced-Price Lunch	5%
Not Eligible	75%

## Concurrent Enrollment Demographics

Table 6a provides information on Concurrent Enrollment participation by race/ethnicity. The number of Hispanic students—Colorado’s largest minority group—participating in Concurrent Enrollment increased by 17 percent from AY 2016-2017 to AY 2017-2018. Additionally, participation by African American students and Native American students increased by 16 percent and 18 percent respectively. **Overall, since the beginning of Concurrent Enrollment in 2009, the program has seen significant diversification, and the composition of the Concurrent Enrollment program continues to closely resemble the composition of public high schools in Colorado.**

**Table 6a:** Concurrent Enrollment Participation by Race/Ethnicity, Prior Academic Year Comparison

Race/Ethnicity	2016-2017 number/percent of total		2017-2018 number/percent of total		Percentage change
Asian	897	3%	997	3%	11%
African American	861	3%	995	3%	16%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	69	0.2%	85	0.3%	23%
Hispanic	6,934	24%	8,111	25%	17%
Native American/Alaskan Native	145	1%	171	1%	18%
Unknown/Did Not Wish to Answer	2,882	10%	3,366	11%	17%
White	15,294	53%	16,386	51%	7%
More Than One Race/Ethnicity	1,053	4%	1,258	4%	19%
Nonresident Alien*	551	2%	611	2%	11%

\*A nonresident alien is a person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely

Table 6b displays Concurrent Enrollment participation by gender. In each of the last six academic years more females have participated in Concurrent Enrollment than males.

**Table 6b:** Concurrent Enrollment Participation by Gender, Prior Academic Year Comparison

Gender	2016-2017 number/percent of total		2017-2018 number/percent of total		Percentage change
Female	15,487	54.4%	17,149	54.1%	11%
Male	12,948	45.4%	14,463	45.7%	12%
No Gender Data	64	0.2%	75	0.2%	17%

Note: Tables 6a and 6b data include Concurrent Enrollment but does not include ASCENT. Counts may differ based upon multiple enrollments and descriptive reporting. Headcount enrollments, by ethnicity and gender, for each participating higher education institution are available [online](#).

## Academic Success

Table 7 details the number of credit hours attempted and the number of credit hours passed for Concurrent Enrollment students by institution of higher education. In 2017-2018, high school students attempted a total of 264,304 Concurrent Enrollment credit hours, up from 242,728 hours in the previous year. The average number of credit hours attempted by Concurrent Enrollment students was 8.5 (down from an average of 8.6 credit hours attempted in 2016-2017), with an average of 8 credit hours passed (unchanged from 2016-2017).

Nearly all the Concurrent Enrollment credit hours taken by students—94 percent—were passed in 2017-2018 (unchanged from last year).

## Remedial Courses

Table 8 details student participation in basic skills, or remedial, Concurrent Enrollment courses. Per C.R.S. §22-25-104, students may concurrently enroll in basic skills courses only if they are enrolled in the 12th grade. Out of all Concurrent Enrollment students, 1,648 (5.3 percent) enrolled in remedial courses compared to 7.1 percent in the previous year.

Community College of Denver (CCD) saw a more than 60 percent decrease in remedial Concurrent Enrollment in 2017-2018. Community College of Aurora (CCA) now enrolls the most remedial Concurrent Enrollment students of any institution of higher education and saw a nearly 40 percent increase in remedial Concurrent Enrollment participation. Combined, CCD and CCA account for over 60 percent of remedial Concurrent Enrollment students statewide.

In recent years, Colorado's public two-year institutions have seen progress in student outcomes moving from a traditional remediation model to another model called Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) or corequisite remediation which places students directly in a college-level course with additional supports. As more institutions and state policy moves toward broad adoption of SAI, it will likely result in significant declines in traditional remedial courses being offered through Concurrent Enrollment.

