

**POSTSECONDARY DUAL ENROLLMENT OPTIONS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act ([PA 160 or 1996](#)) provides for payment from a school district's state aid foundation grant for enrollment of certain eligible high school students in postsecondary courses of education. The bill establishes eligibility criteria for students, institutions, and courses; requires eligible charges (tuition, mandatory course or material fees, and registration fees) to be billed to a school district; establishes enrollment and credit requirements; requires school districts to provide counseling and information to eligible students and their parents; and requires intermediate school districts to report to the Department of Education.

**QUICK REFERENCE**

The following is not a substitute or replacement of related legislation or rule. Districts should use this document as a companion to the [full legislation](#) and [administrative rule](#).

**Eligibility**

- Eligible Student – [388.513\(1\)\(f\)](#)
  - A student enrolled in at least one high school class in a school district, public school academy, or state-approved nonpublic school in Michigan.
  - Excludes foreign exchange pupils enrolled under a cultural exchange program (J-1 Visa).
  - Student must have at least one parent or legal guardian that is a resident of Michigan (unless the student is experiencing homelessness).
  - Student must not have been enrolled in high school for more than four school years (unless one of the exceptions provided for in [administrative rule](#) has been satisfied).
  
- Eligible Postsecondary Institution – [388.513\(1\)\(e\)](#)
  - “Eligible postsecondary institution” means a state university, community college, or independent nonprofit degree-granting college or university that is located in this state and that chooses to comply with this act. However, an out-of-state college that is located within 20 miles of a border with this state and that chooses to comply with this act is also an eligible postsecondary institution for an eligible student if at least 1 of the following is met:
    - (i) The eligible student is enrolled in a school district, as that term is defined in section 6 of the revised school code, 1976 PA 451, MCL 380.6, that shares a border with the state in which the out-of-state college is located.
    - (ii) The eligible student is enrolled in a public school academy, as that term is defined in section 5 of the revised school code, 1976 PA 451, MCL 380.5, that is located in a school district described in subparagraph (i).
    - (iii) The eligible student is enrolled in a state approved nonpublic school that is located in a school district described in subparagraph (i).
  - "Out-of-state college" means a state university, community college, or independent nonprofit degree-granting college or university that is located in another state and that is legally established under the laws of that other state.
  
- Eligible Course – [388.513\(1\)\(d\)](#)
  - Course offered by an eligible postsecondary institution for postsecondary credit.
  - Not offered by eligible student's high school (or is not available to the student due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict).
  - Academic in nature:
    - Normally applies toward satisfaction of [postsecondary] degree requirements.
    - Not ordinarily taken as an activity course.
    - Not a hobby, craft, or recreational course.
  - In a subject area other than physical education, theology, divinity, or religious education.

**Postsecondary Enrollment Options – Frequently Asked Questions**

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- For subject areas assessed on a readiness assessment or the Michigan merit examination, eligible courses are limited to those subject areas for which the student has achieved a qualifying score.
  - Not required for computer science or foreign language courses
  - A district may elect to support a student's enrollment in a subject area that the student has not yet achieved a qualifying score if it has been determined to be in the best educational interest of the student.
- Course limits:
  - Up to 10 courses overall can be covered under the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act. For a student that first dual enrolls in:
    - 9<sup>th</sup> grade – not more than two courses per year in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and not more than four courses in grade 12
    - 10<sup>th</sup> grade – not more than two courses in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and not more than four courses in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade
    - 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade – not more than six courses per year
  - These limits do not apply when a written agreement exists between a public school district and a postsecondary institution, or if the district has elected to support a student's enrollment beyond what is required in [PA 160 of 1996](#).
- Eligible Charges – [388.513\(1\)\(c\)](#)
  - Charges covered under the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act include:
    - Tuition, mandatory course fees, materials fees (including textbooks required for a course), and registration fees required by the postsecondary institution for enrollment in a course.
    - Any late fees charged by a postsecondary institution as a result of the State or a school district not making the required payment in time (according to this Act)
  - Transportation fees, parking costs, and activity fees are not eligible charges.
  - For a district that receives funding through state aid, the district is not required to provide more tuition support under this act than what is received by the district through state aid for the student for the school year.
  - For eligible students enrolled in an out-of-state college that is an eligible postsecondary institution, eligible charges shall not exceed the lesser of the in-district rate for the community college located in the district in which the eligible student resides or the in-district rate for the out-of-state college in which the eligible student is enrolled.

