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Summary

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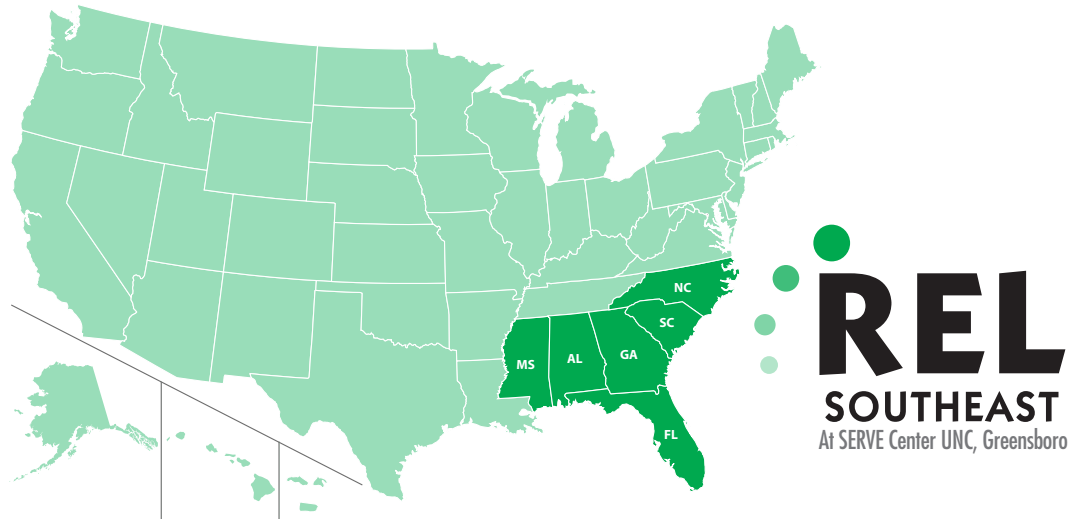
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Who enrolls in dual enrollment and other acceleration programs in Florida high schools?

This study of advanced-level high school courses that offer credit toward both a high school diploma and a college degree in Florida compares one such program (dual enrollment) with others, describing the number and characteristics of grade 11 and 12 students enrolled overall and by district. It also examines dual enrollment partnerships between high schools and colleges in nine sample school districts.

With rising concerns about persistently high dropout rates, the continuing need for remedial postsecondary courses, and workers who lack the skills to succeed on the job, school leaders and elected officials are focusing more on college and career readiness (Amos 2008). States are adopting acceleration programs (advanced-level courses that offer credit toward both a high school diploma and a college degree) to better prepare students for the demands of postsecondary education and the job market. Programs such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), and dual enrollment (collaborative programs allowing high school students to enroll in college-level courses and earn credit toward both a high school diploma and a college degree or a career certificate) are intended to increase students' academic engagement,

ease the transition from high school to college, and boost college completion rates.

Recent policy changes in Florida's school improvement accountability system encourage dual enrollment and similar programs. Since 2009/10, Florida's formula for grading high schools has included participation and success in dual enrollment and other acceleration programs (Florida Legislature 2008). The lower cost of dual enrollment compared with AP programs could fuel interest in making dual enrollment more accessible and successful (Florida Department of Education 2009).

This mixed methods study of acceleration programs in Florida compares dual enrollment with AP, IB, and AICE programs. It describes the number and characteristics of grade 11 and 12 students enrolled in acceleration programs in Florida overall and by district during 2006/07 and examines dual enrollment district-college partnership agreements (articulation agreements) in nine school districts using data collected in 2009/10. Student data from the Florida Department of Education (2007) were used to determine enrollment. Document reviews of district-college dual enrollment articulation agreements and interviews with school district and college administrators during the 2009/10 academic year were used to examine

the motivations for such agreements and the challenges.

This study examines the following research questions:

- What was enrollment in dual enrollment programs (including college-credit and career dual enrollment) in 2006/07, and how did it compare with enrollment in AP, IB, and AICE acceleration programs?
- How did grade 11 and 12 students enrolled only in dual enrollment programs in 2006/07 compare with students enrolled only in AP, IB, and AICE programs?
- How was participation in dual enrollment distributed across the state in 2006/07?
- What factors contributed to the establishment of dual enrollment articulation agreements in nine selected school districts as of 2009/10, and what challenges did the districts encounter?
- What policies did districts' dual enrollment articulation agreements cover?
- How did the nine selected school districts and their college partners inform high school students of dual enrollment options?
- Dual enrollees were more likely than the population of grade 11 and 12 students to be women (62 percent versus 51 percent) and White (72 percent versus 51 percent) and less likely to be economically disadvantaged (eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; 16 percent versus 31 percent) and English language learner students (0.4 percent versus 4.6 percent).
- Of the 98,395 students in grades 11 and 12 taking any type of acceleration course in 2006/07, more students enrolled in AP, IB, or AICE courses only (74 percent, driven mainly by AP enrollment) than in dual enrollment only (16 percent); 11 percent participated in both dual enrollment and one or more other acceleration program.
- Students in dual enrollment only were less likely than students enrolled in AP, IB, or AICE only to be Hispanic (9 percent versus 23 percent), economically disadvantaged (17 percent versus 19 percent), and enrolled in special education (11 percent versus 17 percent).
- Dual enrollment rates among grade 11 and 12 students ranged from 2.9 percent in Orange County School District to 38 percent in Bay County School District. Of the state's 67 districts, all 5 of the largest districts (Orange, Miami-Dade, Broward, Hillsborough, and Palm Beach) were in the fourth quartile of districts ranked by student participation in dual enrollment. Half of the 16 districts in the first quartile (with the highest dual enrollment rates) were in rural locales.

The findings indicate that

- Across Florida, 7.3 percent of students in grades 11 and 12 participated in a college-credit or career dual enrollment course during 2006/07.
- Four district and five college partner administrators (in six districts) identified

Florida K–20 Education Code (Florida Statute) section 1007.235 as a primary reason for establishing articulation agreements. In addition, four district and four college partner administrators (in seven districts) mentioned using the state requirement on dual enrollment service areas for guidance on establishing these agreements.

- The most commonly cited challenge in implementing dual enrollment programs (reported in four district and three college partner interviews in five districts) was administrative challenges. Four district administrators and one college partner administrator (in four districts) identified a lack of qualified high school teachers as a challenge. Other challenges (reported in three or fewer districts) included geographic proximity (the distance between high schools and colleges; three districts), communication with parents and grade point average requirements (two districts), and communication with school personnel (one district).
- The articulation agreements in the nine districts included information on ratification; available courses and programs; recruiting and informing students; student eligibility; institutional responsibility for student screening, program monitoring, and quality assurance; institutional

responsibility for program costs; and transportation.

- Districts reported using a variety of approaches to inform students of dual enrollment options. These involved print materials, high school counselors, college recruiters at high schools, individual and group meetings, media, word of mouth, and promotion of the College Placement Test.

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