**Table 7: Concurrent Enrollment Credit Hours Attempted and Passed, 2017-2018**

Public Institution of Higher Education	Number of Students	Total Hours Attempted	Total Hours Passed	Pass Rate
<b>Two-Year Institutions</b>				
Aims Community College	2,105	13,405	12,433	93%
Arapahoe Community College	5,255	31,392	30,075	96%
Colorado Northwestern Community College	534	5,300	4,805	91%
Community College of Aurora	4,643	37,097	33,735	91%
Community College of Denver	1,619	12,618	11,319	90%
Front Range Community College	5,260	40,180	38,376	96%
Lamar Community College	329	3,783	3,689	98%
Morgan Community College	670	8,123	7,937	98%
Northeastern Junior College	344	3,206	3,151	98%
Otero Junior College	469	3,833	3,697	96%
Pikes Peak Community College	2,437	31,995	29,250	91%
Pueblo Community College	1,710	17,040	16,173	95%
Red Rocks Community College	2,012	18,515	17,642	95%
Trinidad State Junior College	791	6,762	6,460	96%
<b>Four-Year Institutions</b>				
Adams State University	154	2,008	1,793	89%
Colorado Mesa University	965	6,808	6,662	98%
Colorado Mountain College	1,348	11,029	10,845	98%
Colorado State University	16	85	80	94%
Colorado State University - Pueblo	805	5,494	5,100	93%
Fort Lewis College	81	601	563	94%
Metropolitan State University of Denver	416	1,756	1,584	90%
University of Colorado Boulder	37	210	204	97%
University of Colorado Colorado Springs	48	448	448	100%
University of Colorado Denver	40	679	622	92%
University of Northern Colorado	17	114	111	97%
Western State Colorado University	318	1,828	1,773	97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,979</b>	<b>264,304</b>	<b>248,522</b>	<b>94%</b>

Note: Course data not available for Area Technical Colleges.

**Table 8: Remedial Concurrent Enrollment Course Participation, 2017-2018 Credit Hours Attempted and Passed**

Public Institution of Higher Education	Number of Students	Total Hours Attempted	Total Hours Passed	Pass Rate
<b>Two-Year Institutions</b>				
Aims Community College	24	110	95	86%
Arapahoe Community College	125	614	498	81%
Colorado Northwestern Community College	59	355	272	77%
Community College of Aurora	715	4,072	3,101	76%
Community College of Denver	322	1,620	1,195	74%
Front Range Community College	59	300	251	84%
Lamar Community College	4	16	16	100%
Morgan Community College	10	57	53	93%
Northeastern Junior College	17	70	66	94%
Otero Junior College	4	16	16	100%
Pikes Peak Community College	47	229	164	72%
Pueblo Community College	43	186	161	87%
Red Rocks Community College	91	462	364	79%
Trinidad State Junior College	10	42	29	69%
<b>Four-Year Institutions</b>				
Adams State University	9	36	12	33%
Colorado Mesa University	47	236	232	98%
Colorado Mountain College	41	210	210	100%
Colorado State University - Pueblo	1	4	-	0%
Western State Colorado University	23	69	57	83%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,648</b>	<b>8,704</b>	<b>6,792</b>	<b>78%</b>

Note: Course data not available for Area Technical Colleges.

## Career and Technical Education Courses

Providing opportunities for postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) courses as part of dual enrollment offerings is an important strategy to help improve outcomes and encourage more students to complete high school with a credential. The CTE pathways in Colorado provide additional options for students to earn postsecondary credentials. Offering CTE through Concurrent Enrollment allows students to get a head start on those pathways.

Per C.R.S. §22-35-103, Concurrent Enrollment students have the opportunity to take CTE courses and earn credit that can be applied toward a technical certificate or degree. **In 2017-2018, more than 13,000 students participated in CTE Concurrent Enrollment courses, which represents 43 percent of all Concurrent Enrollment students.** Table 9 displays the number of students by institution of higher education. In 2017-2018, Arapahoe Community College served the most students—over 3,000—with CTE Concurrent Enrollment programs.

**Table 9: CTE Concurrent Enrollment Participation, Prior Academic Year Comparison**

Public Institution of Higher Education	Students in CTE Concurrent Enrollment courses, 2016-2017	Students in CTE Concurrent Enrollment courses, 2017-2018	Percentage change
Adams State University	2	6	200.0%
Aims Community College	918	1,217	32.6%
Arapahoe Community College	2,916	3,211	10.1%
Colorado Mesa University	429	462	7.7%
Colorado Mountain College	241	329	36.5%
Colorado Northwestern Community College	207	248	19.8%
Community College of Aurora	726	946	30.3%
Community College of Denver	550	546	-0.7%
Front Range Community College	2,171	2,484	14.4%
Lamar Community College	84	95	13.1%
Morgan Community College	236	202	-14.4%
Northeastern Junior College	106	98	-7.5%
Otero Junior College	175	187	6.9%
Pikes Peak Community College	1,076	1,035	-3.8%
Pueblo Community College	689	887	28.7%
Red Rocks Community College	1,345	1,398	3.9%
Trinidad State Junior College	269	240	-10.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,838</b>	<b>13,264</b>	<b>12.0%</b>

Note: Totals include unduplicated counts from CDHE's SURDS. Area Technical Colleges also offer CTE Concurrent Enrollment courses, but those data were unavailable for this report due to incomplete SURDS reporting.

