



Request for Application

Dual Credit Innovation Grant 2026

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE or Department) Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education (OPHE) is pleased to issue this request for applications for public institutions of higher education to expand access to dual credit programs and improve delivery of college credit coursework at high schools serving significant populations of underserved students. This document describes the requirements that applicants will be expected to meet and the criteria that will be used to award funding for this competitive grant program.

The application submission window will open at 12:00 AM on Wednesday, **January 7, 2026**, and close at 5:00 PM on Friday, **February 6, 2026**.

Please complete and return your application submission via [eGrants](#).

Background

[Section 2004-I of the School Code](#) established the [Dual Credit Innovation Grant](#) within PDE. The purpose of the program is to provide funding for public colleges and universities to increase dual credit course capacity. Dual credit programs allow high school students to take college courses and earn both college and high school credit. Dual credit courses have been found to increase college readiness, college attendance, and college attainment, especially among traditionally underserved students.¹²³ Yet, these students often are underrepresented in dual credit courses.⁴

Institution Eligibility

Eligible public institutions of higher education include the following:

- An institution of the State System of Higher Education established under Article XX-A;
- A community college established under Article XIX-A;
- Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology;
- The Pennsylvania College of Technology; and
- A rural regional college established under Article XIX-G.

If the Department does not receive sufficient applications to expend the available funding, the department may reopen the grant application and award grants to State-related institutions and independent institutions of higher education.

Only one proposal will be accepted from each institution. Applicants may not apply as a consortium. Only the main campus may apply, and funds can be disseminated to branches as the institution deems appropriate if awarded.

¹ An, B.P., & Taylor, J.L. (2015). Are dual enrollment students college ready? Evidence from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 23(58). (<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1070379>)

² Taylor, J.L., Allen, T.O., An, B.P., et. al. (2022). Research Priorities for Advancing Equitable Dual Enrollment Policy and Practice. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah. (https://cherp.utah.edu/_resources/documents/publications/research_priorities_for_advancing_equitable_dual_enrollment_policy_and_practice.pdf)

³ National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Programs. *NACEP Fast Facts*. Retrieved 11/19/2024, from <https://www.nacep.org/resource-center/nacep-fast-facts/>

⁴ Fink, J. (2021, January 14). How equitable is access to AP and dual enrollment across states and school districts? *The CCRC Mixed Methods Blog*. Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center. (<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/ap-dual-enrollment-access-update.html>)

Funding and Eligible Programs

The Dual Credit Innovation 2026 Grant offers institutions the opportunity to apply for competitive funding in the amount of up to \$1,000,000.

Funds may be expended only on eligible programs, activities, and purposes identified in the proposal and approved by OPHE. Funding requests can include a combination of any eligible program described in this request for application. Funding is not guaranteed to any applicant. PDE reserves the right to award less than the requested amount and the requestor must provide updated proposals based on this revised amount.

Partner School Entities

Funding may only be used to offer college coursework to high school students enrolled in school entities. For the purposes of this grant program, a school entity is a school district, area career and technical school, charter school, cyber charter school or regional charter school.

Applicants must provide letters of support from each partner school entity receiving dual credit programming or services under this grant.

Priority Outcomes

The Department shall give priority in grant funding to public institutions of higher education that create or expand dual credit offerings beyond the current offerings, with a particular emphasis on providing courses aligned with high-priority occupations and/or serving students experiencing education instability⁵, students enrolled in career and technical education programs, low-income students, historically underserved student groups, those who face financial, academic, or systemic barriers, and students in rural areas of this Commonwealth.

Allowable Expenses

Due to the limited amount of funding, only items directly related to eligible programs and activities covered in this request for application will be funded by the Dual Credit Innovation 2026 Grant.

Funding may be used to offer college coursework free of any tuition or fees to high school students enrolled in school entities. Reimbursables include course materials, faculty salary, possible mileage or transportation if teaching off-site, etc. A salaried position to support the management of the grant, whether partial or fully, is not eligible for reimbursement.