#### Academic Credit – [MCL 388.517](#)

- Postsecondary courses may be taken for high school credit, postsecondary credit, or both. A student makes this decision at time of enrollment. When more than one course is being taken, a student may make different credit designations for each course.
- Students attending a state-approved nonpublic school may take courses that are considered “essential” for postsecondary credit only. Courses considered “nonessential electives” may be taken for high school credit, postsecondary credit, or both.
- Eligible courses paid for under the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act may not be audited by the student.
- School districts shall grant academic credit and count that credit toward graduation and subject area requirements of the school district when applicable and when a student has designated a dual enrollment course was taken for high school credit or both high school credit and postsecondary credit. School districts may determine how much high school credit shall be awarded for a course, and how that credit will be applied to a student's transcript (letter grade, pass/fail, etc.).

#### Sample Dual Enrollment Process

*Process may vary between school districts and nonpublic schools.*

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1. Student meets with counselor and/or principal to discuss eligibility and other aspects of the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act.
2. Student receives letter signed by principal indicating eligibility to dual enroll.
3. Student enrolls in eligible course(s) with postsecondary institution.
  - a. Eligibility letter (2) often used by postsecondary institution to verify eligibility and payment arrangements.
4. Following drop date of course(s), postsecondary institution bills school district (State of Michigan billed directly for nonpublic school students).
5. School district (for nonpublic school students – State of Michigan) pays eligible charges (up to per course maximum), student responsible for any remainder.

## QUESTION AND ANSWER

### Overview Questions

Q# 1 What are the laws that govern early college credit opportunities for pupils?

A# 1 In Michigan, there are two laws that govern early college credit opportunities for pupils. The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act (PSEOA) or [Public Act 160 of 1996](#), and the Career and Technical Preparation Act or [Public Act 258 of 2000](#), provides for payment from a school district's state aid foundation grant for enrollment of eligible high school pupils in postsecondary courses of education. The law establishes eligibility criteria for pupils, institutions, and courses; requires eligible charges (tuition, mandatory course or material fees, and registrations fees) to be billed to a school

Q# 2 Are districts required to inform pupils of early college credit opportunities?

A# 2 Yes. By March 1 of each school year, a school district or state approved nonpublic school are legally required to provide general information about postsecondary enrollment opportunities such as Advanced Placement (AP), dual enrollment, early and middle college high schools, career and technical preparation enrollment options, etc., to all pupils in grade 8 or higher.

Districts also are required to send all pupils in grades 9 through 12 who have taken the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) or other state approved readiness assessment, regardless of score, a letter, signed by the pupil's principal, indicating their eligibility.

To assist schools in this effort, the MDE has developed an informational brochure for schools and parents. This brochure is available in two formats and can be found on the MDE high school web site.

Q# 3 Must districts comply with this legislation?

A# 3 Yes. The law states that districts and public school academies **shall** use funds allocated under the State School Aid Act to support eligible pupils in their pursuit of enrollment opportunities in postsecondary institutions. Thus, districts and public school academies **must comply with the pupil's request for postsecondary enrollment** if the pupil, course, and institution are eligible under this Act.

[MCL 388.514\(4\)\(1\)](#) indicates that the school district or state approved nonpublic school in which an eligible pupil is enrolled shall provide to the eligible pupil a letter signed by the pupil's principal indicating the pupil's eligibility under this act.

Q# 4 In what other ways are districts required to support postsecondary enrollment under the legislation?

A# 4 Counseling is critical. Pupils capable of college-level curricula are not automatically knowledgeable about college course selection and enrollment process. To the extent possible, districts shall provide counseling services to each eligible pupil and his or her parent or guardian of the benefits, risks, and possible consequences of enrolling in a postsecondary course. A district may provide the counseling in a group meeting if additional individual counseling is also made available. [MCL 388.519](#) details all counseling guidance related to Dual Enrollment.

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Q# 5 How does this legislation interface with existing arrangements between local districts and postsecondary institutions: For example, districts that contract with community colleges for career and technical education courses?

