



Davis School District Board Briefing
Davis Connect Online Program – Performance Audit

May 5, 2026



Davis Connect Online Program Review

Objective & Scope

The **objective** was to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-benefit of the Davis Connect Online Program, focusing on education quality, resource allocation, and financial sustainability, while ensuring alignment with District and state standards.

The **scope** of the engagement was for the period July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025 (SY24 & SY25) and limited to Independent Study (IS), A La Carte (ALC) and Credit Recovery (CR). Now delivered through Davis Connect Term & Davis Connect Flex.



Key Strengths

Quality & Alignment

- Davis Connect delivers high-quality online instruction aligned with USBE and SOEP requirements.
- Courses are built and maintained by DSD teachers and delivered through Canvas, with enrollment and tracking managed by SEATS.
- These structures ensure consistency, rigor, transparency, and accountability.

Model Flexibility

- The Program offers Independent Study, A la Carte, and Credit Recovery pathways, delivered through Davis Connect Term (DCT) and Davis Connect Flex (DCF) formats.
- This model supports personalized learning and accommodates diverse student needs while maintaining alignment with state & district expectations.

Growth & Access

- Enrollment has increased substantially, driven primarily by magnet student participation and expanding SOEP access.
- Growth has broadened equitable access to high-quality online coursework and contributed to improvements in graduation rates and overall course performance.

Finding #1 – Resource Allocation for Magnet Students

Finding

Davis Connect continues to enroll a growing number of magnet students who complete multiple online courses while remaining enrolled at their home schools. Under current practice, funding and staffing allocations remain with home schools even when Davis Connect provides most of the instruction.

This results in **resource constraints**, including a **student to teacher ratio** of **33 to 1** in School Year 2025 and **42 to 1** in School Year 2026. **Table 1** offers a peer comparison.

Recommendation

Davis Connect should implement district wide criteria for enrollment attribution and proportional funding transfer based on course load thresholds **>50%** and instructional time allocation **>60%**. Additional steps include updating governance practices, improving reporting processes, and conducting periodic validation audits.

This approach provides consistent decision making, improves resourcing, and aligns funding with where instruction occurs. The expected outcome is more equitable teacher capacity, sustained performance gains, and clearer accountability for cross enrollment.

Table 1 – Student-to-Teacher Ratios

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CATEGORY	SCHOOL	STUDENT-TO-TEACHER RATIO
Davis Connect	Davis Connect	33:1
Peer Brick-and-Mortar Schools within the District	Farmington High School	26:1
	Mountain High School	10:1
	Northridge High School	22:1
Peer Online Schools outside the District	Kings Peak Virtual High School	15:1 ⁶
	Utah Online School	25:1 ⁷
	Granite Connection High	11:1 ⁸
	Digital Education Center	29:1 ⁹
Comparable online program	Canyons Virtual Academy	25:1

Source: Davis Connect and peer traditional school ratios were calculated by Internal Audit based on data provided by Davis Connect. Peer ratios were obtained online, except for Canyons Virtual Academy who provided ratio data.

Finding #2 – Standardized Cost Analysis

Finding

Before the pandemic, Davis Connect maintained a standardized cost analysis for full-time and adjunct teachers. Enrollment grew from approximately **226 to more than 13,000 students** without an updated analysis. Current adjunct instruction costs average **\$51 – \$54 per 0.25 credit**. Full-time costing is more complex and varies based on assigned responsibilities and required credentials.

Without refreshed and standardized costing, it is more difficult to evaluate long term sustainability and ensure equitable resource allocation.

Recommendation

Davis Connect should re-establish a comprehensive cost analysis that includes:

- Defined cost categories,
- Course or credit-based costing to support unit comparability,
- Activity-based costing for FTE responsibilities, and
- Segmented attribution models for full-time Davis Connect, magnet, and SOEP students

Aligning the methodology with National Standards for Quality Online Programs will support transparency and continuous improvement. This will also strengthen budgeting accuracy, inform staffing decisions, and provide the Board with a clearer financial narrative.

Finding #3 – Student Count & Coding

Finding

Davis Connect continues to use the “999” **placeholder code** for students who complete early withdrawal or are home-schooled. This obscures distinctions among Davis Connect, magnet, and SOEP students and affects the accuracy of enrollment and funding data.

Progress is already underway. The number of students tagged with the 999 code decreased by more than 2,000, which has improved accuracy. However, full standardization is still needed to ensure enrollment counts, funding decisions, and reporting reflect actual student participation.