Funding is to be allocated for each eligible course offering, regardless of the number of students enrolled. Institutions should note that the total funding received will depend on the number of qualifying courses, and estimated spending should be based on a reasonable calculation of the cost to provide a given dual credit course, with variations based on the delivery mode (high school teacher on high school campus, college instructor on college campus, college instructor online). This structure emphasizes course-level support, ensuring resources are distributed based on the number of courses offered, not by counting individual student participants. Tuition should not be charged on top of the course-related expenses.

Example of Cost Per Course funding calculation:

Dual Credit Modality	Instruction Cost	Textbooks and Materials	Administrative Costs	Cost per Course
HS instructor @ HS	\$750	\$600	\$200	\$1,550

⁵ [Assisting Students Experiencing Education Instability- PA Public School Code of 1949](#)

College instructor @ College	\$3,000	\$600	\$400	\$4,000
College instructor Online	\$3,000	\$600	\$200	\$3,800

Allowable expenses include:

- Cost to operate dual credit courses that are tuition free to high school students including: instruction, textbook and course materials, transportation to course location, administrative cost not to exceed 15% of total;
- Cost related to supporting public institutions of higher education in seeking external accreditation for their dual credit courses, such as through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP);
- Costs to provide student academic supports for students enrolled in dual credit courses to be successful in the courses and to successfully transition to postsecondary education upon graduation from high school;
- Cost to increase the use of no-cost or low-cost textbooks or course materials used in dual credit courses; and
- Costs to provide professional development activities for high school teachers specific to teaching dual credit courses.

Examples of eligible programming may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Developing or enhancing partnerships with high schools to develop clear pathways that connect dual credit programs to college enrollment after high school graduation. Courses must be transferable to more than one public institution of higher education within the Commonwealth. Transfer agreements with multiple public institutions of higher education will be given priority.
- Developing and expanding dual credit programs that offer courses in areas that meet regional and state workforce demands, including short-term career-ready programs with stackable credentials. Partnerships with career and technology centers meet priority outcomes of promoting high demand jobs and reaching traditionally underserved students.

eGrants Access

The application submission window will open at 12:00 AM on Wednesday, **January 7, 2026**, and close at 5:00 PM on Friday, **February 6, 2026**.

All application materials must be submitted through the Department's [eGrants system](#). Applications received by email or after 5:00 PM on **February 6, 2026**, will not be considered.

For access to the eGrants system and the related grant opportunities, prospective applicants should complete the [eGrants Request Form](#). Please note that the person completing the grant application must have signatory authority to negotiate grants and contracts for the institution and be able to upload documentation into the eGrants system. Institutions with eSign ability in eGrants will be able to utilize this feature to complete the application.

To ensure access to eGrants system, please notify OPHE whenever there is a staffing change.

Grant Application Components

The Dual Credit Innovation Grant application consists of four areas: Applicant Information, Program Information, Budget, and Compliance Objectives.

Area 1. Applicant Information

Applicant Information

Provide detailed information regarding contact information for the individual responsible for the grant application. It is important to provide any changes to the institution's contact to ensure all vital information and continuity of information between PDE and the institution.

Area 2. Program Information

Project Summary

Provide the project overview, including the title of the project, estimated start date (no earlier than **June 1, 2026**), estimated completion date (no later than **June 30, 2028**), estimated total project cost, and grant amount being requested.

In this section, the institution will provide the project overview, the grant amount requested, and the institution's specific plans to implement the proposed programs. Provide the context for how the spending will be utilized for new dual credit programming. If your institution was a grant recipient last year, proposals must demonstrate how additional funds will expand upon the previous year's programming. Limit this section to 500 words or less. Further explanation should fit within the goals and objectives table below.

Goals and Objectives

With the grant funds, please outline the criteria areas that you will focus on. Explain the goals and objectives of the criteria, a baseline of what is currently being done in this criteria area, the outcomes expected with increased funding, and the amount to be dedicated to that criteria area.

Priority Outcomes Statement

Explain how funds will be used to support high priority jobs and/or underserved student populations.

Area 3. Budget

Budget Narrative

In this section, the institution will provide an explanation of the proposed spending and how it relates to the goals/objectives of the proposal. Ensure that the budget narrative demonstrates how funds will be used to support high priority jobs and/or underserved student populations.