A# 5 Programs such as these are the decision of the local school districts and participating postsecondary institutions, and are usually funded with career and technical education monies through arrangements with the local district. They are not considered as dual enrollment, but as a component of the high school curriculum, and are not affected by this legislation.

Q# 6 Can a district refuse to provide pupils with the opportunity for postsecondary dual enrollment?

A# 6 The purpose of this Act is to provide a wider variety of options to high school pupils by encouraging and enabling qualified pupils to enroll in courses or programs in eligible postsecondary institutions.

However, if the pupil, the course or program, or the postsecondary institution failed to meet the eligibility requirements of [PA 160 of 1996](#), the district would then have the option of allowing or refusing enrollment as the dual enrollment would occur outside of the provisions of this Act.

Q# 7 Can a school district or nonpublic school require its students to enroll in dual enrollment courses at a specific postsecondary institution?

A# 7 No. If a student is eligible under this Act, the student has the ability to select an eligible postsecondary institution in which to enroll.

Q# 8 Can a school district or nonpublic school deny a student from taking dual enrolled courses if they did not receive credit for courses taken in a previous semester?

A# 8 A student that does not receive college credit for a course under the Dual Enrollment legislation is required to repay the school district (or the Department of Treasury in the case of a nonpublic school) any funds that were expended for the course that were not already refunded by the eligible postsecondary institution. If the student does not repay the funds as described in [\[MCL 388.514\]](#), the district may impose sanctions as determined by school policy. A student may take dual enrolled courses (including ones that were previously taken unsuccessfully) if the funds are repaid and if they still meet all other eligibility requirements.

### **Prior Course Completion**

Q# 9 May the district require a pupil to successfully complete the college course prior to tuition and fees being paid by the district?

A# 9 No. The language in [MCL 388.514\(4\)](#) and [MCL 388.1904\(4\)](#) states that if a pupil provides the postsecondary institution with written proof of eligibility, the postsecondary institution will transmit a bill to the district detailing the eligible charges for each eligible course. The language also states that if a dually enrolled pupil does not complete the postsecondary course, the postsecondary institution shall forward to the district any funds that are refundable due to non-completion of the course.

### **Credit Considerations**

Q# 10 There has been an increase in direct college credit courses or “direct credit” courses that provide pupils with an opportunity to take college level courses at high school and are generally taught by college faculty or high school teachers who are adjunct college faculty. Is it the responsibility of the school district to pay for the college credit?

A# 10 Yes. Attending this class and receiving any secondary or postsecondary credit is part of the pupil’s free and appropriate education as required under the state constitution. The parents of these pupils cannot be charged tuition for these direct credit courses. The district must pay for the tuition and any related fees in order to count the FTE for pupils enrolled in these classes.

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Q# 11 Who decides what type of credit a pupil will receive for postsecondary enrollment?

A# 11 The law requires a pupil to designate whether the course is for high school or postsecondary credit, or both at the time of enrollment. Pupils also are required to notify the high school of his/her decision. Pupils taking more than one postsecondary course may make different credit designations for different courses.

If the course is being offered to a nonpublic pupil, the course will be countable toward high school and college credit if the eligible course is determined to be nonessential elective. However, if the course is essential, the course may be taken for college credit only.

Q# 12 Should districts accept the grade a pupil receives in a college course and incorporate it into the pupil's high school grade point average (GPA)?

A# 12 The language does not address the issue of grades. However, in its Guide for the College Bound Pupil Athlete, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) requires that all core courses used for collegiate athletic eligibility must indicate a grade and be calculated in to the pupil's high school GPA. This requirement only pertains to Division I or II collegiate athletes. It is of great importance that pupils are informed of these regulations and offered the opportunity to request a grade on their transcripts.

Q# 13 Is a pupil allowed to count a math class taken through dual enrollment at a 2-year or 4-year institution for a mathematics credit required under the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)?

A# 13 Yes. If the district determines that the class meets the MMC course/credit content expectations or will satisfy a district graduation requirement, then the public school pupil would be allowed to take the course. In addition, all pupils, regardless of where the credit is offered, should be held to the same level of proficiency (passing standards). This could be accomplished by working with the two-year or four-year institution to align its content and assessment to the credit content expectations. A district also could establish a policy requiring a pupil who successfully completed a credit at a two-year or four-year institution to take the credit assessment to earn credit.

