

# Looking At The ISSUES

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## HB 424 Seeks to Retool Post Secondary, Dual Enrollment Options

*An opportunity is before our state to forge a model for dual enrollment that bridges old education boundaries and increases access and preparedness for all students. – KnowledgeWorks Foundation and WICHE<sup>1</sup>*

Since 1989 students in Ohio have been able to take college courses for both high school and college credit, known as dual enrollment, under the state's Post Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Program. Though nearly 20 years old, there has always been confusion over PSEO's original legislative intent as to whether the program was meant to promote college access or just to provide courses for high achieving students. Due to this confusion, colleges and universities often set higher requirements to admit students for PSEO coursework than regular students. Consequently, though PSEO has grown over the years, less than 5% of all high school students today take advantage of the program.

Now a new bill, introduced in the Ohio House on January 8th by Representative Arlene Setzer seeks to end that confusion. The bill, HB 424<sup>2</sup>, clearly states that the purpose of PSEO is "to provide post-secondary education opportunities ... to help secondary grade students transition to college or the work force." Further, the bill specifies that a higher education institution may not require more stringent entrance requirements for a high school student seeking to enroll in a college course under PSEO than it does for other first-year undergraduate students.

While HB 424 seeks to establish dual enrollment and resulting dual credit courses as a college access strategy, one provision might actually hinder its growth in Stark County and elsewhere in the state. The bill as now written would require that high school teachers hold a master's degree in the same subject (content) area as the course taught for the course to qualify for state reimbursement.

Increasingly, dual credit courses are taught at high schools by teachers who meet qualifications of colleges and universities to be adjunct instructors. While these teachers hold Master's degrees, most do not have content masters. Colleges and universities generally require a master's and significant graduate coursework in the subject area, not necessarily a full degree.

## Take A LOOK

### 2007 Stark County Profile

The Ohio Department of Development has released the newest 2007 *Ohio County Profiles*. Go to <http://www.odod.state.oh.us/research/files/SO/Stark.pdf> to review data from Stark County's economic, industrial, and demographic trends.



<sup>1</sup> From the Promise of Dual Enrollment: Assessing Ohio's Early College Access Program, available at: [http://www.kwfdn.org/resource\\_library/publications/pseo\\_report.asp](http://www.kwfdn.org/resource_library/publications/pseo_report.asp)

<sup>2</sup> The text and legislative analysis of HB 424 may be found at: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127\\_HB\\_424](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127_HB_424)