

Dual Credit Programs/Subsidized Fees

Budget Language

\$4,894,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$4,894,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to administer programs and grants which increase equitable access to dual credit programs, including subsidizing or eliminating student costs for dual credit courses or exams. By November 2024, the office shall submit a report to relevant committees of the legislature describing options for entering into statewide agreements with dual credit exam companies that will reduce the overall costs for all students and eliminate costs for students who are low income.

Proviso Purpose

Dual credit proviso funding is intended to support the administration of programs and subsidization efforts which increase equitable access to dual credit programs. This includes awarding grants to districts adopting strategies to promote equitable and sustainable dual credit programs and/or demonstrating a need to support student access and completion by reducing out-of-pocket costs and/or expanding program offerings. Included in these strategies are efforts to subsidize test fees for Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International (CI), and International Baccalaureate (IB) dual credit exams, engage in collaborative research and professional development to identify and remedy performance gaps, invest in equipment and supplies required to meet college learning objectives, and increase staff capacity at high schools and districts to onboard new programs/courses and administer summer quarter Running Start.

Services Provided

Dual credit proviso funds were directed to schools and districts in the following ways:

- Grants for dual credit programs:
 - Consolidated Equity and Sustainability (CES) Grant.
 - CI/IB Test Fee Subsidy Program.
- College Board direct-billing agreement for AP exam fee subsidies for low-income students.

In the fall of 2024, 74 districts (114 schools) were awarded over \$2.43 million in funding through the CES Grant. Awards were initially limited to \$25,000 per school and a maximum of \$75,000 per district, and the average award was \$32,913. All applicants were funded, and nearly 80% received their full request. Through a second round of applications an additional \$497,084 was awarded to 27 districts, prioritizing those that did not receive their full request in the fall.

Allowable grant activities were categorized in seven priority areas: Contracts and Consultancy,



Professional Development and Training, CTE Graduation Pathways, Program Fees, Equipment and Supplies, Exam Fees and Other Student Expenses, Outreach to Underrepresented Student Populations, and Summer Administrative Costs.

In addition to funding provided through the CES Grant, \$309,198 was awarded to subsidize CI and IB exam fees in 18 districts, a 13% increase over the \$273,574 awarded in 2023–24. OSPI was invoiced for \$818,946 (up 3%) for AP exams taken by students from low-income families at 267 schools throughout the state. In total, more than \$4 million in proviso funding was allocated in direct support of students and/or local education agencies, a 23% increase from \$3.3 million in 2023–24.

The balance of the dual credit proviso was utilized for OSPI staff, professional development, and operational needs associated with dual credit. These activities focused on:

- Statewide policy and program coordination among K–12 and postsecondary partners.
- Dual credit technical assistance and grant management services to schools and districts.
- Provision of academic guidance and support about dual credit opportunities related to the High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP).
- Professional training provided to school counselors and Career and Technical Education (CTE) directors and teachers.
- Data collection and analysis required for local and statewide reporting and program improvement purposes.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

Consolidated Equity and Sustainability (CES) Grant: In 2024–25 the CES Grant reverted from a directed grant to a competitive grant. Awards were based on the applicant’s need, commitment to equity and access, capacity for effectively utilizing the funding, variety of proposed activities, and the number of schools and dual programs served. Additional considerations related to awarding funds included the districts’ proportion of free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) eligible students, school/district size, past subsidy/grant utilization, and consistency in submitting required annual reports. A second round of unencumbered funding was awarded to districts in the spring, prioritizing those that did not receive their full request in the fall and others that could demonstrate a need for additional support and capacity to utilize it late in the school year.

Test Fee Waiver Program: AP exam costs for students from low-income families were reduced by the College Board and the remaining cost was subsidized by state funding managed by OSPI. For districts offering CI and IB programs, students receiving test fee waivers must have been enrolled in CI or IB courses and classified as low-income by demonstrating eligibility for free or reduced-price lunches or through other accepted methods outlined in the [Low-Income Verification Form](#).

Beneficiaries in the 2024–25 School Year

Number of School Districts:

CES Grant: 74

IB/CI Test Fee Program: 18

AP Test Fee Program: Unknown

Number of Schools:

CES Grant: 114

IB/CI: 21

AP: 267

Number of Students:

CES Grant: 30,422 based on annual report estimates

IB/CI: 1,454 (36% of total IB/CI test-takers)

AP: 9,335 (17% of total AP test-takers)

Number of Educators:

Unknown, although 46 of 74 CES Grant recipients (62%) used funding for professional development, and 89 teachers received certifications or took postgraduate courses.

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$4,894,000	\$4,545,555
2024	\$4,894,000	\$3,704,134
2023	\$4,894,000	\$4,696,501
2022	\$4,894,000	\$4,894,000
2021	\$4,894,000	\$4,894,000

Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	CES Grant: 114 Schools AP/IB/CI Test Fee Programs: 288 Schools AP Exams Subsidized 14,874
2024	CES Grant: 100 Schools AP/IB/CI Test Fee programs: 286 Schools AP Exams Subsidized: 14,552
2023	CES Grant: 128 Schools/Districts AP/IB/CI Test Fee Programs: 280 Schools AP Exams Subsidized: 12,453
2022	CES Grant: 102 Schools/Districts AP/IB/CI Test Fee Programs: 308 Schools AP Exams Subsidized: 12,588
2021	CES Grant: 137 Schools/Districts AP/IB/CI Test Fee Programs: 318 Schools AP Exams Subsidized: 12,957

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

In 2023–24, [Substitute Senate Bill \(SSB\) 5048](#) established a state funding structure for College in the High School (CiHS), making CiHS course subsidies via the CES grant unnecessary. The CES Grant was redesigned to allow districts greater flexibility in using funds, with new priority areas such as outreach to underrepresented student populations and summer administrative costs to address participation gaps and staffing challenges. Grant administration was updated to include a pre-application survey and revised year-end reports for clearer tracking of fund usage and program impact. In 2024–25, the grant became competitive again, and districts with unmet needs or incomplete funding requests received additional support through a second round of applications.

