

Effects Of MOWR Law On High School Students

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Introduction

Georgia's Move On When Ready program, commonly called MOWR, was created to let eligible high-school students take approved postsecondary courses while earning both high-school and college credit. The program was later renamed Dual Enrollment, and its current rules are administered through the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Students do not simply leave eleventh or twelfth grade, bypass academic requirements, or enter college without oversight. Eligible students remain connected to a participating high school or home study program, must meet admission requirements at a participating postsecondary institution, select approved courses, and coordinate those courses with graduation requirements. Current rules also define grade-level eligibility, funding limits, application procedures, and consequences for repeated course withdrawals or repeats. The most important effects of MOWR are therefore educational rather than administrative. Dual enrollment can broaden access to advanced coursework, allow students to explore careers, accelerate progress toward a credential, and build college readiness. Those benefits depend on careful advising because early credit has limited value when courses do not transfer, do not apply to a future degree, or overload a student who is not prepared.

Dual Enrollment Expands the Range of Courses Available

One of the strongest effects of Georgia's program is that high-school students can access courses their own school may not be able to offer. A small or rural school may lack advanced mathematics, specialized laboratory science, world languages, engineering, computer networking, health occupations, or technical training, while a nearby college or online provider can make those subjects available. The program can therefore widen the curriculum without requiring every high school to employ specialists in every field. Current Georgia rules allow eligible students to enroll through participating public and private postsecondary institutions, although tenth-grade participation is more limited than participation for older students and ninth graders are not funded through the state program. Online and distance options may also be available when the institution and approved course directory permit them. This flexibility can be especially valuable for students who have exhausted

local offerings, but access remains unequal when transportation, broadband, disability accommodations, admission requirements, or scheduling make participation harder for some families than for others.

Early Credit Has Value Only When It Fits a Plan

Dual enrollment can reduce the number of courses a student needs after high-school graduation and may lower future tuition costs, but credit accumulation should not become the sole measure of success. A course can count toward high-school graduation yet transfer only as an elective at the student's eventual college, and highly sequenced majors may require particular prerequisites that a general dual-credit class does not satisfy. Georgia's funding limits make planning especially important because students have a finite number of funded semester or quarter hours. Advisors should therefore help students confirm how each course fits graduation requirements, likely transfer destinations, and potential degree programs before registration. The program is also valuable when it helps a student test a field early. An introductory nursing, engineering, business, or technical course can reveal whether the discipline matches the student's interests and strengths before a larger commitment is made. The educational benefit is consequently broader than speed; well-chosen courses can provide information, confidence, and clearer career direction.

College Readiness Includes More Than Strong Grades

Students who succeed in a structured [high school classroom](#) may still find college expectations unfamiliar. Postsecondary courses often require more independent reading, fewer graded assignments, longer deadlines, formal communication with instructors, and greater responsibility for seeking help. Dual enrollment can strengthen readiness by allowing students to practice these behaviors while still connected to high-school counselors and family support. The same experience can reveal that a student needs additional preparation, which should be treated as useful information rather than as failure. A poor grade or withdrawal can also become part of a postsecondary academic record, so enrollment decisions should consider maturity, time management, transportation, employment, family responsibilities, and the student's willingness to seek assistance. Programs that focus only on recruiting large numbers of participants can overlook these developmental differences. Effective dual enrollment includes orientation, tutoring, disability services, early alerts, and clear communication about college policies before academic difficulty becomes irreversible. Clear expectations can also help families distinguish ordinary challenge from a genuine mismatch in readiness.

The Program Changes Responsibilities for Schools and Colleges

Dual enrollment does not make the high school irrelevant. Schools still advise students, approve coursework, verify progress toward graduation, coordinate schedules, and help families understand how college calendars and policies differ from secondary education. Colleges, meanwhile, serve younger students whose legal, developmental, and support needs may differ from those of adult learners while maintaining genuine college-level standards. If many advanced students leave campus for part of the day, a high school may find it harder to sustain low-enrollment advanced courses, yet partnerships can also expand the curriculum and free resources for other needs. Postsecondary institutions gain enrollment but also incur instructional, advising, technology, materials, and administrative costs. The program should therefore not be judged as a simple financial transfer between systems. Its success depends on coordination: course quality, transferability, advising, student support, and equitable access must be shared responsibilities. Participation numbers are useful, but completion, meaningful credit, persistence, and later educational progress provide stronger measures of whether the bridge is working.

Conclusion

Georgia's former Move On When Ready law is best understood through its current Dual Enrollment program rather than through the idea that students simply "move on" from high school. Eligible participants remain part of a high-school or home-study program while enrolling in approved postsecondary courses under state funding and institutional admission rules. The program can broaden access to advanced academic and technical learning, provide early college credit, improve readiness, and help students explore careers before full-time postsecondary enrollment. These benefits are not automatic. Credit can be wasted when it does not fit a future degree, students can encounter unfamiliar academic expectations, and transportation or information barriers can make access unequal. Strong implementation therefore requires coordinated advising, orientation, tutoring, transfer planning, and accurate information about current eligibility and funding limits. The most important effect of MOWR is not that high schools empty or colleges gain tuition; it is the creation of a structured bridge between secondary and postsecondary education whose value depends on whether students learn, retain useful credit, and progress toward realistic long-term goals.

References

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