



Rhode Island's Funding Models

Rhode Island offers its high school students the opportunity to engage in college coursework through two separate state programs: Dual Enrollment and Concurrent Enrollment. [State regulations](#) define dual enrollment as college courses taught on college campuses and concurrent enrollment as college courses taught on high school campuses.

The state's Dual Enrollment program allows high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses at public or private, two- or four-year postsecondary institutions to earn both high school and postsecondary credit. Courses are taught on a college campus by college faculty and are available to students enrolled in public or private secondary schools as well as students who receive home instruction. Dual Enrollment includes career and technical education courses.

In contrast, the state's Concurrent Enrollment program is offered on high school campuses through partnerships with public two- and four-year postsecondary institutions. Courses are taught by high school teachers who meets standards approved by the postsecondary institution. Postsecondary institutions are encouraged by the state to obtain National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships accreditation for their Concurrent Enrollment programs.

Who Pays for Dual Enrollment?

Rhode Island employs different funding models for its Dual Enrollment program based on whether the postsecondary institution offering the course is public or private. When Dual Enrollment is offered through a public postsecondary institution, the state funds tuition and fees up to eight credits per semester per student. Tuition and fees for enrollment beyond eight credits per semester is funded by the local district up to a capped amount. When the program is offered through the All Course Network at a private postsecondary institution, the state covers tuition and fees for up to [two credit-bearing courses](#) per semester. The state may negotiate reduced tuition rates that private institutions subsidize.

For public school students, the school district covers the costs of books and supplies for Dual Enrollment through public institutions; the state covers those costs for Dual Enrollment through private institutions. As a result, public school students are responsible only for the cost of transportation. In contrast, private school and homeschooled students participating in Dual Enrollment are responsible for the costs of tuition, fees, books, supplies and transportation.

Dual Enrollment Offered Through Public Postsecondary Institutions

| | Tuition | Fees | Books/Supplies | Transportation |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| State* | ✓ (Up to 8 credits) | ✓ (Up to 8 credits) | / | / |
| Student (Public HS) | / | / | / | ✓ |
| Postsecondary Institution | / | / | / | / |
| School District | ✓ (Beyond 8 credits) | ✓ (Beyond 8 credits) | ✓ | / |

*State funding flows through the office of the postsecondary commissioner.

Dual Enrollment Offered Through Private Postsecondary Institutions

| | Tuition | Fees | Books/Supplies | Transportation |
|----------------------------------|---------|------|----------------|----------------|
| State** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | / |
| Student (Public HS) | / | / | / | ✓ |
| Postsecondary Institution | ✓ | ✓ | / | / |
| School District | / | / | / | / |

**State funding flows through the department of education.

✓ **Always** contributes
 ✓ **Sometimes** contributes
 Never contributes

State Funding

The state subsidizes Dual Enrollment program courses offered through public and private, two- and four-year postsecondary institutions but uses different mechanisms to subsidize public institutions versus private institutions.

For public postsecondary institutions, the governor and state legislators approve a line-item appropriation to the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. The state appropriated [\\$2.3 million](#) for dual and concurrent enrollment in the 2022-23 fiscal year. This appropriation covers expenses for both Dual Enrollment at public postsecondary institutions and Concurrent Enrollment programs at high schools. This annual appropriation is not allocated from the state's general funds; instead, the state draws from a dedicated CollegeBound Fund and other reserves to support the program.

The office of the postsecondary commissioner allocates the appropriated state funds to public postsecondary institutions based on memorandum-of-understanding agreements with each institution. To receive funds, the institution must submit an annual plan to the office that details the names of partner high schools, the types of courses offered and the number of participating students. The office takes program costs, program outcomes and other factors into account when allocating funds.

To subsidize Dual Enrollment courses offered at private postsecondary institutions, the state appropriates general funds and permanent school funds to the Rhode Island Department of Education to support the [All Course Network](#). In the 2022-23 fiscal year, the state appropriated \$150,000 from the general fund and \$300,000 from the permanent school fund to the department of education for the program. Dual Enrollment is one of five types of services offered through the program, which also includes advanced placement courses, school-based enrichment, work-based learning and career credentials. According to department of education staff, Dual Enrollment accounts for 15% of total enrollment in the program.