### Student/Course Eligibility

Q# 14 Which pupils are eligible to participate in dual enrollment?

A# 14 Pupil eligibility to participate in a dual enrollment course in a core content area is a local district decision that should include multiple sources of information about if a pupil is ready for a postsecondary educational experience, and what is in the best educational interest of the pupil. In terms of academic readiness, pupil eligibility for enrollment should be informed by pupil performance on one or more of the assessments provided by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability. The MDE supports the use of career and college ready benchmarks whenever possible for this purpose

Q# 15 Can a district establish additional requirements for dual enrollment beyond those defined in law? (i.e. Only pupils with a GPA of 3.0+ can participate.)

A# 15 No. A district may only use the eligibility criteria outlined in state law and may not establish additional requirements which would prohibit a pupil from satisfying or exceeding the credit requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum through advanced studies such as advanced placement courses, dual enrollment in a postsecondary institution, participation in the IB program or early or middle college high school programs.

Q# 16 Can pupils dual enroll even when their grade is not included in one that requires district support under [\[1996 PA 160\]](#) and [\[2000 PA 258\]](#)?

A# 16 Yes. The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act and the Career and Technical Preparation Act do not prohibit a district from supporting any pupil regardless of grade level from taking college courses as long as the courses are eligible under the acts.

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Q# 17 Can a student enroll in more than 1 postsecondary course per semester or trimester?

A# 17 Considering [fifth-year high school students](#) and students who have enrolled in the 10 postsecondary courses provided under the Acts, most students are allowed to enroll 2 or more postsecondary courses semester or trimester. The maximum number of courses per grade level is provided in more detail in [MCL 388.513](#). Noting this, a district may support a student's enrollment in more than the limit defined in legislation per grade if it has been determined to be in the student's best educational interest.

Q# 18 Are students required to "exhaust" the high school's curriculum before they are eligible for postsecondary enrollment?

A# 18 No. State law requires the postsecondary course(s) eligible for tuition support be course(s) not offered by the district or state approved nonpublic school but does not require pupils to take all available high school courses before enrolling in postsecondary courses. If a postsecondary course is offered at the high school, the district may require that the high school course is taken in lieu of the requested postsecondary course.

Q# 19 May pupils attend college classes in the evening or virtually?

A# 19 Yes. Pupils may elect to take college courses during the school day, in the evening, or on weekends.

### Payments, Tuition, and Course Fees

Q# 20 What costs is the school district required to pay?

A# 20 The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act requires that all school districts pay an eligible student's tuition and mandatory course fees, including technology fees, materials fees (including textbooks), registration fees, and any late fees charged by the postsecondary institution. Eligible charges do not include transportation, parking costs, or most activity fees. Districts are only obligated to cover an amount per course equal to the lesser of total eligible charges for that course or the prorated percentage of the statewide pupil-weighted average foundation allowance. A calculation worksheet that can be used to estimate this amount can be accessed [here](#).

Q# 21 Is the payment for which school districts are responsible based on the number of credits a pupil is taking or the number of courses involved?

A# 21 The number of individual dual enrollment courses a student takes, regardless of number of credits, is used to calculate the amount that the school district or State shall cover. In some instances, where possible given scheduling conditions, a 3 or 4 credit course may be slotted into two periods on the student's schedule, in which case, that course would be considered two courses when calculating the amount of tuition support.

Q# 22 Can pupils receive Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act or Career and Technical Preparation Act tuition/fee support for college courses taken during the summer?

A# 22 Yes. PA 160 of 1996 was amended during the 2019-20 school year to clarify this was an option. The revised language allows for a course that in part or whole occurs during the summer following the academic school year.

Q# 23 Can local districts provide a greater amount of tuition/fee support to pupils than is required in the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, the Career and Technical Preparation Act and the Section 21b language?

A# 23 Yes. The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act only sets the minimum amount that should be covered. School districts may choose to contribute more to a student's dual enrollment expenses.

Q# 24 If a pupil fails to compete a district/school paid postsecondary course, is he or she responsible for the fees/tuition not refunded by the postsecondary institution?

