



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

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Joint High School Partnership Programs

As presented to

**Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations
January 2010**

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Joint High School Partnership Programs

Introduction and Historical Overview

The North Carolina Community College System has been engaged in the delivery of courses to high school students since the enactment of Session Law (SL) 1983-596 [House Bill (HB) 1044], “*An Act to Authorize Local Administrative Boards of Community Colleges to Establish Cooperative Programs with High Schools.*” This legislation introduced by Rep. Joseph P. Huskins of Iredell County, whose name still identifies the program in the legislature and in the community college system, amended General Statute (G.S.) 115D-20(4) by adding:

“Provided, notwithstanding any law or administrative rule to the contrary, local administrative boards and local school boards may establish cooperative programs in the areas they serve to provide for college courses to be offered to qualified high school students with college credits to be awarded to those high school students upon the successful completion of the courses.”

College credit course offerings began in fall 1983 with the primary purpose of providing additional opportunities for selected students who were advanced and would benefit from the accelerated college curriculum. These advanced students received college instruction in courses selected by the community college and local high school. The course sections have grown tremendously since their initial offering in 1983. Between 2001 and 2007, **Huskins** enrollments increased from 13,622 unduplicated students in 2001 to 17,365 unduplicated students in 2007.

Not long after the Huskins program was initiated, individual students who were at least 16 years of age were also permitted to enroll in community college classes and receive college quarter hour credit. These credits permitted students to gain a head start on community college certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees and receive credit at four-year institutions willing to accept college transfer credits. Likewise, the enrollment of individual unduplicated **dual-enrolled** students increased between 2001 and 2007 from 5,030 to 9,236. Total enrollment of duplicated dual-enrolled students in curriculum courses increased from 18,652 students in 2001 to 25,601 in 2007 for a growth rate of 37 percent.

In 1985, the legislature further amended G.S. 115d-20(4) by adding:

“Provided, further, that during the summer quarter, persons less than 16 years old may be permitted to take noncredit courses on a self-supporting basis, subject to rules of the State Board of Community Colleges.”

The rules of the State Board of Community Colleges that implement this portion of the statute, along with other programs for high school students on community college campuses, appear in the North Carolina Administrative Code (Administrative Code) 23 NCAC 2C.0305 as “Education Services for Minors.” Both Huskins and dual-enrolled course enrollments have continued to grow as a result of collaborative efforts by community colleges that partner with their local public school systems, private schools, and home schools.

In 2004, the community college high school programs were expanded by Governor Michael F. Easley and the General Assembly under the '**Learn and Earn**' initiative with funding from the state and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. On July 1, 2005, the General Assembly adopted G.S. 115C-238.50 which enabled the expansion of joint high school partnerships. North Carolina community colleges were four of the five initial Learn and Earn projects within the State. Today there are 61 programs located on community college campuses. "Learn and Earn will change North Carolina high schools so that students receive the skills and training they need for high-skilled, better-paying jobs," said Governor Easley. "If students know they can graduate with practical job skills and an advanced degree, they will have an additional incentive to complete their degree before entering the workforce."

The Learn and Earn initiative allows public school systems to collaborate with higher education institutions to establish stand alone high schools where students earn the high school diploma and an associate degree at the end of the fourth or fifth year. Community college courses are college credit courses and students have equal access to courses as they pursue their degree. Tuition waivers were approved for students in Middle College High Schools and Learn and Earn Early College High Schools [G.S. 115D-5(b)]. In fall 2005, community colleges enrolled 881 of the 1,115 total Learn and Earn students; in fall 2006, 2,530 students of the 3,093 total enrollments were at community colleges; and in fall 2007, 4,414 students of the total 5,207 enrollments were at community colleges.

In 2007, Governor Easley championed, and the legislature funded, the '**Learn and Earn Online**' initiative. While similar to the original 'Learn and Earn' initiative in providing access to community college courses for high school students, Learn and Earn Online courses are available exclusively via the Internet to any high school student within North Carolina without regard to college service area (G.S. 115D-1.2).

Current Status of Joint High School Programs

Currently, there are four different joint high school partnership programs: Huskins, Concurrent Enrollment, Cooperative Innovative High Schools, and Learn and Earn Online. The inception of each program has driven different statutory guidelines as well as the development of different administrative codes. Each joint high school program has its own set of laws, rules and/or policies and procedures to govern them. With the creation of each joint high school program, new laws to govern the program were adopted as opposed to expanding the scope of the existing program. There currently are multiple programs that serve high school students despite the fact that most of the students we are serving are 17 years of age or older.