Total enrollment was **13,308 in 2025**, which is an **increase of 13% compared with 2024**). Magnet participation nearly doubled. (**Table 2** – provides a full enrollment comparison)

Recommendation

Davis Connect should adopt clear and consistent coding standards with distinct codes for early completion, withdrawal, and home school status. All codes should be linked to program categories that include Davis Connect, magnet, and SOEP. Additional steps include periodic reconciliation of 999 coded records at term breaks and peak enrollment periods, monitoring exceptions, and updating district procedures across SEATS and Encore platforms to support consistency.

These actions will strengthen data integrity, improve funding attribution, and support better operational planning.

Table 2 – Davis Connect Student Enrollment Count

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Davis Connect Students	2024	2025	Increase / Decrease
Number of students enrolled at Davis Connect	143	226	83
Number of magnet students taking Davis Connect classes	4,760	8,777	4,017
Number of SOEP students taking Davis Connect classes	15	79	64
Number of students in the 999 home school bucket	6,823	4,226	(2,597)*
TOTAL:	11,741	13,308	1,567

Source: created by Internal Audit based on data provided by Davis Connect.

***Note:** The decline in the “999 home school bucket” reflects improved student coding and categorization practices, as recommended by the USBE and implemented by DSD. More students are now accurately attributed to Davis Connect, magnet, or SOEP categories, rather than being grouped under the 999 code. This change is consistent with state guidance to improve data accuracy and enrollment reporting.¹¹

Finding #4 – Grade Syncing between Canvas & Encore

Finding

Manual grade transfers for magnet students continue to create delays and occasional discrepancies. These issues increase workload for teachers, coordinators, and support staff and reduce the reliability of grade information across platforms.

Recommendation

Davis Connect should establish an end-to-end grade synchronization process that includes scheduled exports, secure data ingestion, and pre commit validation rules such as checks for ID mismatches, section mismatches, scale differences, and out of window submissions. Additional components include audit logs and concise role-based guidance for teachers, coordinators, and IT staff. A parent and student overview should also be published to set expectations.

These steps will improve speed and accuracy, strengthen transparency, and increase trust in academic records.

Finding #5 – Student Outcomes & Continuous Improvement

Finding

Graduation rates continue to show strong momentum. The ACT composite score of **18.4** is slightly **below** the **Utah state average of 20** and the **peer benchmark of 21**, which is **consistent with other online programs**.

There is an opportunity to strengthen college readiness while sustaining gains in graduation performance. (**Table 4** presents a comparison of ACT scores).