## Postsecondary Credentials

Table 10 shows how many Concurrent Enrollment students, including ASCENT participants, are seeking a postsecondary credential while in high school. Overall, 15,696 students registered for their courses in a specific credential program. Most students are seeking an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree, both of which are transferable to four-year institutions of higher education.

Of students participating in ASCENT, more than 88 percent enrolled in a credential-seeking program. For students enrolled in Concurrent Enrollment programs, 48 percent enrolled in a credential-seeking program.

**Table 10: Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT Students by Postsecondary Credential-Seeking Status, Prior Academic Year Comparison**

Credential Type	Total Students 2016-2017	Total Students 2017-2018	Change from previous year	Percentage change
Certificate (less than 1 year)	2,702	3,425	+723	26.8%
Certificate (at least 1 year, less than 2)	848	943	+95	11.2%
Associate of Applied Science	3,903	4,247	+344	8.8%
Associate of General Studies	1,866	2,072	+206	11.0%
Associate Degree (AA or AS)	7,472	6,689	-783	-10.5%
Bachelor of Arts Degree	84	115	+31	36.9%
<b>Total credential-seeking</b>	<b>15,246</b>	<b>15,696</b>	<b>+450</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
Not credential-seeking	13,652	16,563	+2,911	21.3%

Note: ASCENT numbers are from CDHE's SURDS.

Table 11 displays the number and type of credentials earned by high school students participating in the Concurrent Enrollment or ASCENT programs during the past two academic years. Through Concurrent Enrollment or ASCENT programs, 2,758 students earned some type of postsecondary credential while in high school in 2017-18. This is a 37 percent increase over last year's total high school credential completion number (2,017).

**Table 11: Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT Postsecondary Credential Completion, Prior Academic Year Comparison**

Credential Type	Total Students 2016-2017	Total Students 2017-2018	Change from previous year	Percentage change
Certificate (less than 1 year)	1,640	2,231	+591	36.0%
Certificate (at least 1 year, less than 2)	79	144	+65	82.3%
Associate of Applied Science	16	22	+6	37.5%
Associate of General Studies	53	55	+2	3.8%
Associate Degree (AA or AS)	227	305	+78	34.4%
Bachelor's Degree (BA or BS)*	1	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,017</b>	<b>2,758</b>	<b>+741</b>	<b>36.7%</b>

Note: ASCENT numbers are from CDHE's SURDS.

\*The student receiving a bachelor's degree was an ASCENT student.



## Outcomes of Dual Enrollment Programs

To support research into the impact of Concurrent Enrollment on postsecondary student outcomes, CDHE received a two-year \$400,000 from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to study dual enrollment in Colorado. Several aspects of the research are still on-going but preliminary results have shown positive outcomes for Concurrent Enrollment students.

Controlling for several factors (such as 9<sup>th</sup> grade test scores, Free or Reduced Lunch eligibility, race/ethnicity, and English Language Learner status), students that participated in Concurrent Enrollment had a college-going rate of **77 percent compared a 52 percent** for students not participating in Concurrent Enrollment. Additionally, the persistence rate in postsecondary education for Concurrent Enrollment students was **82 percent compared to 77 percent** for non-Concurrent Enrollment students. For comparison, CDHE's recent [Legislative Report on the Postsecondary Progress and Success of High School Graduates](#) showed a college-going rate of 56.3 percent and a persistence rate of 79.5 percent for recent Colorado high school graduates.

Research into outcomes for Concurrent Enrollment students will continue to investigate the relationship between dual enrollment in Colorado on credential completion as well as the return on investment of Colorado's Concurrent Enrollment program.

Previous CDHE research has also shown positive impacts of Concurrent Enrollment on postsecondary student outcomes. A 2014 study using Colorado data shows better outcomes on all indicators for dual enrollment students as compared to students who did not take dual enrollment courses. Participation in Concurrent Enrollment is associated with:

- An increased likelihood of enrolling in college after high school (**23 percentage points higher**);
- A decreased need for remediation (**11 percentage points lower**)<sup>4</sup>;
- Higher earned cumulative credit hours by the end of students' first year (**9 more credit hours**);
- Higher first-year grade point averages (**0.15 GPA higher**); and
- Higher first-year retention rates (**3 percentage points higher**)<sup>5</sup>

Research released by the U.S. Department of Education reviewed the results of 35 studies that examined dual enrollment and showed consistent and positive outcomes for dual enrollment students. Dual enrollment programs were found to have positive effects on students':