The creation of new statutes or administrative codes for each new program causes unnecessary confusion and frustration for students and their families. Additionally, having multiple programs is ineffective and inefficient and is not in keeping with the North Carolina Community College's philosophy of simplification. An example of an inconsistency, general education courses offered under the Learn and Earn Online program can generate budgeted FTE, but with Huskins and Concurrent enrollment they cannot.

Outlined below is the current FTE distribution for high school students taking community college courses. It is important to note approximately 87% of the students are 17 years old or older. Also, North

Carolina community colleges do not collect student grade information. Therefore, age has been used as a proxy for school grade.

Table 1: Estimated FTE by Age

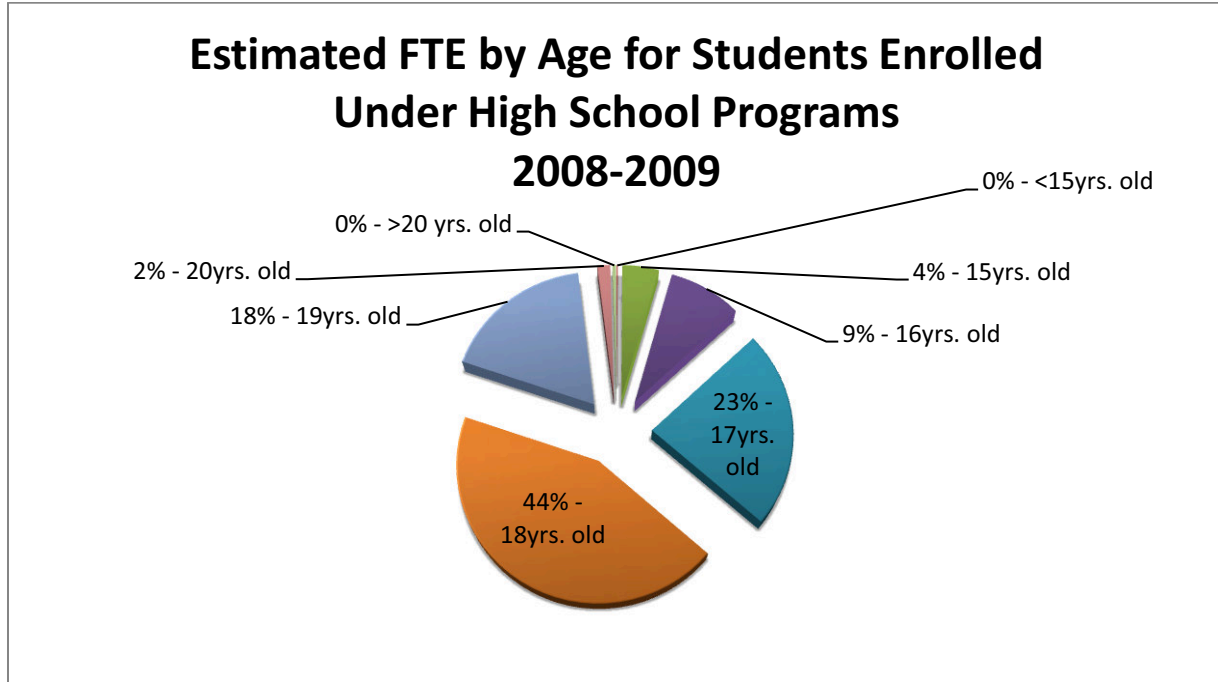


Table 1: Some Cooperative High School Programs are 5 year programs. Students may graduate at an older age.

The table below gives a snap shot of the FTE and expenditures by age for students enrolled under one of the current high school programs.

Table 2: Estimated FTE and Expenditures by Age

Estimated FTE and Expenditures by Age for Students Enrolled Under High School Programs, 2008-09		
Age	Estimated FTE	Estimated Expenditures
<15	8.4	\$41,453
15	300.1	\$1,475,795
16	605.7	\$2,978,488
17	1,631.8	\$8,023,935
18	3,064.6	\$15,069,908
19	1,252.5	\$6,158,833
20	106.3	\$522,665
>20	30.1	\$147,914
	6,999.5	\$34,418,991

Proposed change to G.S. 115D-20(4)

New section to be titled: Joint High School Partnership Programs (G.S....)

