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MUS to continue “One-Two-Free” Dual Enrollment program for high schoolers

Popular program allows high school students to earn college credit tuition-free, boosts academic success

HELENA – Montana Governor Steve Bullock and Commissioner of Higher Education Clayton Christian announced today that the popular One-Two-Free program – a pilot project that allows high school students to complete college courses tuition-free – will continue to be offered through the Montana University System.

One-Two-Free was launched on a pilot basis in 2018 with three goals: To increase the number of high school students pursuing higher education, reduce education costs for Montana families, and enhance student success. The program was set to end in 2020.

“The One-Two-Free program gives Montanans a jumpstart on their college education and encourages students who think they aren’t college bound to take a course and realize they can succeed,” Governor Bullock said. “Free dual enrollment courses have already saved families more than \$24 million in tuition costs and continuing it will further those savings while preparing students for the education and training they need to pursue a meaningful career.”

Funded by the Montana University System, the One-Two-Free program gives Montana high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to take and earn college credit – tuition free – for two college-level courses. Students take the 100- and 200-level classes at their high schools, on college campuses or online through the Montana University System’s Dual Enrollment program.

Students who demonstrate financial need can apply for a scholarship to cover the tuition for additional Dual Enrollment courses.

“The One-Two-Free program ensures that tuition costs are never a barrier to Montana students who want to take the first steps toward their college education,” said Commissioner Christian. “Having the opportunity to experience college classes in high school makes students more likely to attend college and to be successful once they get there. Our Montana students will continue to reap the benefits of this program well into their college careers and beyond.”

Montana University System (MUS) statistics show that high school students who complete college-level Dual Enrollment classes are more likely to stay in college, with 10 to 15 percent higher rates of first-year retention when compared with their MUS peers. Dual Enrollment students also are more likely to stay in Montana for college, with approximately 60 percent enrolling in an MUS college or university.

And MUS Dual Enrollment participants are more likely to finish college on time, which can result in less student debt. Students who take Dual Enrollment courses earn their bachelor’s degrees within four years at a rate 11 to 13 percent higher than their MUS peers. Likewise, Dual Enrollment participants earn associate degrees within two years at a rate 5 to 10 percent higher than their peers.

The One-Two-Free program helps students start reducing college costs while still in high school. By covering the cost of Dual Enrollment for students and their families, One-Two-Free significantly boosted participation from Montana high schools, which increased 25 percent from the 2017-18 to 2018-19 academic years. One hundred percent of Class AA & A and 70 percent of Class B & C schools had at least one student participating in some form of dual enrollment in the 2018-19 academic year. With the pilot now established as a regular program, the Montana University System is increasingly focused on working with rural schools and other community and education partners to extend more class offerings to rural districts.

“The Montana University System, with the support of the Board of Regents, is proud to continue funding this successful program,” said Commissioner Christian. “We’re helping students build the foundation they need for academic and personal success.”

How to sign up for One-Two-Free

To begin Dual Enrollment student registration, contact your high school counselor or the Dual Enrollment Coordinator on a participating Montana University System campus: <https://mus.edu/one-two-free/contacts.html>

For more information, visit: <https://mus.edu/dualenroll/> or call the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education at (406) 449-9128.

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