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Dual Enrollment a great option for High School Students

The recent spotlight on legislative changes to the Dual Enrollment option for High School students has brought a renewed interest in the option to students and parents alike as planning for college looms in the near future. Though it may be several months before the potential implementation of the new laws, the Dual Enrollment opportunity has been a great resource to many families in this area over the years.

“We’ve seen a steady increase of students becoming dual enrolled,” said Kallan Williams, Director of Student Navigation and Retention Services at NGTC. “In 2010 we had just over 30 students, and this year we were over 200.”

For parents wondering how to handle the cost of a college education for their child, this program could save them thousands of dollars.

Dual Enrollment is a program in which eligible high school students can enroll in college and earn both college and high school credits for the same class. The economic advantages are outstanding because the tuition is covered 100%, and at some colleges, books and fees are covered so there is minimal to no out of pocket expense for the student. In addition, dual enrolled courses do not count against the credit hour cap for the HOPE program.

Students who are dual enrolled get the benefit of the college experience while still maintaining their social connections during their last years in high school.

For example, Yesenia Benevides took advantage of the Nurse Aid Certificate offered at Habersham Central High School to get an inside look at the medical career she was considering. “I would highly recommend the dual credit option to other students because of the great opportunity they will have to get ahead in the career they plan on taking,” she said. Yesenia will actually complete her credentials and become a graduate of North Georgia Technical College even before she graduates from high school.

“I dual enrolled after hearing many Franklin County High School graduates say they wished they would have taken advantage of this opportunity,” said Cari McDuffie. “I would recommend dual enrollment, but only to students who are seriously ready to take the next step in their education. Balancing high school with college academics is no easy task, but it can be done.” After finishing her core classes at NGTC, Cari plans to transfer to UGA to pursue a degree in mass media.

“I decided to dual enroll my last year of high school to not only get a head start in college, but to prepare myself for the work that will be required of me,” said Rabun County High School student John Addington. “I feel that the professors have treated us like college students and have shown us the type of work that we will be doing in college.”

Skyler Vandiver, a student at the Mountain Educational Charter High School White County site says, “Dual credit has helped me immensely by allowing me to attend college classes and receive the high school equivalent to those classes. It enables me to graduate with what I believe to be a true quality education.” Miss Vandiver plans on continuing to pursue higher education with the ultimate goal of attaining a doctorate in computer science.
Along with the occupational programs, there are 27 college core classes that transfer easily between the Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia. Students may take required college classes such as English Literature and College Algebra and more at a local college where the class sizes are small and the instructor contact is great.

Students may enroll individually and choose to attend on campus. Students attending White County High School and Rabun County High School have the added option of enrolling in core classes taught at their high school.

To learn more about the possibilities of dual enrollment, students and parents should contact their high school counselor first. For additional information about the dual enrollment program at North Georgia Technical College, contact Eric Miller, emiller@northgatech.edu.

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