*“Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 115D-20(4), local community colleges are permitted to collaborate with local school administrative units in the establishment of **cooperative innovative high school programs (G.S. 115C-238.50)** and/or offer **college courses** to qualified high school students with college credits to be awarded to those high schools students upon the successful completion of the course(s).”*

The above proposed statute would provide a foundation for a cohesive and unified delivery system of courses and programs to high school students in community colleges. Essentially, this will give statutory permission for colleges to participate in one or both of the following programs:

- Cooperative Innovative High School Programs
- High School Students Enrolled in Community College Courses

The **Cooperative Innovative High School Programs** were established to expand opportunities for educational success through high quality instructional programming. They target students who are at risk of dropping out of school and students who would benefit from accelerated academic instruction. Furthermore, these programs provide students with the opportunity to graduate from high school possessing the core academic skills needed for postsecondary education and high-skilled employment; as well as, providing a flexible customized program of instruction for students who would benefit from accelerated higher level coursework or early graduation from high school. The programs include but are not limited to Learn and Earn Early Colleges, Middle College High Schools, STEM Schools, and other innovative high school programs. The governance of Cooperative Innovative High School Programs would remain intact (G.S. 115C-238.50 - 55).

High School Students Enrolled in Community College Courses have an opportunity to take community college courses and receive college credit upon successful completion; encompassing programs that are currently in place such as Huskins, Concurrent Enrollment, and Learn and Earn Online. This initiative would require a change in current Administrative Code. The State Board of Community Colleges, in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction, will adopt policies to implement the proposed statute. The Administrative Code would address the issues and concerns related to the inconsistencies of the current high school programs such as, but not limited to:

- Type of courses allowed or not allowed to earn budget FTE
- The grade or age a student becomes eligible to participate in a program
- Developmental courses
- Service areas
- Non-public school students
- Contractual agreements
- Assessments
- Supplanting and/or Duplication of courses

Establishing an all-encompassing paradigm for the joint high school programs would develop a coherent, streamlined set of policies to guide the opportunity for students to take community college courses while in high school. Discarding special program names would also eliminate the confusion that now exists within the education community. Additionally, it would enable high school students who pass college readiness assessments to take community college courses in English, foreign languages, math, science, technology, and technical areas to gain a strong foothold of success toward college completion without having to navigate different program titles and requirements. Furthermore, consistency with the rules and funding across the programs is crucial in terms of making them more efficient.

It is our recommendation that colleges should receive funding for providing college courses to high school students through the regular community college funding formula. This is an efficient funding mechanism, as it uses an existing process and does not require the development of additional bureaucracy. Since all colleges are audited on an annual basis to ensure that only allowable FTE are counted for budgeting purposes, this mechanism also builds upon an established system of accountability. To the extent that North Carolina high school graduates continue their education at a North Carolina public institution of higher education, each community college credit hour earned by a student while in high school ultimately saves the State money.

Due to the funding differential between community colleges and UNC institutions, as well as inflation, the State would ultimately pay more to support that same credit hour if the student earned it at a public institution after graduating high school. The State can further ensure that public funds are used efficiently and effectively by focusing resources on high priority courses and requiring students to demonstrate readiness for college-level work using a consistent set of assessment requirements.

Summary

The statutes authorizing high school students' enrollment in community college courses have evolved over a period of 25 years. As a result, enabling language is scattered throughout Chapter 115D. The above proposed statute gives an opportunity to encompass joint high school programs under one statute; keeping the governance simple. The number of innovative programs in the state requires a simple but concise statute which allows local colleges to respond to the needs of the community for programs that accelerate learning, increase graduation rates, reduce dropout rates, and demonstrate effectiveness.

A further study is needed to continue discussion on the complexities of this issue. We believe the North Carolina Education Cabinet would be best suited to perform the study and offer our further assistance as necessary.

Following is an abbreviated chart of key concerns and issues as summarized in this report.