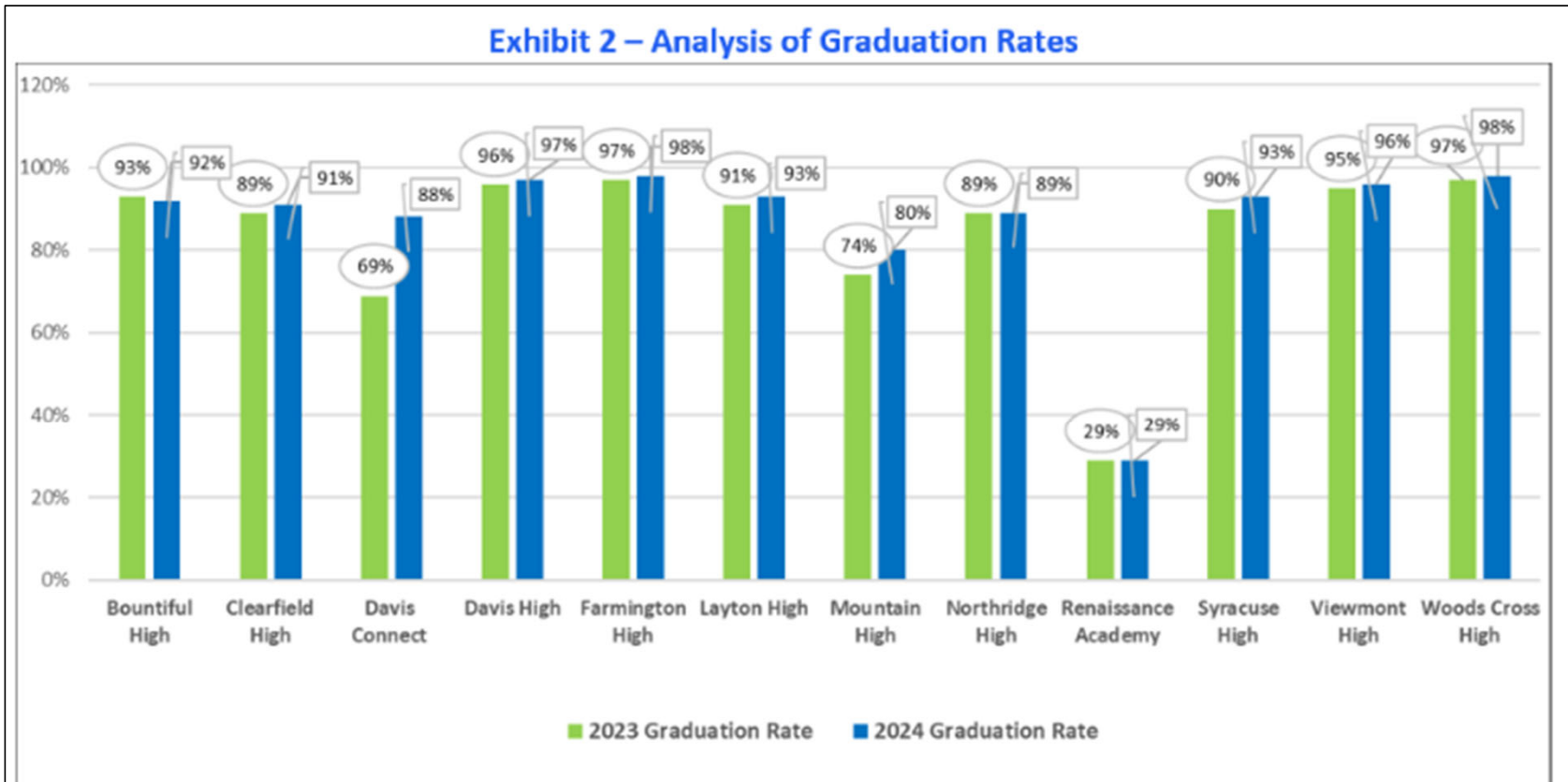
Recommendation

Davis Connect should implement a continuous improvement plan that focuses on:

- College readiness supports including ACT preparation, concurrent enrollment, and SAT and CTE pathways,
- Sustaining graduation improvements through student support systems, teacher capacity development, and cohort monitoring,
- Formal feedback loops from student and parent surveys, and
- Quarterly KPI dashboards covering ACT, graduation, course completion, and satisfaction).

These actions will help close readiness gaps while maintaining program growth and quality over time.

Exhibit 2 – Analysis of Graduation Rates



Source: Created by Internal Audit based on the data reports from the USBE website.

Table 3 – Analysis of ACT Scores

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School Year	Davis Connect	Utah Virtual Academy	Mountain Heights Academy	Farmington High	Utah State Average	National Average
2023	25	17.4	20.2	22.7	19.9	19.5
2024	18.5	18.3	19.5	21.9	19.9	19.4
2025	18.4	18.6	20	22	20	19.5

Source: Created by Internal Audit based on the data reports from the USBE website.

Note: ACT data is limited to grade 11 students, as Utah administers the ACT statewide for all juniors.

Summary of Planned Actions: Management Responses

Finding	Planned Action	Responsible Parties	Timeline
#1 – Resource Allocation	Review staffing ratios; evaluate course-based funding to support magnet students	Davis Connect, Secondary Directors, Business Dept	Initial meetings by February 28, 2026; recommendations by May 31, 2026
#2 – Cost Analysis	Build standardized cost framework aligned with existing DSD standards	Davis Connect, Business Dept, Secondary Directors	Begin by February 28, 2026; model complete by July 1, 2026
#3 – Student Coding	Evaluate Student Information System and coding practices for multi-site students	Davis Connect, Student Services, Programming	Code review by February 28, 2026; system assessment by March 15, 2026; ongoing improvements – maintain regular meetings
#4 – Grade Sync	Automate Canvas–Encore syncing; launch pilot and systemwide implementation	Davis Connect, DSD IT/Programming	Automation turned on before January 31, 2026. Canvas pilot begins on March 31, 2026; final plan for 2026-27 by May 31, 2026
#5 – Student Outcomes	Expand ACT supports; formalize feedback use; monitor KPIs	Davis Connect, District Leaders	Ongoing effort; build dashboard structure during 2026



Thank you

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