A# 24 Yes. [MCL 388.514\(9\)](#) and [MCL 388.1904\(9\)](#) states that the eligible pupil shall repay to the school district any funds that were expended by the school district for the course that are not refunded to the school district by the eligible postsecondary institution. If the eligible pupil does not repay this money, the school district may impose sanctions against the eligible pupil as determined by school district policy. This subdivision

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does not apply to an eligible pupil who does not complete the course due to a family or medical emergency, as determined by the eligible postsecondary institution. For an eligible pupil who is enrolled in a state approved nonpublic school, please refer to [MCL 388.514\(10\)](#) and [MCL 388.1904\(10\)](#).

Q# 25 How should local districts process dual enrollment payments on their budget breakdowns?

A# 25 Districts should use Function Code 113: High School Instructional Costs under Purchased (Contractual) Services.

Q# 26 Does a school need to be involved in the enrollment of a high school pupil in a postsecondary institution if the course will not be financially supported under the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act?

A# 26 No. A parent may enroll his or her child in a postsecondary course without the assistance of the school if he or she will be paying for the enrollment. In order to receive tuition and fee assistance, and high school credit under this act, the postsecondary enrollment must be coordinated through the public or nonpublic school.

### Full Time Equivalency (FTE) Calculations and Considerations

Q# 27 How does a college course that does not have a five-day schedule affect the pupil's eligibility to be counted in membership and for FTE?

A# 27 See [Section 3 of the Pupil Accounting Manual](#) for information specific to pupils enrolled in postsecondary dual enrollment and early middle college. Within that section, three methods are provided that can be used to determine how much membership can be claimed for situations such as the one described.

A# 28 How should districts count pupils involved in postsecondary enrollment in terms of full-time equated membership?

A# 29 See [Section 3 of the Pupil Accounting Manual](#).

Q# 28 The district has five pupils who have earned all of the credits required for their high school diploma in the previous year but did not go through the graduation ceremony and did not receive their diploma. These pupils have enrolled in one course at the high school and four courses at the nearby community college. May the district count these pupils for 1.0 FTE?

A# 30 An individual who has achieved a high school diploma shall not be counted in membership. An individual who has achieved a high school equivalency certificate shall not be counted in membership unless the individual is a student with a disability as defined in [R 340.1702](#) of the Michigan administrative code.

### Reporting Information

Q# 29 What will districts report to the MDE?

A# 31 School districts report the following information as required by [MCL 388.521\(3\)](#):

- Total dollars expended for pupils involved in postsecondary enrollment
- Number of pupils eligible for postsecondary enrollment
- Number of pupils involved in postsecondary enrollment during the preceding school year (aggregate and by grade level)
- The percentage of the district's enrollment represented by pupils involved in postsecondary enrollment
- The number of postsecondary courses paid for by the district under this Act
- The number of postsecondary courses for which college credit was granted
- The number of postsecondary courses for which high school credit was granted
- The number of postsecondary courses that were not completed by pupils

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**Homeschooled and Nonpublic School Students**

Q# 30 What defines an eligible nonpublic school for the purposes of Dual Enrollment?

A# 32 To determine if a nonpublic school is recognized by the MDE, visit the [Nonpublic and Homeschool webpage](#) and locate the document: Nonpublic Schools Meeting Reporting Requirements.

Q# 31 Can a nonpublic pupil enroll directly with a postsecondary institution, or do they need to coordinate their enrollment with their local public district?

A# 33 Students attending a state-approved nonpublic school may have their dual enrollment authorized by their high school principal. After enrolling in an eligible dual enrollment course, the postsecondary institution will bill the state directly for eligible charges.

Q# 32 Can a homeschooled pupil enroll directly with a postsecondary institution, or do they need to coordinate their enrollment with their local public district?

A# 34 No. Homeschooled pupils are required to enroll in at least 1 course with a public or state-approved nonpublic school, then dual enroll through that school to be considered an eligible student under this Act and have eligible charges covered.

*Note: A district that enrolls a pupil under PA 160 of 1996 must also follow all applicable legislation and rule that applies to that pupil. For example, for a pupil who is enrolled in a homeschool or nonpublic school, who is also enrolled in postsecondary courses through a district, MCL 388.1766b would need to be followed in tandem with the requirements found in PA 160 of 1996.*

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