Joint High School Partnership Programs

		Huskins	Concurrent Enrollment	Learn and Earn Online (LEO)
		Key Concerns/Issues	Funding	<p>Generates budget FTE (with the exception of General Education courses –excluding math, science and technology) Tuition is waived for students enrolled in Huskins courses</p> <p><u>MAY NOT earn budget FTE:</u> ACA, ANT, ARA, ART, ASL, CHI, COM, DAN, DRA, ECO, ENG, FRE, GEO, GER, HIS, HUM, ITA, JPN, LAT, MUS, PED, PHI, POL, POR, PSY, REL, RUS, SOC, and SPA</p>
Courses	<p>Curriculum courses 100 level or above; Continuing Education Courses, COE, SEL and SEM prefix courses are not approved</p> <p>*NO developmental courses</p>	<p>Curriculum courses 100 level or above; COE, SEL and SEM prefix courses are not approved</p> <p>*NO developmental courses</p>	<p>Curriculum courses 100 level or above; Continuing Education Courses are not approved</p> <p>*NO developmental courses</p>	

Joint High School Partnership Programs

Key Concerns/Issues	Huskins		Concurrent Enrollment		Learn and Earn Online (LEO)	
	Participants (Student Eligibility)	Public high school students in grades 9 through 12; non-public high school students must participate via their local school administrative	High school students 16 years old or older; non-public school students can participate (all students may be admitted on a space available basis)	High school students 16 years old or older; non-public school students can participate (all students may be admitted on a space available basis)	High school students in grades 9 through 12; non-public school students may enroll in a LEO course with space available that has been offered to but not filled by any eligible public school student	High school students in grades 9 through 12; non-public school students may enroll in a LEO course with space available that has been offered to but not filled by any eligible public school student
	Service Area	Only students enrolled in a high school located in the college's service area	No restrictions as it relates to service area	No restrictions as it relates to service area	No restrictions as it relates to service area	No restrictions as it relates to service area
	Contracts/Agreement	Completion of the Huskins Cooperative Program Agreement is required; this agreement is in collaboration with the local school administrative unit and the community college	No agreement required at state level; locally colleges may have implemented a form for processing these students	No agreement required at state level; locally colleges may have implemented a form for processing these students	No agreement required at state level; locally colleges may have implemented a form for processing these students	No agreement required at state level; locally colleges may have implemented a form for processing these students
	Personnel Oversight	NCCCS governance at the System Office; local governance at the high schools	NCCCS governance at the System Office; local governance at the high schools	NCCCS governance at the System Office; local governance at the high schools	NCCCS governance at the System Office and at DPI (NCNSP) - a collaborative effort	NCCCS governance at the System Office and at DPI (NCNSP) - a collaborative effort

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Key Concerns/Issues	Huskins		Concurrent Enrollment		Learn and Earn Online (LEO)	
	Fees & Textbooks	Huskins agreement must state who is responsible for textbooks; in most cases the local school administrative unit pays	Student is responsible for textbooks and fees		Students do not pay for fees or textbooks; reimbursement of funds is subject to availability; non-public school students must pay for their fees and textbooks	
	Credentials/Credit Usage	Student receives college credit for successful completion of course(s); high school determines how college course will be used at the high school	Student receives college credit for successful completion of course(s); high school determines how college course will be used at the high school; Students taking Continuing Education courses receive continuing education credit		Student receives college credit for successful completion of course(s); high school determines how college course will be used at the high school	
	Approval Process	Courses have to undergo an approval process at the System Office	No approval process at the System Office		No approval process at the System Office	
	Supplanting/Duplication	College courses cannot supplant or duplicate high school courses	No supplanting or duplication issue		No supplanting or duplication issue	

Joint High School Partnership Programs

Key Concerns/Issues	Huskins		Concurrent Enrollment		Learn and Earn Online (LEO)	
	Non-public Schools	Non-public high school students must participate via their local school administrative unit	Non-public school students may participate		Non-public school students may enroll in a LEO course with space available that has been offered to but not filled by any eligible public school student	
	Pre/Co-Requisites	All course pre/co-requisites must be met	All course pre/co-requisites must be met		All course pre/co-requisites must be met	
	Administrative Code	NCAC 23 2C.0305(e)	NCAC 23 2C.0305(c,d)		Rule Making Process	
	Key Legislation	S.L. 1983-596 (HB 1044)	N/A		S.L. 2007-323 (HB 1473), Section 7.27 S.L. 2008-107 (HB2436), Sections 7.5, 7.15, and 8.6 S.L. 2009-451 (SB202), Sections 7.10 and 8.6	
	NC Statute	NC Statute 115D-20(4)	N/A		NC Statute 115D-1.2	