To determine how All Course Network funds will be distributed, the department of education issues a request for proposals each year to course providers, which include private postsecondary institutions, community-based organizations, school districts and municipalities. The department reviews all proposals and uses a set of business rules based on student demand and student performance to determine which course providers they will fund. The agency negotiates reduced tuition and fee rates with these providers. The department's allocations cover the negotiated tuition and fee amounts as well as all costs for books and supplies for courses from approved providers.

Nonstate Funding

When Dual Enrollment is provided through a public postsecondary institution, school districts are responsible for the cost of books and supplies. State funds cover tuition and fees for students up to eight credits per semester; however, students may also enroll full time. Full-time students are limited to attending two-year institutions unless they receive a waiver from the state. For full-time students, [state regulations](#) require the school district to support the cost of tuition and fees beyond eight credits per semester. The amount of this support is based on: the postsecondary institution's tuition and mandatory fee rates (not exceeding 100% of the cost of enrollment at the postsecondary institution) and is capped at 50% of the "core instructional per pupil amount of state and local education aid" as determined by the department of education.

When Dual Enrollment is provided through a private postsecondary institution, All Course Network funds are used to cover the cost of tuition, fees, books and supplies. For the past two years, these funds have been drawn from both state and federal funding sources. Federal funding for the program is drawn from Rhode Island’s allocation of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds, as well as from a specific competitive allocation of ESSER funds to the department of education known as [ReThink Rhode Island](#). The combined allocation of state and federal funds to support all five of the All Course Network programs amounted to \$1.8 million in the 2022-23 fiscal year. About one quarter of those funds (\$500,000) were used to support Dual Enrollment.

Direct Student Support

State regulations require that students who come from low-income backgrounds not be denied access to Dual Enrollment based on their inability to pay the cost of tuition and fees. The cost of books and supplies are covered by either the state or the school district, depending on the type of institution providing the course (public or private). The cost of transportation is the responsibility of the student.

Who Pays for Concurrent Enrollment?

State funding for the Concurrent Enrollment program is similar to the Dual Enrollment program in that state funds pay for tuition and fees for courses. However, for Concurrent Enrollment, these costs are covered at a reduced rate because participating postsecondary institutions subsidize program costs. School districts cover costs for any books and supplies associated with the course. Because Concurrent Enrollment is offered on the high school campus, there are no transportation costs associated with the program.

Funding for Rhode Island’s Concurrent Enrollment Program

| | Tuition | Fees | Books/Supplies | Transportation |
|----------------------------------|---------|------|----------------|----------------|
| State*** | ✓ | ✓ | / | N/A |
| Student | / | / | / | N/A |
| Postsecondary Institution | ✓ | ✓ | / | N/A |
| School District | / | / | ✓ | N/A |

***State funding flows through the office of the postsecondary commissioner.

✓ **Always** contributes

✓ **Sometimes** contributes

☐ **Never** contributes

State Funding

The state funds Concurrent Enrollment courses through a line-item appropriation to the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. The state appropriated [\\$2.3 million](#) in the 2022-23 fiscal year to cover expenses for both the Dual Enrollment program offered at public postsecondary institutions and the Concurrent Enrollment program offered at high schools. This annual appropriation is not allocated from the state's general funds; instead, the state draws from a dedicated CollegeBound Fund and other reserves to support the program.

The office of the postsecondary commissioner allocates state funds to public postsecondary institutions based on memorandum of understanding agreements with each postsecondary institution. As part of the memorandum of understanding, the postsecondary institution specifies the separate amounts that will be used to support the Concurrent Enrollment program and the Dual Enrollment program.

Nonstate Funding

Each year, Concurrent Enrollment course costs are established by participating public postsecondary institutions and approved by the state's board of education. For courses provided through the Concurrent Enrollment program, postsecondary institutions subsidize the difference between the reduced rate of tuition and fees paid by the state and the normal tuition and fee rate. Institutions also provide administrative support, as well as faculty mentoring and oversight of the local school district where the Concurrent Enrollment course is offered. The school district covers the cost of books and supplies and pays the salary of the course instructor at the high school.

Direct Student Support

State regulations require that students who come from low-income backgrounds not be denied access to Concurrent Enrollment based on their inability to pay the cost of tuition and fees. The cost of books and supplies are covered by either the state or the school district, depending on the type of institution providing the course (public or private). Since the program is offered on the high school campus, there are no transportation costs.