Instruction; Purchased Professional and Technical Services; Contracted Services; and Supplies and Equipment

The budget demonstrates a fiscally sound allocation of funds to successfully provide activities related directly to the Dual Credit Innovation Grant. Round amounts to the nearest whole dollar. All budgets will be reviewed to evaluate appropriateness and connection to proposed grant activities and goals. **NOTE: If including travel expenses, please provide a description. Please use function code 1000-Instruction and object code 500-Other Purchased Services.**

Budget Summary

The budget summary demonstrates fiscally sound allocation of funds to successfully provide activities related directly to the Dual Credit Innovation Grant. Round amounts to the

nearest whole dollar. All budgets will be reviewed to evaluate appropriateness and connection to proposed grant activities and goals.

Area 4. Compliance Objectives

Compliance Objectives

1. All grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement with PDE.
2. Once approved, the institution will invoice for payment of the grant. All invoices must be received within 30 calendar days of notification of approval.
3. Institutions are encouraged to expend all grant funds, and funds must be spent, and services performed/products received, on or before **June 30, 2028**.
4. PDE shall seek repayment of funds if it determines that funds were not utilized for the stated and approved purpose.
5. Grantees will be required to submit reports in the eGrants system on forms supplied by PDE. Final Expenditure Reports must be submitted no later than **July 31, 2028**.
6. Grantees are expected to participate in PDE evaluation research, including staff interviews and student surveys.

Review Process and Scoring

Applications will be reviewed on a competitive basis by a team selected by OPHE. All qualifying applications will be reviewed and scored based on a rubric. Each application will be scored twice by unique grant evaluators.

The following criteria will be evaluated to rank and score the applications according to the following attributes.

Application Section	Description	Score
Program Information I	Proposal Narrative	40 points
Program Information II	Expected Outcomes	40 points
Budget Information	Budget Narrative and Detailed Budgets	20 points

Applications that do not include all the required information as stated in the application will not be considered for funding. Applications that include unallowable expenses or exceed the identified threshold of spending on allowable expenses will not be reviewed or scored.

Award and Disbursement

All grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement with OPHE. Once approved, the institution will invoice for payment of the grant. All invoices must be received within 30 calendar days of notification of approval. Failure to meet the 30-calendar day deadline will result in an automatic forfeiture of funds.

All grant funds must be committed, and services performed by **June 30, 2028**. Awardees are encouraged to ensure all funding is spent by the end of the grant period. **NOTE: No-cost extensions will no longer be permitted.**

PDE shall seek repayment of funds if it determines that funds were not utilized for the original stated and approved purpose. Institutions will be notified when their Final Expenditure Report is reviewed and approved. If unused grant funds are due to PDE, the institution will have **30 calendar days** to return funds.

Program Reporting and Evaluation

Upon completion of the grant, grantees will be required to submit a final report on forms supplied by OPHE. **Final reports and correlating invoices/receipts must be submitted no later than July 31, 2028.** It is highly recommended to include various individuals involved in the grant administration activities coordinated across campus to ensure everyone is aware of the program reporting and evaluation deadlines.

Program Changes

All requests for changes to the approved grant (**changes in approved goals/objectives**) must be submitted to OPHE in writing no later than **June 1, 2027**. OPHE must approve program changes, or the grant will be rescinded.

Budget Revision Changes/Reallocation of Funds

All requests for budget revision/reallocation of funds (shifting money from one function code/object code to another) must be submitted in eGrants, under the heading “Create Budget Revision.” Once OPHE approves changes, the institution will be notified through the eGrants system. **NOTE: If the institution desires to make changes to submitted goals/objectives, see above heading “Program Changes.”**

Technical Assistance

Contact OPHE at ra-highereducation@pa.gov for technical assistance or to obtain answers to questions related to the grant application. All substantive questions must be submitted by **Wednesday, January 14, 2026**. Responses will be provided in the form of an FAQ distributed to all institutions on **Wednesday, January 28, 2026**.

Please communicate staffing changes to OPHE to ensure your institution’s continued access to the eGrants system.

The deadline for submission is **Friday, February 6, 2026**, at 5:00 PM. Applications received after this time will not be considered.