Between 2022 and 2025, per legislative request, OSPI engaged in conversations with the College Board about increasing AP exam subsidization by changing the income threshold for exam reductions. The College Board indicated that it will not move away from the free and reduced-price lunch eligibility standard, and both CI and IB declined to offer exam discounts for low-income students. Consequently, no changes were made to either the AP or CI/IB test fee subsidy programs in 2024–25.

This body of work has been discontinued by the legislature. Beginning July 1, 2025, OSPI is no longer implementing this program.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

Utilization of AP test fee subsidies increased for a fourth consecutive year reflecting an all-time high of 99,949 exams taken by 54,313 students in 2025. Overall, 77% of all exams were scored 3 or higher, making them eligible for college credit. 17.2% of all AP exam-takers received low-income fee reductions. Use of CI/IB exam subsidies was also up 13%, as was the total of 2,538 exams taken by subsidy-eligible students. 36% of all CI/IB test-takers received subsidies. As this figure more accurately reflects the proportion of the state's students who are classified as low-income, OSPI will need to investigate differences in practice or reporting that might account for the discrepancy between AP and IB/CI subsidization levels. Nevertheless, the \$1 million+ invested in the test fee subsidy program was effectively used and the \$0 co-payment for students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch has helped eliminate barriers to students attaining dual credit.

The CES Grant funded 14 more schools than in the previous year and was increased by 23% to \$2.93 million, including a second round of awards in the spring. These funds were instrumental in supporting a wider variety of local needs, and many schools and districts received higher awards to invest more strategically in specific priority areas. In their annual reports, recipients provided details on the amount expended in each category and for each dual credit program.

Figure 1: Reported Expenses in Each CES Grant Category

Priority Category	Amount Expended	Percentage of Total Reported*
Contracts and Consultancy	\$431,285	19%
Professional Development and Training	\$438,924	20%
CTE Dual Credit and Graduation Pathways	\$228,285	10%
Program Fees	\$115,261	5%
Equipment and Supplies	\$591,621	27%
Exam Fees and Other Student Expenses	\$51,480	2%
Outreach to Underrepresented Student Populations	\$253,704	11%
Summer Administrative Costs	\$110,486	5%

*5 of 74 CES Grant recipients did not report expenses.

Figure 2: Reported Expenses in Each Dual Credit Program

Dual Credit Program	Amount Expended	Percentage of Total Reported*
College in the High School	\$634,458	35%
CTE Dual Credit	\$683,494	39%
Running Start	\$208,845	12%
Exam-Based Dual Credit (AP/CI/IB)	\$246,054	14%

*5 of 74 CES Grant recipients did not report expenses.

Overall, nearly 80% of CES Grant recipients received their full request which is a significant shift from 2022–23 when 59% received less than half due to the demand for CiHS subsidies. Even with larger awards and a late distribution of unencumbered funding, districts expended 82% of the CES Grant funding awarded. In 2024–25, CES Grant investment in professional development and equipment more than doubled and spending on Career and Technical Education more than tripled, providing evidence of the districts' need and capacity to utilize CES Grant funding.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

The steadily rising number of dual credit exams being subsidized and the intent to provide funding to support more sustainable access to dual credit opportunities led OSPI to limit the amount of CES Grant funding that could be utilized for test fees in 2024–25. In the previous year, AP accounted for over 22% of the total grant expenses. Fortunately, this year's limitation led to increased investment and innovation in other programs that serve students more equitably (e.g. CiHS and CTE Dual Credit).

Spending on Equipment and Supplies jumped 10%, accounting for over a quarter of all CES Grant expenses. One reason for the increase in equipment spending was the need to update technology to meet college standards for CTE Dual Credit and CiHS courses. Recipients also reported the need to reallocate grant funding to equipment and supplies when their initial plans for program and curriculum development did not materialize. Given the recurring needs, reliance on the CES Grant for CTE equipment is not a sustainable practice.

Proviso funds were primarily used to address immediate and administratively uncomplicated needs or projects that can be outsourced (e.g. 19% in Contracts and Consultancy, 20% in Professional Development, and 27% in Equipment and Supplies). Districts report too little capacity and time to invest the funding in more deliberate and far-reaching initiatives. While funding is often prioritized for small, under-resourced schools, those are the very schools least likely to apply for it due to staff size or limitations. Ultimately, students suffer when access to funding is dependent upon the district's capacity to apply for it.

Future Opportunities

This body of work has been discontinued by the legislature. Future opportunities will depend on future legislative direction and resources dedicated to the work. If this work were to be continued, future considerations should center on the complex and time-consuming development and administration of CiHS and CTE Dual Credit course curriculum and articulations/agreements.

Dual credit programs can require significant investment in equipment and supplies to meet college standards. While institutions of higher education receive funding for these dual credit programs through the state reimbursement model (CiHS) and sizable Perkins awards (CTE), schools and districts do not. For these programs to expand and serve more students, dedicated funding needs to be committed to schools and districts to develop and sustain them.

Other Relevant Information

N/A

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2025 Fiscal Year.](#)

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