- Degree attainment;
- College access and enrollment;
- Credit accumulation;
- Completion of high school; and
- General academic achievement<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Bautsch, B. (2014). *The Effects of Concurrent Enrollment on the College-Going and Remedial Education Rates of Colorado's High School Students*. Available at: [https://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/Concurrent/ConcurrentEnrollmentEffectsAnalysis\\_2014.pdf](https://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/Concurrent/ConcurrentEnrollmentEffectsAnalysis_2014.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Bean, B. (2015). *Annual Report on Concurrent Enrollment 2013-14 School Year*. Available at: [https://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/Enrollment/FY2014/2014\\_Concurrent\\_Enrollment\\_Sep\\_2015.pdf](https://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/Enrollment/FY2014/2014_Concurrent_Enrollment_Sep_2015.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. (2017) *WWC Intervention Report: Dual Enrollment Programs*. Available at: [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/InterventionReports/wwc\\_dual\\_enrollment\\_022817.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/InterventionReports/wwc_dual_enrollment_022817.pdf)

## Next Steps

Since its creation, the state's Concurrent Enrollment program has shown rich, scalable impact year-over-year. Governor Jared Polis continues to champion Concurrent Enrollment as an effective strategy that levels the playing field for students, saving them time and money. In accordance with C.R.S. §22-35-107(7), the General Assembly may consider the following guiding principles and areas of focus for improvements:

### Guiding Principles of Concurrent Enrollment

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**To help the state reach its goals, Colorado's Concurrent Enrollment infrastructure should strive to:**

- Provide meaningful college exposure;
- Offer college courses that are transferable and applicable to programs of study at Colorado institutions of higher education;
- Accelerate time to degree and offer opportunities for students to receive credentials in high school;
- Provide students with access to both CTE and general education pathways; and
- Ensure Concurrent Enrollment courses offer the same level of quality as other postsecondary courses.

### Suggestions for Improving Concurrent Enrollment

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**To achieve universal access to Concurrent Enrollment in the state and to maximize its impact, CDHE, CDE, institutions of higher education, and LEAs should:**

- Leverage Open Education Resources and similar approaches to minimize costs to families;
- Streamline the administrative processes for institutions and districts adopting Concurrent Enrollment;
- Provide opportunities for high school teachers to earn the necessary qualifications to teach Concurrent Enrollment courses, particularly in rural areas;
- Create greater access to Concurrent Enrollment via diverse delivery models;
- Communicate clearly how Concurrent Enrollment impacts a student's financial aid status;
- Provide opportunities to receive stackable credentials in high school;
- Ensure Concurrent Enrollment courses carry through to a postsecondary education by counting successful credits toward a program of study or approved CTE program;
- Explore ways to improve access by first better understanding barriers for students to enroll;
- Improve transparency for student and families through clear branding and public, statewide information about Concurrent Enrollment offerings, associated costs, transferability and applicability; and
- Offer Supplemental Academic Instruction (corequisite remediation) opportunities through Concurrent Enrollment.

## Attachment A: Reporting requirements and data availability

Reporting Requirement	Source	Data Availability from AY 2017-2018
The number and names of local education providers and institutions of higher education that have entered into cooperative agreements	Institutions of Higher Education through CDHE	Used institutional data for AY 2017-18
The number of qualified students who participated in a Concurrent Enrollment program in the previous school year, including subtotals for each local education provider and each institution of higher education	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18
Demographic information about qualified students who participated in a concurrent enrollment program in the previous school year	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18
The total number of credit hours completed at each institution of higher education by qualified students who participated in a concurrent enrollment program in the previous school year	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18
The total number of basic skills courses completed at each institution of higher education in the previous school year by qualified students participating in a concurrent enrollment program	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18
The total tuition costs paid by local education providers to institutions of higher education in the previous school year on behalf of qualified students who participated in dual enrollment programs in the previous school year, including subtotals for each local education provider and each institution of higher education	Local Education Provider Request or Institution of Higher Education Request.	Data currently not available based on higher education tuition breakdowns and structures
The total number of qualified students designated by the department as ASCENT program participants in the previous school year	CDE/CDHE	Used CDE & SURDS data for AY 2017-18
The postsecondary degree and certificate programs in which ASCENT program participants were concurrently enrolled in the previous school year, including subtotals indicating how many ASCENT program participants concurrently enrolled in each postsecondary degree and certificate program	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18
Data indicating the total number and percentages of qualified students who failed to complete at least one course in which they concurrently enrolled	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18
To the extent possible, data indicating the total number and percentage of qualified students who concurrently enrolled in college courses who have completed a postsecondary degree	CDHE	Used SURDS data for AY 2017-18